



IMPACT REPORT 2023

Noah's Ark Zoo Farm is an award-winning, modern and progressive zoo - the home of the big zoo animals. We welcome over 220,000 visitors a year and employ over 100 people. After almost a quarter century as a family-owned animal attraction, in a major milestone for the zoo, Noah's Ark became a charity in April 2023, beginning an exciting new era.

Through the inspiring efforts of our dedicated team, we've managed to achieve some incredible things in the past 12 months. On the following pages, find out more about our local and global impact and outputs in 2023.

Buoyed by a busy and successful year, we're looking ahead to our milestone 25th anniversary in 2024 with positivity and excitement. As always, we're grateful to the loyal support of our visitors, members and partners, and we're confident we can achieve even more together.

Larry Bush, CEO



**OUR VISION FOR
NOAH'S ARK ZOO FARM
IS TO PROTECT
WILDLIFE AND THE
NATURAL WORLD AND TO
PROVIDE AN OASIS OF
INSPIRATION AND HOPE
FOR PEOPLE.**

OUR PURPOSE

We are living at a time of huge challenges for our planet, with climate change and biodiversity loss. As a zoo and a conservation charity our purpose is to play our part by working with others to fight to overcome these challenges, creating a better future for all.

Our core priorities are represented in our three charitable objectives, below. We've structured this report around them to explain how we've impacted the world and made a difference across these key areas.

- 1. Conservation**
- 2. Education**
- 3. People and Wellbeing**





NOAH'S ARK

IN 2023

Since we opened our doors in 1999 as a local animal attraction, we've grown into an award-winning zoo of international significance. We've welcomed over 3 million visitors, educated hundreds of thousands of children and adults and contributed to local and global conservation efforts. We have trained thousands of volunteers and employed hundreds of dedicated staff – some of whom have been part of our story since our early years.

We officially became a charity this year, marking a major milestone in our journey. The process gave us a valuable opportunity to evaluate our priorities, reflect on our past and consider our future, resulting in the development of an exciting new vision and strategy for the zoo which we will publish next year.

Over the last 12 months, we've focused our efforts on strengthening the pillars that will underpin this strategy and enable us to realise our ambitions. This includes continuing to enhance our care for our amazing collection of over 120 species of animals and delivering impactful conservation both in the UK and through new partnerships overseas. We've also grown our core focuses on education and people. We've inspired a record number of visitors and schools by providing powerful and accessible experiences of nature, and through creative education activities and outreach. We continue to be a place which enhances people's wellbeing through enjoying our peaceful, rural space and re-connecting with nature.



STRATEGIC IMPACT FOR GOOD

As we prepare to celebrate our milestone 25th anniversary, we've recognised our strengths in welcoming and inspiring visitors and caring and protecting our animals. In this report, we've highlighted and summarised some of our most impactful activities over the past year under the headlines of our three charitable objectives.

By reflecting on our charitable priorities and our responsibilities, our passions and strengths, we've begun identifying strategic goals that will underpin our new vision, which will be explored in our next Impact Report. They'll be the focus for our energy and resources for the next five years.

IMPACT ON

SPECIES AND CONSERVATION

SUMMARY

We're privileged to care for an incredible range of animal, reptile and bird species, including 21 which are classified as vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered. Over the last year we've grown in status and recognition as a modern zoo providing best-practise facilities and welfare to flagship animals like African elephants and Andean bears.

This year we've invested time reviewing our animal collection plan, increasing our conservation focus, and cultivating new international partnerships. We've also continued to invest in sustainable initiatives, protecting our local environment.

KEY IMPACTS:

Zoo License Inspection. This year we had our three yearly Zoo Inspection – a full review of zoo facilities and systems as well as animal care and welfare. The inspectors welcomed our new off-show animal service centre with facilities including food kitchens for animals, walk-in freezers, and vet facilities. The report commended the high standards that they witnessed.

Elephant Eden. Our elephant programme continues to play a vital role both in providing an African bull facility for the international breeding programme and in helping set the benchmark for elephant facilities and care in the UK. In June 2023, we welcomed Sutton, a 9 year old bull elephant from West Midlands Safari Park, providing him with a place to develop as a young adult and future breeding bull. We are playing an important role in providing elephant health and behaviour data to the Elephant Welfare Group, which in turn has informed positive government-level decisions about the future of elephant care in the UK.

Andean bears. Our group of bears continues to thrive, and we've developed an important conservation partnership this year. Read more in the case study spotlight below.

Other animal developments. We've expanded our South American collection with the addition of armadillos, a giant anteater and poison dart frogs. We've also added a third giraffe (from Belfast Zoo), and a Bactrian camel was born here. Our domestic rare breed programme has seen 34 births across the six species we hold which are on the Rare Breed Survival Trust's Watch-list.

Sustainability. We've delivered a broad range of initiatives with a green focus this year. We grew 5,600 pumpkins using 60 tonnes of our own elephant and rhino manure, selling 3,500 to the public as part of our popular autumn Pumpkin Fest event. We've also grown significant volumes of flowers for planting, and vegetables sold in our Farm Shop.

AT A GLANCE

Threatened species: 21

New arrivals: 37

Animal births: 119

EEP's*: 4

(*European Endangered Species Programmes: Siamang gibbons, white-headed vultures, African elephants, Andean bears)



Total animals:
586



SPECIES AND CONSERVATION

CONTINUED

Spotlight on...

ANDEAN BEARS

Following the birth of twin cubs Beni and Tuichi born in 2022, our group of 4 bears is establishing well. Our facility is an integral part of the international breeding programme for this species which is Vulnerable to extinction according to the IUCN. We established a key partnership this year with the Spectacled Bear Conservation Society (SBC) who carry out research and conservation work in Peru and Bolivia. Following a visit from their Director and Field Manager in April 2023, we have funded GPS tracking to be used by SBC in ground-breaking research in Peru exploring the ranges and behaviours of Andean Bears in the wild. This is part of a new wildlife conservation area around Machu Picchu which has been approved by the Peruvian government.



“THE ZOO INSPECTORS WERE EXTREMELY IMPRESSED BY NOAH’S ARK ZOO FARM DUE TO THEIR HIGH ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS, COMPREHENSIVE ANIMAL HUSBANDRY PROGRAMMES, STAFF CULTURE AND COMMITMENT TO PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT... NOAH’S ARK DEMONSTRATES WHAT IT IS TO BE A MODERN ZOO AND WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED WITH A FOCUSED AND CAPABLE MANAGEMENT TEAM.”

Zoo Licence Inspection Report, March 2023

IMPACT ON

EDUCATION

SUMMARY

Since launching a modest education programme a year after the zoo opened back in 1999, our provision has grown significantly in size, skills and capacity. Today, we offer a formal suite of on-site zoo education opportunities including taught workshops, and external outreach activities which impact hundreds of people in Bristol and Somerset.

In 2023 we've expanded our programme by increasing capacity, developing new education spaces and offering education outside of the classroom. We've also developed new community partnerships to extend our reach.



17,751
STUDENTS AND
TEACHERS

AT A GLANCE

This year we've...

Welcomed **17,751** students and teachers

Inspired and educated **13,976** school-aged children on **332** educational trips

Taught **252** workshops, for **6,736** school children

KEY IMPACTS:

Learning Outside the Classroom. Our education programme was inspected in June by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (CLOtC) and re-awarded the Quality Badge, with a very positive review. It is the only national award assessing both the educational provision and quality of risk management across all types of outside the classroom education providers.

Education Engagement Day: In August, our Education Team ran a special event for the public to enhance the visitor experience and deepen understanding of the natural world. The theme for the event was 'African Adventure'. Visitors had the opportunity to learn about African animals and take part in various fun, interactive and educational activities during the day.

Holiday, Activity and Food (HAF) programme. HAF ensures school children from reception to year 11 who receive benefits-related free school meals have a hot dinner, and fun, educational activities each day of the school holidays. This year our Education Team went on regular outreach visits to several holiday clubs over the various school holidays, providing a programme of fun, educational and memorable experiences for children.

Community engagement. This included working with the Bristol Bears Community Foundation, part of the Bristol Sport Group. See the case study spotlight for more info.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

BRISTOL BEARS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

In November, Noah's Ark delivered special educational activities on matchday at the Ashton Gate stadium and provided a workshop to a disadvantaged school with a theme of bear conservation. Rugby fans also participated in a 'Feed the Bear' game which gave insight into the diets of the family of bears.

"THE EDUCATION TEAM AT NOAH'S ARK ZOO FARM INCLUDES EXPERIENCED EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS AND THE QUALITY EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDED REFLECTS THIS."

CLOtC assessor report comment



IMPACT ON

PEOPLE & WELLBEING

SUMMARY

As much as we care for our animals at Noah's Ark, we also highly value people - our visitors, staff and local community. Our commitment to this area reaches all parts of our business and operations, but is seen particularly in our visitor services, our welcome, our education programme and public engagement.

This year we've focused on creating more 'next level' experiences and 'wow' moments, championed playfulness, and being inclusive and accessible for all our customers. We've also managed our beautiful zoo and grounds to support the mental health and wellbeing of our visitors.

AT A GLANCE.

We have...

Supported **4,793** charity and community organisation visits

Welcomed **8,485** registered disabled guests and their carers

Provided **506** free tickets for charity and community fundraising events

Offered **300** free days out for over 70s

Given **6,644** blue-light (NHS & emergency services) discounts



KEY IMPACTS:

Ark for All. This programme has been key to our progress with regards accessibility and inclusion this year. In recent seasons we've added a wide range of facilities and infrastructure, including inclusive play areas and Changing Places toilet provision. Find out what we've done this year in the case study spotlight below.

Visitor wellbeing. Scientific literature increasingly expounds the benefits of environments like ours for mental health and wellbeing. Green spaces and fresh air promote health and relieve stress. We've worked hard to ensure the layout of our zoo enables our visitors to walk, play and relax here. This year we've upgraded our play areas and installed a brand new outdoor, stretch-tent-covered eating area, with 10 new picnic benches made from recycled plastic.

National awards. We were delighted to be recognised with three Gold tourism awards in 2023, including winning Visit England's highly prized Gold Award for Accessible and Inclusive Tourism, judged against all inspected tourism businesses in the UK. This reflects the significant investment and cultural commitment we've made to delivering 'next level' experiences and 'wow' moments for our visitors.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

AN ARK FOR ALL

This year we installed a new Mobility Scooter Shed beside the Ticket Offices, providing a larger number of scooters which can be pre-booked or booked on arrival. We also built an adjacent storage room for schools to store bags and packed lunches. Both additions have improved the visitor experience and efficiencies for our Visitor Services Team. We've also incorporated new, accessible symbols - pictorial sentences - into public information and education resources. We've continued training and equipping our Visitor Services Team this year to be attentive and ready to respond to the diverse needs of visitors - growing our culture of being welcoming and inclusive. Visitor feedback on Trip Advisor and social media suggests our efforts are being positively received.

"I LOVE TO VISIT NOAH'S ARK WITH MY SON WHO HAS AUTISM. IT HAS EASY PARKING AND IS SUCH A LOVELY LARGE OPEN PLACE, WITH MANY QUIETER AREAS TOO, WHERE WE CAN SIT AND ENJOY... THE CHOICE OF SO MANY THINGS MAKE IT MORE MANAGEABLE FOR HIM."

Carole, Noah's Ark member



BUILDING FOR OUR FUTURE

This past year has seen us attract record visitor numbers, and it's been a privilege to see them enjoy the benefits of some of the developments we've highlighted in this report. We've also engaged more purposefully with our local community, strengthening existing relationships and building new ones which we're excited to carry forward.

The intent we've demonstrated this year will be harnessed into the new vision we're building for the zoo. This will be unveiled in 2024 and delivered through strategic activities, initiatives, and projects over the next five years. They'll only be achieved through meaningful, ongoing collaboration with our visitors, members, local businesses and external partners – our people and our relationships are the source of the expertise, energy and creativity which will enable our success.



VisitEngland
Awards for
Excellence
2023

Gold

Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award
Noah's Ark Zoo Farm

Find out more and get involved →



Visit our website at www.noahsarkzoofarm.co.uk

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