

Annual Report 2025
Zoological Society of Ireland



PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

**Presidents of the Zoological Society of Ireland*, 1833 to 1837, and 1994 to date;
and the Royal Zoological Society of Ireland, 1838-1993.**

Sir Philip Crampton	1833*	Prof. A. Francis Dixon	1927-31
The Duke of Leinster	1834*	Sir William Taylor	1932-33
Captain Portlock	1835-36*	Lord Holmpatrick	1934-42
Sir Philip Crampton	1837-38	Dr. R. Lloyd Praeger	1942-43
The Archbishop of Dublin	1839-40	Capt. Alan Gordon	1944-50
Sir Philip Crampton	1841-42	Prof. John McGrath	1951-53
The Archbishop of Dublin	1843-44	Dinnen B. Gilmore	1954-58
Sir Philip Crampton	1845-46	G.F. Mitchell	1959-61
The Duke of Leinster	1847-48	N.H. Lambert	1962-64
Sir Philip Crampton	1849-50	G. Shackleton	1965-67
The Marquis of Kildare	1851-52	Prof. P.N. Meenan	1968-70
Sir Philip Crampton	1853-54	Prof. J. Carroll	1971-73
Lord Talbot of Malahide	1855-56	A.E.J. Went	1974-76
Sir Philip Crampton	1857-58	Victor Craigie	1977-80
Doctor D.J. Corrigan	1859-63	Alex G. Mason	1981-83
Viscount Powerscourt	1864-69	Aidan Brady	1984-86
The Earl of Mayo	1870-71	John D. Cooke	1987-89
Earl Spencer	1872-74	Padraig O Nuallain	1990-91
J.W. Murland	1875-78	Prof. David J. McConnell	1992-93
Sir John Lentaigne C.P.	1879-84	Prof. David J. McConnell	1994-95*
Rev. Dr. Haughton F.R.S.	1885-89	Joe McCullough	1996-98*
Sir Robert Ball F.R.S.	1890-92	Sean Cromien	1998-2001*
Dr. Samuel Gordon	1893-97	Michael O'Grady	2001-04*
Field Marshal Earl Roberts	1898-1902	Barry Murphy	2004*
Prof. D.J. Cunningham F.R.S.	1903	Michael MacNulty	2005-08*
Earl of Dudley	1904-05	Derek McCleane	2008-11*
Rt. Hon. Jonathon Hogg D.L.P.C.	1906-10	Margaret Sinanan	2011-14*
Sir Charles Ball	1911-15	Tom Dunphy	2014-17*
W.E. Peebles	1916	Michael Daly	2017-20*
Sir Frederick Moore	1917-21	Ann Keenan	2020-23*
Sir Robert H. Woods	1922-26	Carmel O'Connor	2024*

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE is given that the annual general meeting of the Zoological Society of Ireland will be held at Haughton House, Dublin Zoo, Dublin 8, on 24 September 2026 at 18:00 for the following purposes:

Ordinary Business:

1. To receive and consider the statutory financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2025 (the “Financial Statements”), the report of the directors on the Financial Statements (the “Directors’ Report”) and the report of the statutory auditors on the Financial Statements and the Directors’ Report.
2. To review the affairs of the Company.
3. To elect Fintan Fagan as director of the Company with effect from 24 September 2026.
4. To re-elect Sharon McCabe, who retires in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Company (the “Articles”) and is eligible for re-election, as a director of the Company.
5. To note that Emma Teeling retires as director of the company as of 18 December 2025.
6. To note that Yvonne Buckley retires as director of the company as of 18 December 2025.
7. To note that Ann Keenan retires as director of the company as of 24 September 2026.
8. To re-appoint Deloitte Ireland LLP as statutory auditors of the Company.
9. To authorise the directors of the Company to approve the remuneration of the statutory auditors.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

Tom Cassin
Secretary

Registered Office

The Zoological Society of Ireland
Dublin Zoo
Phoenix Park
Dublin 8

Dated 9 July 2026

Note: A member entitled to attend and vote is entitled to appoint a proxy using the form set out in section 184 of the Companies Act 2014 (enclosed) to attend, speak and vote on his or her behalf. A proxy need not be a member of the Company. Proxies must be received at the registered office of the Company not less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND – BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Ann Keenan

Ann was appointed to the Board in 2016. Ann has held senior executive level roles for 40 + years in HR and strategic development in IBM and DCC plc during

sustained periods of fast growth in both organisations. She graduated with a B.Sc. in Pure Mathematics & Computer Science from Queens University Belfast. Ann chairs the Board of FoodCloud, which is an Irish based, international social enterprise with a vision for a world where no good food goes to waste. She is a three-time awardee in Women's Executive Network's "Ireland's Most Powerful Women: Top 25" awards. Ann served as President of the Zoological Society of Ireland from 2020 – 2023. Ann is currently Chair of the Governance and People Committee and the Health and Safety and Sustainability Committee. Ann also serves on the Board of Governors of Fota Wildlife Park.



Tom Cassin

Tom was appointed to the Board in 2019. He also serves as Company Secretary. Tom is a chartered accountant and a former senior client partner at Deloitte.

He has over 40 years' experience as an accounting, risk, governance, business and charity sector expert and brings this expertise to his role as Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee. Tom is also a member of the Governance and People Committee. Tom also serves on the Board of Governors of Fota Wildlife Park.



Yvonne Buckley

Yvonne was appointed to the Board in 2023. Yvonne is Professor of Zoology at Trinity College Dublin where she leads an international research centre, the

Co-Centre for Climate + Biodiversity + Water, and the AIB

Trinity Climate Hub. Yvonne's research is on the intersection between climate, biodiversity and people's interactions with nature. Yvonne is a member of the Health and Safety and Sustainability Committee.



Carmel O'Connor

Carmel was appointed to the Board in 2018 and is the current President of the Zoological Society of Ireland. Carmel is a law graduate from UCD and a Chartered

Tax Adviser. She joined PwC in 1983, was a partner in PwC for 25 years including eight years on the Firm's leadership team. Carmel is a member of the Governing Authority of the University of Galway and Chair of its Audit and Risk Committee. Carmel is a member of the Governance and People Committee of ZSI. She also serves on the Board of Governors of Fota Wildlife Park.



Sharon McCabe

Sharon was appointed to the Board in 2023. She is an experienced professional in the retail and healthcare sector, with vast experience in finance, organisational

design and development, operational excellence, ecommerce, digital development and M&A activity. Sharon currently serves at board level for a number of private commercial companies. Previously she was the CEO of McCabe's Pharmacy Group, and served on the boards of Easons PLC, St. Vincent's Healthcare Holding Company, Cancer Trials Ireland, Retail Excellence Ireland, United Drug Wholesale, Dublin Chamber of Commerce and PHX Ireland. Sharon holds a BCL from University College Dublin, a Diploma in Managerial Economics from the London School of Economics and has completed The President's Program of Executive Education at Harvard Business School. Sharon is a member of the Finance and Audit Committee.



Emma Teeling

Emma Teeling was appointed to the Board in 2022. Emma is a member of the Ethics Committee. Emma is a Professor at UCD and is an international leader

in the cross-cutting fields of mammalian phylogenetics and comparative genomics, with particular expertise in bat biology. She established the Laboratory of Molecular Evolution and Mammalian Phylogenetics, is a Founding Director of the genome consortium Bat1K and the Full Professor of Zoology, UCD. Emma's high standing in the international community is highlighted by her nomination to prestigious academic boards and institutes (e.g. Irish Research Council Board, 2015; Member of Royal Irish Academy, 2016) and her having been awarded Chevalier des Palmes Académiques, 2017 by the French Government for her research.



Enda Faughnan

Enda was appointed to the Board in 2024. He is a member of the Finance and Audit Committee. Enda is a certified accountant and a former long serving partner of

PricewaterhouseCoopers Ireland and also led their Taxation practice for 8 years. Enda sits on the board of the Pentland Group, which owns some of the world's best known outdoor and lifestyle brands, and on a number of Irish subsidiaries of EQT AB, a Swedish global investment organisation. Until recently Enda also sat on the board of Savvi Credit Union, one of the largest credit unions in Ireland. He brings to the Board his extensive commercial, financial, governance and accounting knowledge as well as his experience of dealing with Regulatory Authorities in Ireland.



Peter McKenna

Peter was appointed to the Board in 2024 and is a member of the Finance and Audit Committee. Peter McKenna was appointed as the Stadium Director

of Croke Park in 2001. Peter was appointed to his current position of Stadium Director and Commercial Director for the GAA in 2011. He is responsible for the operation and management of Croke Park Stadium and is tasked with steering the GAA's sponsorship, media rights, licencing and general games promotion. In 2013, Peter won the Marketer of the Year Award and is the Stadium Business 2016 recipient of the Outstanding Achievement Award. Peter has a strong passion for sustainability and under his leadership Croke park stadium has become certified to international standards. The stadium achieved the target of full waste diversion from landfill in 2014 and has maintained this record ever since. Peter is a Fellow of the Marketing Institute of Ireland, on the advisory board of the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre and a board member of the National Concert Hall.



Ciaran O'Keeffe

Ciaran was appointed to the Board in 2024. Ciaran is Chair of the Conservation, Education and Science Committee.

Ciaran is a zoologist by training. He was manager of Glenveagh National Park in Co. Donegal from 1985 to 1999, and among other projects started the work of the Golden Eagle reintroduction, which was then taken on by the Golden Eagle Trust. In 1999 he moved to the National Parks and Wildlife Service HQ in Dublin where he was responsible for science and many aspects of the EU Nature Directives.



Sam Whitbread

Sam was appointed to the Board in 2025. Sam currently chairs Dublin Zoo's Ethics Committee and is a member of the Conservation, Education and

Science Committee. Sam has spent over 25 years engaged with the zoo industry, working in various facilities including private animal collections and both corporation and smaller independent zoos. Since 2024, Sam has been the Zoo Manager at Tilgate Zoo, a local-authority owned collection in Crawley, having spent the previous 12 years at Chessington World of Adventures, latterly as that zoo's Collection Manager. As well as co-chairing of the Association of British and Irish Wild Animal Keepers (ABWAK), he is the editor of the organisation's journal Ratel. He is the EEP coordinator for Blesbok (*Damaliscus dorcas phillipsi*) within EAZA's Antelope and Giraffid Taxon Advisory Group and in his roles, he has particular interest in ethics, animal-related legislation and zoo history.



Fintan Fagan

Fintan Fagan was appointed to the Board in 2025. He is a member of the Ethics Committee and the Health and Safety and Sustainability Committee. Fintan has

held senior positions in public and private healthcare and is currently the Chief Executive Officer of St. Francis Hospice Dublin. He is an experienced health services Senior Leader with a proven track record of delivering healthcare service improvement and change in organisations, underpinned by 35 years progression with leading healthcare organisations. He is currently the Chairman of the All-Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care (AIHPC). The AIHPC is a leading charity with national and international influence promoting excellence in palliative care. Fintan holds an MBA degree in Health Services Management from the RCSI and UCD.



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Member,

The Board of the Zoological Society of Ireland (ZSI) is pleased to present the annual report and consolidated audited financial statements of Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park for the year ended 31 December 2025.

I would also like to share some of the significant events and developments in Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park during the year.

2025 was a year of both challenge and progress for Dublin Zoo. Although visitor numbers fell short of expectations due to poor weather, shifting visitor behaviour and wider economic pressures, the organisation continued to deliver on its strategic priorities. In particular, Dublin Zoo strengthened its position as a conservation-led organisation. A key milestone was the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in March, in the presence of Minister of State Christopher O'Sullivan TD. This agreement firmly establishes Dublin Zoo as an important contributor to protecting Ireland's native wildlife and supporting the Government's biodiversity goals.

Dublin Zoo's international standing was evident in a number of developments this year. The Board warmly congratulates Dr Christoph Schwitzer on his election as Chair of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA). The Zoo's admission to membership of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) was a great achievement for the Conservation and Science team, and places us within an influential international conservation network.

A notable strength of the Zoo is the work of the Conservation Education team, which is supported by a highly committed

volunteer cohort, to whom the Board extends its sincere thanks. In 2025, volunteers contributed almost 18,000 hours across a wide range of activities, engaging with visitors, supporting conservation messaging and contributing to events throughout the year. The Conservation Education Department continued to broaden its reach through inclusive and community-focused initiatives, engaging diverse audiences on site and through targeted outreach. Together, these efforts reflect a dynamic and evolving approach, advancing the aims of the Conservation Education Master Plan.

The Board is encouraged by the progress made in developing the Zoo's events offering this year, particularly in the growth of corporate events and the introduction of new formats. It also recognises the innovation shown by the Visitor Operations team in the careful sourcing of more sustainable retail products, including biodegradable and conservation-linked ranges. Visitor Operations also advanced inclusive access through initiatives such as Sensory Night and supported work placements. These efforts strengthen the Zoo's overall visitor experience, enhancing the quality, accessibility and distinctiveness of the on-site visit.

The Zoo continued its ambitious capital investment programme. The Board decided, having obtained planning permission and following a detailed tender process, not to proceed with plans to build a large new restaurant at the African Plains. Significant construction cost inflation as well as changing visitor demographics contributed to this decision. This has given the Zoo scope to undertake further capital works on existing and new animal habitats and initiatives to support its conservation mission. Exciting enhancements will be made to catering and playground facilities in the Zoo to improve the experience and reflect the feedback of our visitors.

2025 saw Fota Wildlife Park advance its conservation mission with real ambition and tangible results. The Park's native species programmes delivered outstanding outcomes, most notably in becoming the first facility in Ireland and only the second in Europe to successfully hatch dunlin under a recognised headstarting programme. The natterjack toad programme surpassed a cumulative total of 13,000 toadlets released since 2012, and the birth of an endangered drill, the first of this species born in Ireland, was a landmark moment for the Park's animal care and breeding programme. The Education, Conservation and Research Centre continued to grow in reach and reputation, welcoming school groups, university partners and researchers, corporate clients and public audiences through a programme of engagement weekends and evening events that have firmly established it as one of the most distinctive venues in the Cork region. Fota Wildlife Park was also honoured to be admitted to membership of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Against this backdrop, 2025 also brought one of the most significant challenges in the Park's history. The detection of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N1) in October triggered a government-mandated ten-week closure. The Fota Wildlife Park team managed this crisis with a deeply impressive professionalism, transparency and genuine care. Sincere gratitude is due to the Government through the office of An Taoiseach and the National Parks and Wildlife Service for the emergency support provided in formal recognition of Fota Wildlife Park's critical national conservation role. The Board of ZSI and the Board of Governors of Fota Wildlife Park wishes to acknowledge the remarkable goodwill shown by the local and national community during a very difficult time. That the Park returned a surplus for the year is a testament to the resilience of the organisation and its people.

As President of the Society, I would like to thank the directors of Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park, Dr Christoph Schwitzer and Ms Aileen Tennant, for their outstanding leadership under which the important developments and achievements in pursuing the conservation mission of the Society, detailed in this report, have been delivered. They, their management teams and all of the employees and volunteers of both Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park have worked exceptionally hard in ensuring our mission is lived out daily in both facilities. Thank you to each and every one.

The Board is deeply grateful to the Irish Government, through the Office of Public Works, for the generous support of the capital investment programmes at Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park in 2025. We appreciate the partnership approach which the OPW adopts in working with our teams in ensuring that the funding is spent prudently on important projects which further our conservation mission and deliver on our strategic plans. Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park also acknowledge the support and collaboration of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) with both organisations, including the critical emergency support provided to Fota consequent on its H5N1 closure. We are very proud to continue to play an important role in the delivery of the National Biodiversity Action Plan, led and co-ordinated by the NPWS.

Once again, we thank our visitors for their loyalty and support to Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park in 2025. Your support, every visit to the Zoo and the Park, enables us to continue our critical work in conserving species for future generations. We never take you for granted, and we work hard to ensure you have a wonderful day out in both facilities, with a focus on improving all dimensions of the visitor experience.

Thank you to my colleagues on the Board of the Zoological Society of Ireland and the Chair and Governors of Fota Wildlife Park for giving so generously of their time and expertise during 2025. At the end of 2025 we marked the retirement of our esteemed colleagues Professor Emma Teeling and Professor Yvonne Buckley from the Board of ZSI and are delighted that Yvonne will continue to contribute her expertise through the Health and Safety and Sustainability Committee. We welcomed Sam Whitbread and Fintan Fagan to the Board during the year, both of whom had served on Committees. Jim Woulfe concluded his term of office as Chair of the Board of Governors of Fota Wildlife Park and Richard Healy was elected Chair. We are delighted that Jim

continues as a member of the Board of Governors. We noted too the retirement of Susie Horgan from the Board in 2025, having made a significant contribution to the Park during her term. We are privileged that our retired Board members remain firm friends and supporters of Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park, itself is a mark of the esteem and affection in which both organisations are held in the wider community in Ireland and beyond.

Carmel O'Connor
President
Zoological Society of Ireland



(Bottom) Asian lion, Kushanu

DUBLIN ZOO DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Zoo welcomed 895,976 visitors in 2025, representing a 4% decrease on 2024. The year started slowly but the launch of our animatronic dinosaur exhibition, Zoorassic Trail, which was included in the Zoo admission ticket, and favourable weather attracted more than 200,000 visitors in March and April. However, visitation became increasingly uneven from late spring and remained below expectations for the remainder of the year. The underperformance was influenced by a combination of factors, including unsettled weather, increased competition from alternative leisure options, changing visitor behaviour, ongoing cost-of-living pressures and a shift towards more frequent overseas travel; similar trends were observed across a number of zoos in Britain and Europe. Wild Lights, our winter seasonal event, achieved a visitation of 150,898 in this financial year. We attribute the drop in ticket sales against the previous year to increased competition from other winter light festivals and premium Christmas experiences around the greater Dublin region. Total visitation to Dublin Zoo was 1,046,874 in the reporting period.



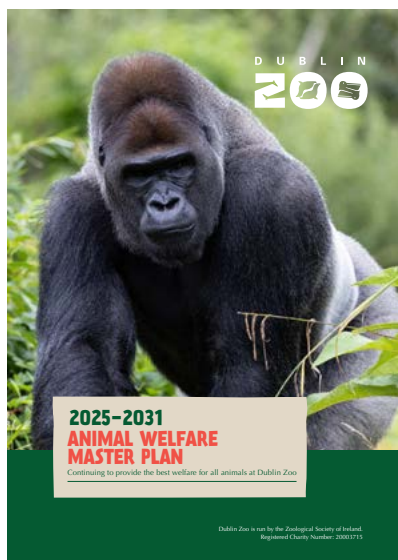
(Bottom left) Zoorassic Trail entrance gate

This year, there was significant progress in the delivery of Dublin Zoo's conservation mission and the advancement of the 'Dublin Zoo 200' strategic vision. A key milestone was achieved in March with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) on the Centre for Species Survival: Ireland (CSS: Ireland). This formalised the link between Dublin Zoo's native species conservation work and Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan, and is believed to be the first such alignment between a national zoo and government policy in the European Union. The signing was attended by the Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Biodiversity Christopher O'Sullivan TD and the NPWS senior leadership team. This was followed in June by the first joint workshop to establish a shared workplan, marking the transition from strategy to delivery. Together, these developments constituted a major achievement under the Zoo's Conservation Master Plan and reinforced Dublin Zoo's leadership in conservation at a national level.



(Bottom right) Dr Christoph Schwitzer, Ciara Carberry (NPWS), Niall Ó Donnchú (NPWS), and Minister Christopher O'Sullivan TD following the signing of the landmark Memorandum of Understanding

2025 also saw Dublin Zoo further strengthen its international profile and partnerships. The CEO's election as Chair of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) for the 2025–2028 term reflects strong peer recognition for Dublin Zoo across the sector. In addition, Dublin Zoo was admitted as a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), securing voting rights at the World Conservation Congress and enhancing opportunities to collaborate with a global network of conservation experts and organisations. Together, these milestones continue to build Dublin Zoo as a credible and active contributor to global conservation efforts.



independent, voluntary assessment, the certification provides external validation of the Zoo's approach to animal welfare and its commitment to continuous improvement. Towards the end of the year, as part of the 'Dublin Zoo 200' strategic

Earlier in the year, Dublin Zoo was awarded the prestigious Global Humane Certified™ designation, placing it among an elite group of zoos worldwide and recognising the exceptional standards of animal care and welfare delivered by staff. Awarded following an

vision, the Zoo completed its Animal Welfare Master Plan, setting out clear goals and actions through to its bicentennial in 2031. Developed with input from teams across the organisation and informed by external expertise from the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), EAZA and the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA), the plan embeds a transparent, structured and internationally recognised approach to animal welfare.



In July, the Board approved the appointment of contractors for the refurbishment of the South American House and the restoration of the cottage orné. Both projects are now underway, with completion scheduled for spring 2026. We are grateful to the Irish Government for part-funding these projects through a capital grant from the Office of Public Works (OPW), and to Dublin City Council for additional grant funding for the cottage orné from the Built Heritage Investment Scheme.



CONSERVATION EDUCATION IMPACT AT A GLANCE

622,705
TOTAL
LEARNERS
2015 – 2025

63,134
LEARNERS ENGAGED IN
2025

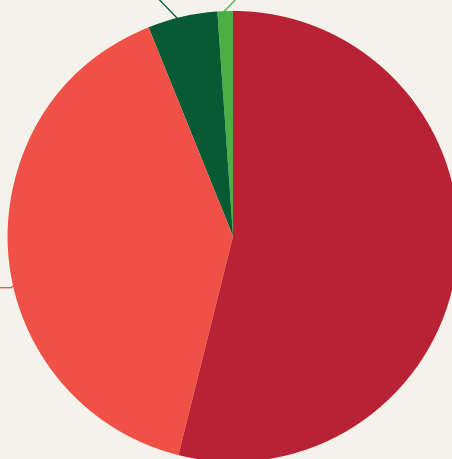
2025 LEARNERS

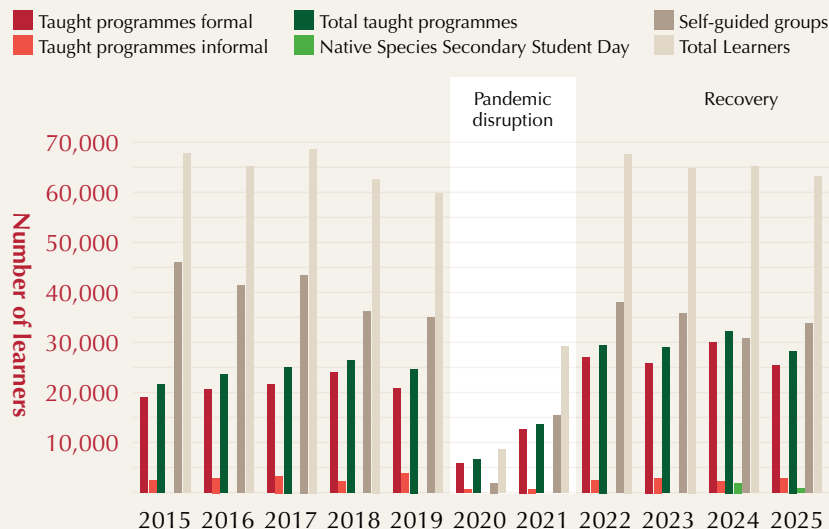
5% Informal taught
programmes

1% Native Species
Student Day

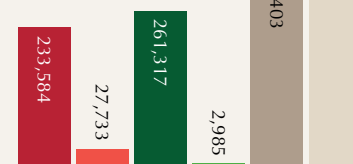
40% Formal taught
programmes

54% Self-guided
groups

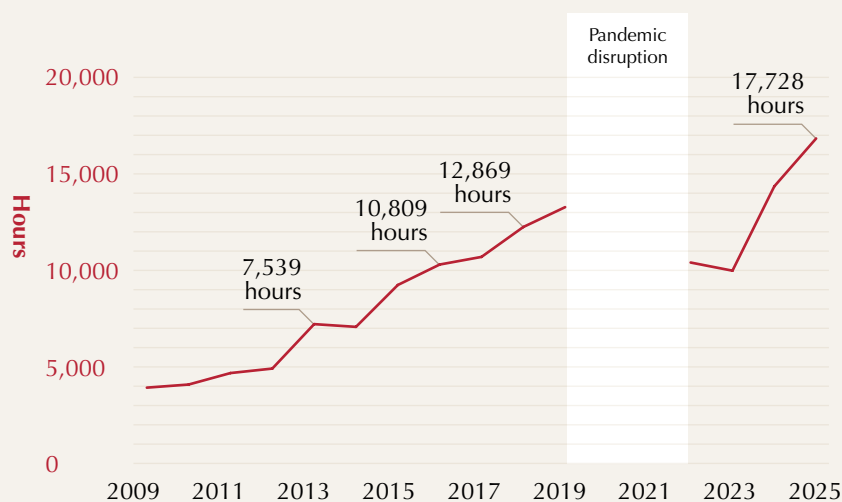




Total number of learners 2015-2025



RECORD VOLUNTEER SUPPORT IN 2025



Volunteer contribution continued to grow in 2025, reaching a record 17,728 hours. This represents a 17.4% increase on 2024 and more than four times the number of hours recorded in 2009, demonstrating the sustained commitment and impact of our volunteer community.

Pandemic disruption

No volunteering occurred here

FIELD CONSERVATION IMPACT AT A GLANCE

€2.18
MILLION

CONSERVATION
INVESTMENT
2000 - 2025

81 PROJECTS
SUPPORTED

25 COUNTRIES
REACHED

80+ SPECIES
SUPPORTED

CONSERVATION SUPPORTED

2000 First conservation grants

2013 Funding exceeds €100k

2019 Funding exceeds €150k

2023 Funding exceeds €200k

2024 Funding exceeds €250k

2025 Record €376k

SUPPORTING CONSERVATION ACTION ACROSS FIVE CONTINENTS



Angola 1	Kenya 14
Australia 2	Madagascar 15
Brazil 3	Myanmar 16
Chad 4	Namibia 17
Chile 5	Nepal 18
China 6	Sierra Leone 19
Côte d'Ivoire 7	South Africa 20
Democratic Republic of Congo 8	Spain 21
Georgia 9	Thailand 22
Ghana 10	Tunisia 23
India 11	Vietnam 24
Indonesia 12	Zimbabwe 25
Ireland 13	

SPECIES CONSERVED



53 Mammals



19 Birds



2 Reptiles



1 Amphibian



2 Invertebrates



4 Marine species

SOME OF THE SPECIES SUPPORTED BY DUBLIN ZOO 2000 - 2025

Asian elephant €149,000

Southern white rhino €108,000

Western lowland gorilla €54,000

Amur tiger €37,000

Red panda €25,000

Eastern bongo €72,000

Cheetah €6,000

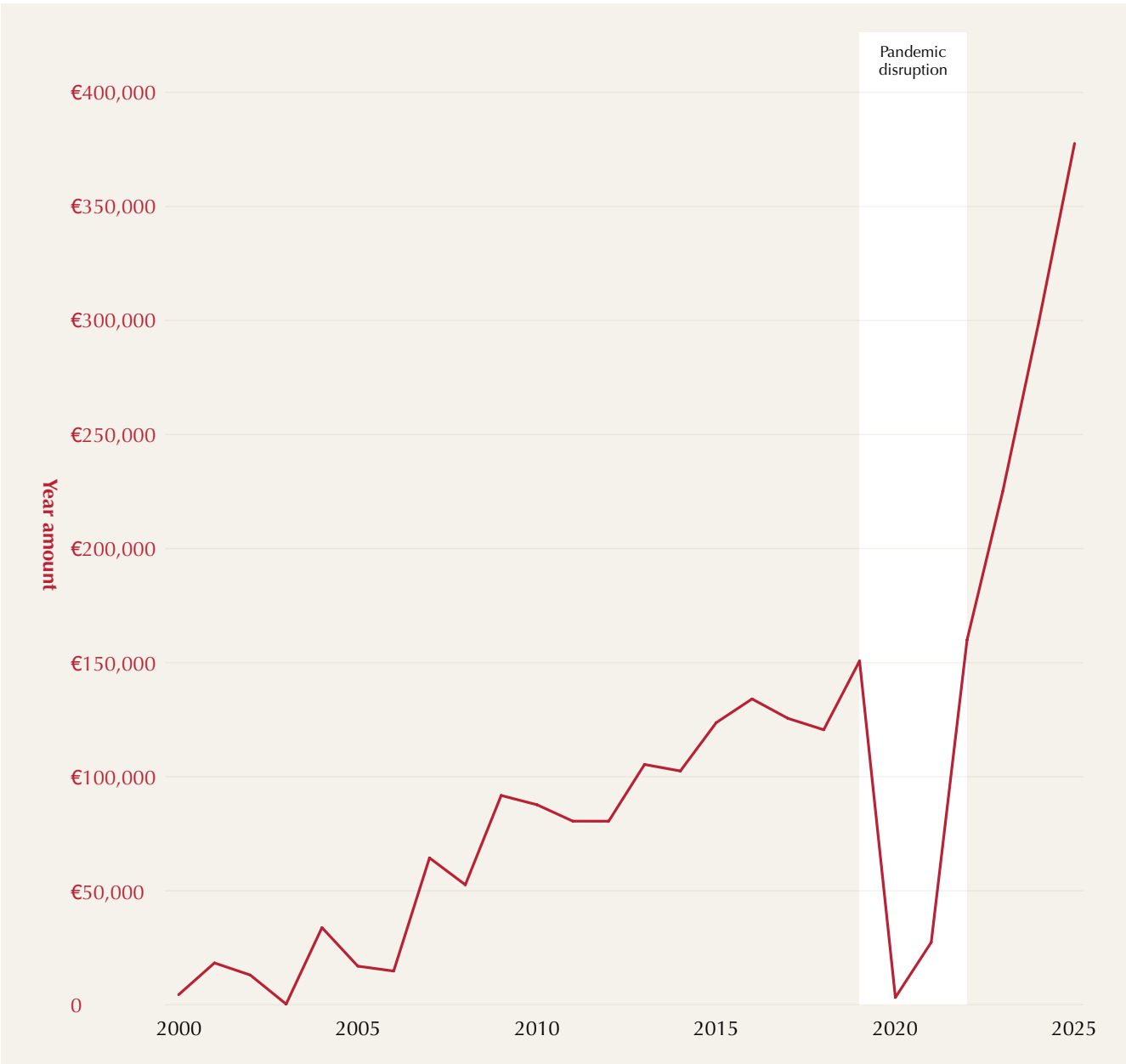
Bornean orangutan €94,000

Okapi €60,000

Snow leopard €65,000



CONSERVATION EXPENDITURE SINCE 2000



ANIMAL COLLECTION

2025 was a year of continued development across the animal collection, with progress in animal welfare, breeding programmes and husbandry across a wide range of species. Dublin Zoo's Behaviour and Welfare Scientist, Lucy Stratford (formerly Lucy Rutherford), completed a draft of the new Animal Welfare Master Plan, providing a framework for future animal welfare procedures. It was approved by the Zoological Society of Ireland Board in September and will be launched officially in spring 2026. She also reviewed and updated the focal welfare and species-level assessments, and ensured the new master plan and current welfare science were reflected in the Zoo's Animal Welfare Policy. Multiple focal welfare assessments and species welfare audits were carried out. Enrichment plans for the Far Side habitats and the Kaziranga Forest Trail were revised. Male elephant (*Elephas maximus*) Aung Bo, female Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*) Luda and female hippo (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) Imani were fitted with monitoring bracelets around their front legs. These bracelets contain what is effectively an accelerometer, similar to a 'Fitbit', allowing their movements and behaviours to be tracked continuously. This forms part of a pilot project in collaboration with L'Océanogràfic, Valencia. The data collected will assist the team in assessing the animals' activity levels, informing husbandry decisions, providing additional evidence and supporting the ongoing assessment of welfare in these species and, potentially, others. This technology has not previously been used on elephants, and Dublin Zoo will be a pioneer in this project.

Early in the year, biosecurity measures for all bird species were strengthened in response to seasonal avian influenza controls, including the installation of protective netting over the penguin habitat to prevent contact with wild birds. Although housing and movement restrictions were lifted in May, bird habitats continued to be managed as separate epidemiological units under strict biosecurity protocols.

In November, all bird habitats were again placed under a nationwide housing order to address avian influenza. All birds received their annual vaccination against avian influenza.



In April, we said farewell to Leonie, our much-loved female Northwest Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus pygmaeus*). She had arrived with male Sibu from Rotterdam Zoo in 1984 and had given birth in Dublin to a female,

Riona, in 1996 and a male, Karl, in 1997. In the final months of her life, her health declined due to age-related heart and respiratory conditions and, despite extensive care and specialist advice, her condition did not improve. Following



(Middle right) Bornean orangutan, Leonie

(Bottom right) New female Bornean orangutan arrival, Miri, at the Orangutan Forest habitat

an in-depth health assessment, supported by veterinarians from Copenhagen Zoo, the decision was taken to euthanise her on welfare grounds. A few months later, female Bornean orangutan Miri arrived from Duisburg Zoo and male Hutan from La Palmyre Zoo, establishing a new breeding group with the resident female Mujur under the European breeding programme. We would like to thank our colleagues in Duisburg and La Palmyre for letting us have these two magnificent animals. Miri settled well and developed a stable relationship with Mujur, supported by habitat improvements that expanded outdoor access and flexibility for the group. Hutan required a longer adjustment period and remains under close monitoring, with a welfare plan in place to support his gradual integration.



During the year, Ireland's disease-free status for bluetongue virus (BTV) affected ungulate transfers to Dublin Zoo, with implications for breeding and population planning. These restrictions impeded the transfer to Dublin of a male bongo (*Tragelaphus eurycerus isaaci*), a male okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*) and a male scimitar-horned oryx (*Oryx dammah*) from continental Europe, requiring ongoing discussions with EEP coordinators and the exploration of alternative



arrangements. In February, eastern bongo Annabelle gave birth to a female calf, having arrived from Belfast Zoo the previous August. While the calf, Nia, initially required supplementary feeding, she began suckling naturally after five days and has since remained strong and healthy.

Ongoing work is focused on identifying a suitable male for the group, subject to the current import restrictions affecting ungulates. Okapi Lumara gave birth to a healthy female calf in April. Discussions took place with the EEP regarding the potential transfer of okapi breeding male Kitabu to a British zoo and the introduction of a new male to Dublin from continental Europe. However, progress was affected by wider restrictions on the movement of ungulates. A male scimitar-horned oryx was scheduled for transfer from Poland to Dublin but encountered several obstacles along the way, including a strike of the ferry operator and the subsequent expiry of its health certificate, and ultimately was transferred to Amsterdam Zoo, where it turned out that the animal was actually female. We are grateful to our colleagues at Amsterdam Zoo for their prompt and pragmatic help. Instead, we are planning a transfer of a male scimitar-horned oryx from Fota Wildlife Park in 2026. In April, a relatively young female scimitar-horned oryx was euthanised due to a non-treatable respiratory condition. The cause remains under investigation.



In September, female hippo Imani, who had arrived in Dublin in October 2024, underwent planned cataract surgery following extensive preparatory training and veterinary planning. New scales were installed to allow her exact weight to be measured and the

appropriate anaesthetic doses prepared. The team also trained her to receive eye drops voluntarily. The surgery was successful in her left eye, while the right eye could not be saved; nevertheless, her vision improved following the procedure. After recovery, Imani was introduced to Heidi. While initial behaviour was positive, the introduction was paused, and plans are in place to reintroduce the two animals.

After a challenging year in 2024, the Asian elephant herd remained in good health overall in 2025, with herd behaviour generally positive. Early in the year, bull Aung Bo was reintroduced to the females as part of ongoing breeding management. Breeding activity, including full matings, was observed and recorded; however, tests on faecal samples carried out by Chester Zoo later confirmed that female Samiya was not pregnant. An enrichment schedule was introduced in response to stereotypical behaviour observed in Aung Bo prior to keeper arrival. Work also progressed on husbandry and facilities, including veterinary training, building improvements, and exploratory discussions on the sustainable use of elephant waste.



Dublin Zoo's science team studied stereotypic behaviour in female aye-aye (*Daubentonia madagascariensis*) Tahiri during periods of increased visitor noise.

Tahiri was transferred into

a quieter off-show habitat, where her behaviour and health were closely monitored. Changes to the aye-aye house, including adjustments to visitor access and increased browse provision, improved conditions for the group. Dublin Zoo also partnered with other zoos internationally to collect data and develop a further understanding of the species' husbandry requirements.

During the year, we moved Northeast African cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus soemmeringii*) in line with European breeding programme recommendations. Dublin Zoo's female cheetah Callie was transferred to Fota Wildlife Park, while a female, Cora, was transferred from Fota to Dublin. Another female arriving from Fota, Sonia, was pregnant on arrival and gave birth off-show. The cubs did not survive but this is not uncommon in first-time (primiparous) mothers in many species, both in the wild and in human care. Sonia has since settled well and continues to be monitored, with future

(Top left) Common hippopotamus, Imani, wearing the monitoring bracelet which tracks her movements and behaviours

(Top right) Asian elephant herd

(Middle right) Aye-aye

breeding plans under discussion. Cora was transferred to La Palmyre Zoo in France in October.



During the year, the Asian lions (*Panthera leo persica*) were relocated to allow management across two adjacent habitats, with male

Kushanu and female Kamala moved to the former Amur tiger habitat near the visitors' entrance to the Zoo and adjacent to the mother-and-daughter pair Suri and Sita. During the move, Kamala underwent a reproductive assessment, which indicated that she was unlikely to breed. A recommendation for a new female was sought and has been confirmed for 2026. Following the euthanasia of Tundra, the female Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*), in December 2024, plans were put in place to introduce a new female for male Max. Max was returned to the original Amur tiger habitat near Sea Lion Cove and settled following an initial adjustment period. In September, female Luda arrived from Copenhagen Zoo and was briefly introduced to Max in November, but the pair were quickly separated due to aggression from Max. Efforts towards a successful introduction are ongoing.



Early in the year, the elderly red river hog (*Potamochoerus porcus*) Ruardhi died at almost 14 years of age. Discussions with the European breeding programme led to the arrival of two red river hogs from Marwell Zoo to join the existing male, Rian, who continues to be monitored for age-related issues. The new hogs, Gamba and Matonda, were successfully introduced and have settled well.



Sadly, our four remaining elderly grey wolves (*Canis lupus lupus*) were euthanized on separate occasions during the year due to untreatable age-related health issues. They were all of the same age. At the end of the year, four male dholes (*Cuon alpinus*) were moved into the former wolf habitat. The dholes are a very active species and are seemingly enjoying the habitat. We also said farewell to the last of our meerkat group (*Suricata suricatta*), which had lived in a habitat by the restaurant. The three remaining meerkats, all elderly, had age-related health issues and died or were humanely euthanised during the year. The now-empty habitat is undergoing refurbishment in preparation for the introduction of a new group of meerkats in 2026.



In Zoorassic World, the phantasmal dart frogs (*Epipedobates tricolor*) continued to breed, producing approximately 10–15 tadpoles per month from the on-show group, supported by off-show stock. Their vocalisations have added to the atmosphere of

the habitat. The collection was also expanded with the acquisition of a Madagascar giant day gecko (*Phelsuma grandis*) and two turquoise dwarf geckos (*Lygodactylus williamsi*) from Augsburg Zoo. The West African crocodiles (*Crocodylus suchus*) required closer management due to increased aggression between the pair; keepers used the off-show area to manage the animals safely, and alternative long-term options, including a change to a smaller crocodilian species, are under consideration.

Other new arrivals included one male North African ostrich (*Struthio camelus camelus*) from Zoobotanico, Jerez, Spain and two female common ostriches (*S. camelus*) from Reserve Africaine de Sigean, France. Also from Zoobotanico, we received four night herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) and six Eurasian spoonbills (*Platalea leucorodia*), as well as six white-faced whistling ducks (*Dendrocygna viduata*) and three Eurasian spoonbills from Zoo Zurich, Switzerland. We are much obliged to the colleagues of the sending zoos and, where applicable, the EEP Coordinators for the respective species.

Other births included a male white-naped mangabey (*Cercocebus lunulatus*), and waldrapp ibises (*Geronticus eremita*). Humboldt penguins (*Spheniscus humboldti*) also bred during the year, with five chicks hatching; although

one chick was lost due to a paramyxovirus infection, the remaining birds are doing well. Changes were made to the penguin habitat, including the installation of roof mesh, to support future breeding and biosecurity. Chilean flamingos (*Phoenicopterus chilensis*) laid eggs for the first time in at least five years, representing an important behavioural milestone for the flock. Although the eggs were lost following disturbance within the group, this activity is considered a positive step towards future breeding success.



In April, we received a 19-year-old female Venezuelan red howler monkey (*Alouatta seniculus*) from Yorkshire Wildlife Park; unfortunately, the animal died of chronic kidney disease in October, which was a sad loss for us. During the summer, two Galway sheep and one Tamworth pig came in from Irish farms. Animals transferred out during the year included Nose,



the remaining Goeldi's monkey, to Emerald Park; three Galway sheep to an Irish farm; and one Kerry cow calf to Farmleigh House and Estate.

(Top left) Madagascar giant day gecko
(Middle right) Chilean flamingoes
(Bottom right) Galway sheep

LICENCES

In February, Dublin Zoo was officially recognised as a Global Humane Certified™ Zoo, a certification awarded by the Global Humane Society for high standards in humane animal care and welfare. While Dublin Zoo is already accredited by EAZA and is a member of BIAZA and WAZA, this additional certification supports the achievement of Objective Three of the 'Dublin Zoo 200' strategic vision, to become a leader in our sector and strengthen the Zoo's impact. The certification followed a comprehensive inspection in October 2024, when three inspectors from Global Humane spent four days on site observing animals, reviewing facilities and interviewing staff. Their findings highlighted many positive aspects of the Zoo's operations, including good animal condition and outdoor habitats that provided high levels of choice and control.

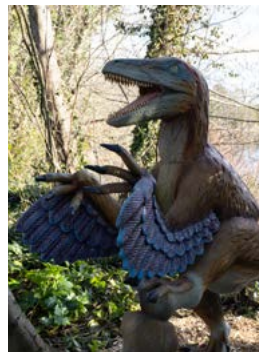
The annual zoo licence inspection took place on 26–27 May and resulted in a very positive outcome. During the post-inspection debrief, inspectors commended Dublin Zoo for its continued progress in animal welfare and husbandry and gave no conditions to the license. The Conservation Education Department also formed part of the inspection, with feedback highlighting the strength of the volunteer programme and the new community outreach role.

A special NPWS zoo inspection was carried out in March, following six animal welfare allegations submitted to the Board under protected disclosure in 2024 and proactively referred by the Zoo for investigation. The report concluded that all allegations were unfounded. The inspection report was published on the Dublin Zoo website as usual.

HORTICULTURE

Throughout 2025, the Horticulture Team focused on seasonal activities essential to the upkeep and presentation of Dublin Zoo. Early in the year, work concentrated on hedge-cutting ahead of the end-of-February seasonal restrictions. In spring, the Horticulture Team provided significant support to the Commercial Operations Team during preparations for the Zoorassic Trail animatronic dinosaur exhibition, which opened in March. Considerable time was also devoted to works behind the penguin habitat.

As the year progressed, the team continued routine horticultural maintenance, including extensive weeding and de-heading to prevent unwanted plant proliferation. A comprehensive external tree survey was also undertaken mid-year to support long-term site management and safety planning. Over the summer months, the team was temporarily expanded with the addition of three horticulture assistants. During this period, the team worked closely with the Animal Care Team, addressing significant vegetation overgrowth on the island habitats for orangutans, gorillas and chimpanzees, as well as in both lion habitats, contributing to improved habitat management and presentation. In the final quarter, seasonal works resumed, including mulching, hedge-cutting and plant protection measures to prepare landscaped areas for winter.



(Bottom right) The animatronic dinosaurs as part of Zoorassic Trail blended naturally into the Zoo landscape, thanks to the Horticulture Team

VISITOR OPERATIONS

The Visitor Operations Team made some changes in April to the entrance and exit layout to improve visitor flow and reduce queuing during the busy season. The old ticket office was reopened, allowing separate entrances for paying visitors, pre-booked ticket holders and annual pass holders or groups. In July and August, a trial was carried out directing visitors to exit through the main gift shop, with a bypass option and adjustments made to the internal queuing layout to manage crowd flow. Feedback was mostly positive and visitors adapted well to the new arrangements. In the African Plains, a review of 2024 trading patterns led to reduced opening hours of the gift shop, with the shop operating from 10.30–3.00 on weekdays and 10.00–5.00 at weekends during the summer, and weekends only outside the high season. Sales there are largely driven by drinks, ice cream and confectionery.



Three members of the Visitor Operations management team attended the Spring Fair in the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham. This is an important British trade event for the gift sector, featuring around 700 exhibitors and many international brands. The team sourced new retail products for the gift shop, including Eugy, a New Zealand product marketed in Ireland by Brainstorm. Eugy products are small

3D cardboard model kits, best known for animal designs. Made from environmentally friendly materials, including biodegradable card and natural inks, the range has proven popular.



A range of conservation-themed jewellery by Cool Jewels for older children and adults was another new line added to our stock. Sales from this range support environmental charities, including Tree Mission, 1% for the Planet and Clear Seas Project. Sona Sensory 3D toys were also introduced; these are designed to support sensory

development and are made from polylactic acid (PLA), a plant-based biodegradable material derived from sources such as cornstarch and sugarcane. New eco-friendly and sustainable products from existing suppliers including Wild Republic and Keel were introduced, while the Nature Planet range continued to be stocked, with a portion of profits supporting conservation charities, such as the Red Panda Network and Plan International. A new range of Dublin Zoo montage-branded lanyards, notebooks, magnets, tote bags and other items was developed. In preparation for the Zoorassic Trail, which opened in March, a variety of

*(Middle left) New exit via the Gift Shop
(Top right) New range of conservation-themed jewellery
(Middle right) Sona Sensory 3D toys*

dinosaur-themed merchandise was sourced, including event-branded T-shirts, hoodies, mugs, magnets, badges and sweet tins, alongside a wider selection of related products such as plush toys, keyrings, stationery, torches and projectors, watches and vehicles. The Dublin Zoo Marketing Team produced two dinosaur activity books, which were sold in the gift shop. Gift card sales were promoted during the Christmas period through a display table in the main gift shop and QR code signage linked directly to the online shop.



We stocked up at the end of the year in preparation for the annual Wild Lights event. Reflecting the theme *The Wild Kaleidoscope*, merchandise included colourful plush toys, seasonal items, kaleidoscopes, sensory books and Sensory Snuggables for Sensory Night. A double cabin on the Great Lawn sold Wild Lights merchandise and the popular light-up wands, which were also available from the entrance kiosk. The annual Sensory Night took place on 1 December, with reduced sound levels, limited capacity and additional staff support to assist visiting families.

The plastic bottle and aluminium can reverse vending machine (RVM) continued to function well and 1,087 visitors used the donation button incorporated into the machine to donate their refunds. Six orange bottle-shaped bins were placed around the Zoo to capture bottles and cans from visitors who did not use the RVM machine. These were emptied regularly, and all recyclables were processed as donations, helping to increase the total for the year. The total value of RVM donations for 2025 was €2,047.25.

After the success of last year's programme, a further work experience placement was offered to four students from Down Syndrome Ireland. This year's four-week training programme helped the students to develop skills and gain experience in a retail environment. Two Visitor Operations staff members worked alongside the students as mentors. Jack, Holly, Naoise and Lia, who was a return student from last year's programme, carried out a range of tasks in the gift shop, including pricing products and checking in deliveries under the supervision of their mentors. Their graduation took place in June at a ceremony attended by the students, their families and staff members. The programme was a great success and represented a significant achievement for everyone involved. We are grateful to Down Syndrome Ireland for this partnership.

CATERING

BaxterStorey continued to oversee catering operations across Dublin Zoo, with several new outlets introduced during the year, some of which will operate on reduced hours during the low season. At Sea Lion Cove, Jump Juice



and SOS Cookies opened in July and were a great success. Oakberry, a Brazil-based health food chain specialising in organic açai bowls and smoothies, opened in mid-August near the Great Lawn and showed great promise during the warmer days. In October, Irish company Mad Egg, which specialises in fried chicken, replaced Chicken Hut in Sea Lion Cove; initial figures show a very strong

response to the brand. Irish dessert and ice-cream concession Scrumdiddly's also launched in late 2025; unsurprisingly, it had a slow start through the colder months but we anticipate a strong response as the days brighten in 2026. Meanwhile, in April, the Wuuf catering trailer and associated storage container were relocated to the Kaziranga bypass above the Ibis Cliff area.

For Wild Lights, in addition to the permanent catering outlets, we provided several catering facilities including a Baileys Truck serving Baileys hot chocolate and mulled wine, a Spice



Bag Express Truck, a Keogh's Potato Swirls at the Great Lawn, and a double cabin unit at Sea Lion Cove, which offered a wide range of items

including crêpes, nachos, popcorn, hot and cold beverages, donuts and cookies, with a reduced version also available at the front entrance in a smaller single cabin. The Spice Bag Express and Keogh's Potato Swirls proved to be particularly popular.

The figures around the new brands have been encouraging. Average transaction value, average spend and overall spend increased significantly against previous unbranded offerings. This has elevated the visitor experience as well as proving commercially successful, and BaxterStorey together with the Zoo Team looks forward to building on this in 2026.



(Middle right) Scrumdiddly's, located beside the Brazilian tapir habitat
(Bottom right) SOS Cookies, Jump Juice and Mad Egg at Sea Lion Cove

FACILITIES

The Facilities Department completed a wide-ranging programme of infrastructure, safety and asset-management works across the site, including extensive road resurfacing at the African Savanna, storm-damage repairs following Storm Éowyn, the installation of new stand-off fencing and improved wayfinding and safety signage. Solar panels were installed as part of the Zoo's sustainability objectives. Mechanical and electrical works completed during the year included boiler replacements in the administration, veterinary, horticulture and stores buildings, servicing of hydraulic animal gates, and upgrades to electrical and data infrastructure at Sea Lion Cove.

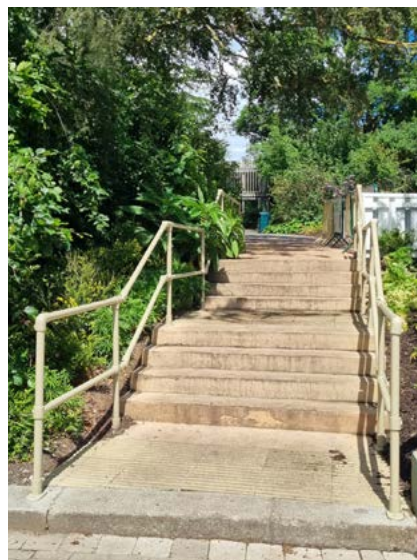
Projects partially funded by a capital grant from the Government of Ireland through the Office of Public Works this year included the extensive refurbishment of the South American House, incorporating a new roof, floors, heating system and upgrades to the four animal habitats. Major conservation work to restore the historic cottage orné was also supported, with additional grant funding from Dublin City Council. Both projects are on schedule for completion in spring 2026. The capital grant from the OPW also enabled infrastructural works at the African Plains and the penguin habitat. Planning for significant upgrades to a number of ageing playgrounds commenced during the year, with completion scheduled for later in 2026.

Operational works for animal care, staff safety and the visitor experience included gate and safety upgrades in the rhino and hippo houses, installation of weighing scales in large animal housing, reinstating steps to the Meerkat Restaurant at the annual passholders' entrance, and repairs to water features, pathways and fencing along Kaziranga Trail, as well as installing plastic curtains in the elephant cow house for winter temperature control. Improvements to the animal quarantine area included a second entrance

door, new internal furniture and outdoor climbing structures. The orangutan habitat was expanded to include the southernmost island, which was previously unoccupied; this gives the gibbons access to a dedicated island. The changes were completed prior to the arrival of new female and male orangutans. Upgrade works in the tiger habitat were completed, and additional netting was installed in the penguin habitat to prevent contact with other bird species as part of avian flu controls. Preparatory work commenced on facilities for the curlew head-starting project as part of the Breeding Waders EIP.

All fridges and freezers across the site were serviced, pumps at Sea Lion Cove were removed and serviced, and CCTV systems were reconfigured to provide keepers with 48-hour playback access. A new handheld two-way radio system was purchased and commissioned, and 150 coloured crowd-control barriers were installed. Visitor and operational improvements also included the fit-out of a new office for

the Visitor Operations Team, changes to the front gate layout with updated barriers, camera positions and signage, and the relocation and reconfiguration of CCTV between animal houses.



(Bottom right) Steps to the Meerkat Restaurant were reinstated at the Annual Passholders' entrance

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

A new position, Health, Safety and Environment Manager, was created this year. The role works across the organisation to manage risk, reduce incidents and deliver the Zoo's Sustainability Master Plan, embedding responsible environmental practices across daily operations. We welcome Jose Yopez to the position.

In 2025, the Dublin Zoo Safety Statement was comprehensively reviewed following an internal health and safety audit, with the scope expanded to include incident response procedures, health and safety resources and the development of a more streamlined document. The audit included interviews, document reviews and targeted inspections, alongside planned and responsive working area reviews that identified both good practice and areas for improvement. A revised draft Safety Statement was completed during the year and is scheduled for final sign-off in 2026.

Health and safety training took place throughout the year, with staff trained across areas including manual handling, equipment use, first aid, mental health training and environmental safety. Health and Safety induction and manual handling training were provided to all new Wild Lights Visitor Operations assistants, with the updated programme rolled out to new staff. Emergency Procedures and Driving Policy toolbox talks were given to the Facilities and the Animals and Grounds teams towards the end of the year.

The installation of the solar PV panels was completed by OHK Energy and corresponding software provided to track and manage the energy produced. Full commissioning of the solar panels is on schedule for 2026.

The Dublin Zoo Zero Waste Team was established during the year to deliver actions arising from the Sustainability Master

Plan. It focussed on improving waste separation by visitors through clear, sustainable messaging, including animal-themed approaches designed to appeal to children and to highlight positive impacts on wildlife. Dedicated, high-profile branded bins were installed across the Zoo to improve the separation of beverage containers from the general waste stream and support their return through our reverse vending machine. The Zero Waste Team also worked in collaboration with BaxterStorey to ensure a consistent and effective approach to waste reduction across the organisation.



(Bottom right) Dedicated, high-profile branded bins were installed across the Zoo to improve the separation of beverage containers from the general waste stream.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Dublin Zoo CARE values (We Care, We Are a Team, We Are Respectful and We Are Excellent) were launched across the organisation in the first quarter of 2025. All staff completed half-day, in-house training sessions on how the values apply to their roles. Relevant policies and supporting materials were updated. In March, the inaugural CARE Awards took place and our in-house CARE champions were announced.

Recruitment activity during 2025 covered both operational and specialist staffing needs, with seasonal recruitment supporting peak periods in Visitor Operations. Among the significant appointments this year were Jose Yepez, Dublin Zoo's first dedicated Health, Safety and Environment Manager, and Martha Whelan as Learning Manager and Head of Conservation Education in an acting capacity while Niamh Potter is on a period of leave. In December, Dr Andrew Mooney was promoted to the position of Conservation and Science Manager, reflecting the growth of the department and its significant contributions to the work of the Zoo.

Learning and development during 2025 was supported through the Staff Development Fund, which provided grants

to 14 employees totalling €17,910. These grants supported attendance at training courses, conferences and conservation projects linked to Dublin Zoo partnerships, as well as, in one case, the completion of a postgraduate degree in animal behaviour. Lost and missing child procedures were reviewed and updated, and training was delivered across the organisation; the new procedure was implemented in March. At Senior Management Team level, changes to work practices and reporting improved coordination of meetings and visibility of departmental activity.

Digital transformation within Human Resources (HR) continued this year with the full implementation of SAGE People, which is available on a mobile app. All Zoo team members are now using the system for time and attendance, training coordination and other HR processes. The use of SAGE People improved attendance at training sessions, reduced the need for rescheduling, and provided more consistent workforce data across the organisation.

During the summer, the 2025 employee engagement survey, designed to reflect the previous 12 months, was carried out. It was completed through SAGE People and achieved a 90%



CARE



A TEAM



RESPECTFUL



EXCELLENT

participation rate, with an overall satisfaction score of 80%. Arising from the survey, a detailed action plan was developed to address the broader organisational challenges raised by staff. The plan focused on three key areas: improving communication, developing management capability, and embedding greater consistency in how our CARE values are lived day to day. Throughout 2025, we delivered manager training on providing meaningful feedback, and launched a new performance management programme, introducing end-of-year reviews and development-focused personal development plans. Employee Voice, Dublin Zoo's employee representation group, was relaunched, giving staff a renewed platform to contribute ideas and help shape improved working conditions at the Zoo.

A new three-year pay agreement covering the period 2025–2027 was agreed with staff representatives. The agreement provides staged pay increases and includes additional benefits, such as a flexible allowance for pension, healthcare or gym membership, enhanced leave for employees undergoing IVF treatment, and changes to the existing success-sharing scheme.

Jim Quinn, our Facilities Supervisor, retired this year after 38 years of service, spanning a period of major development and change in the Zoo's facilities and habitats. Over that time he developed an unrivalled knowledge of the Zoo's buildings and infrastructure. His practical judgement, calm approach and deep familiarity with the site made him an invaluable member of the team, and his contribution to the development and upkeep of the Zoo's facilities over nearly four decades has been significant. Marketing Manager Suzanne O'Donovan concluded 17 years of service during the year, having been a key member of the Zoo's award-winning Marketing Team; the marketing function was restructured to reduce reliance on external services. The year also saw the

departure of Kelly Mara after eight years in the Conservation Education Department, during which she made a valuable contribution to learning services, including throughout the Covid period.

At the Charities Institute Ireland's 'Charity Excellence Awards', Dublin Zoo's CARE Values initiative won the prestigious Employer Excellence Award, recognising our work on the introduction of the CARE values and their positive cultural impact within the Zoo. At the National HR and Leadership Awards, we were shortlisted for the SME HR Team of the Year, while Michele Orr was nominated for HR Rising Star of the Year.



(Bottom right) Humboldt penguins

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

In 2025, the Conservation Education Department supported 63,134 learners through a combination of taught programmes, self-guided visits and education events, representing a largely stable level of engagement when compared with 2024. Of these, 28,388 learners participated in formal and informal taught programmes (a decrease of 5.75%), while 34,746 learners attended as part of self-guided groups and education events (an increase of 3.9%). The reduction in taught bookings at both primary and secondary level can be understood in the context of changes to school calendars, including a later Easter, extended secondary exam periods and primary schools finishing earlier in June, all of which significantly compressed the booking season. In response, the team adapted proactively with direct follow-up with schools and enhanced digital outreach. Programme delivery was further strengthened through a streamlined booking system, increased flexibility in staff scheduling during peak periods, the recruitment of casual teaching staff to maximise capacity, and the ongoing development of supporting systems and processes.

Self-guided and group bookings, which had declined in early 2025 (-14% from January to March), recovered well in April and May (+28% year-on-year), with primary self-guided bookings in May and June combined increasing by 20%. This recovery was supported by targeted promotional work by Conservation Education Office Coordinator Christine O'Connor, including audience segmentation and tailored communications. Momentum continued through the summer with increases in primary school groups and additional needs groups. Despite lower bookings in November and December, overall self-guided visits increased by 9% in 2025 compared to 2024.

Formal education bookings started strongly in 2025, with an

11.5% increase on 2024 from January to March, but declined from April to June despite the launch of Zoorassic Trail. Autumn bookings for secondary learners remained in line with the same period last year. At primary level, the teaching team developed a new programme, 'Adventure in Asia', using the lower Zoo for early-morning sessions as an alternative to 'African Adventure', which took place in the African Plains. At secondary level, the Conservation Education Team reviewed and updated the ecology module and associated fieldwork booklets in preparation for the revised senior cycle biology curriculum, which became relevant from September 2025 for incoming fifth-year students. A temporary supplement incorporating updated content aligned with the revised curriculum was developed for the existing booklet (which is produced through sponsorship by SSE Airtricity) while curriculum changes were under review; the revised materials will be piloted and finalised in 2026. The team also developed a bespoke programme for an A-level secondary school group from Belfast on 'Animal Behaviour and Psychology'. Curriculum changes at both senior and primary level continued to be monitored, including the introduction in September 2025 of the new Leaving Certificate Climate Action and Sustainable Development subject; early-stage development work began in response.

Other formal programmes included the four-week Careers Afterschool programme for secondary students, which ran in February and March. Revised by Conservation Education teacher Brandon Farrelly, the programme highlighted the wide variety of roles available at Dublin Zoo. Participants met staff from across the organisation, learned about different roles and took part in practical activities that provided insights into zoo-based careers.

Lunar New Year celebrations in January were delivered in

partnership with Dublin City Lunar New Year, and the special snake workshops proved very popular despite inclement weather. February midterm and Easter holidays each included a mix of teen and junior workshops, with additional family workshops at Easter.

During the year, the Conservation Education Team engaged in several external events, fostering community engagement and strengthening partnerships. The team hosted stands at both the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition in early January and at the Science Blast exhibition in March, running competitions for free class trips to encourage education newsletter sign-ups. At both events, the team engaged pupils and teachers with biofacts and other hands-on educational resources. As part of ongoing support for teachers, Brandon Farrelly worked with BIAZA education colleagues at Emerald Park and Galway Atlantaquaria, and with Oide, to prepare in-person STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) workshops for secondary teachers at Emerald Park in March. The annual programme focused this year on classification and taxonomy.



(Bottom left) Conservation Education Team at the Stripe Young Scientist Exhibition

In spring, work commenced on interpretation for the refurbished South American House in collaboration with our architect and design partners. The team, including Niamh Potter, Martha Whelan and Victoria Eigler, contributed to the design process, researched and created interpretative content and informed key aesthetic decisions to ensure a cohesive and engaging visitor experience. The habitat, being renamed Rainforest House, is scheduled to open in spring 2026.

In May, the Conservation Education Department formed part of the annual zoo licence inspection, with Head of Conservation Education Niamh Potter meeting the inspectors to update them on the activities of the department. The inspectors' positive comments included special commendations for the volunteer programme and our new community outreach position. Also in May, another successful Native Species Students Day took place as a follow-on to the Native Species Weekend. 907 secondary students and teachers took part in exhibitions, talks and activities led by Dublin Zoo staff and Irish conservation partners. Some changes from the previous year resulted in improved engagement at the marquee site.

In June, Christine O'Connor, led a cross-departmental team in organising the annual Dreamnight event, which took place on a warm evening. Now in its eighteenth iteration at the Zoo, Dreamnight is an exclusive, invitation-only event for children with serious illnesses or disabilities and their families. Seventy families were invited and 52 families (248 adults and children) joined us from Children's Health Ireland (CHI) Crumlin and CHI Temple Street. With staff from across the Zoo volunteering to help on the night, the families experienced up-close animal encounters, face painting, music and magic. Dublin Zoo's caterers kindly provided food for everyone.



Bookings opened in May for the annual Primary Teachers Summer Course, but uptake was slower than usual, largely due to external scheduling restrictions and its relatively high cost compared with online alternatives. Following social media promotion, bookings improved and two week-long courses were delivered in July, with a total of 87 teachers attending. Revisions to strengthen curriculum links were well received, and participant surveys indicated increased confidence and knowledge, with good feedback on course content and delivery.

As usual, our summer camp tickets sold quickly, with four fully-booked weeks running from late July to mid-August. Dinosaur Discovery family workshops ran throughout the summer and again in November. The Parent & Toddler sessions were refreshed and relaunched for the autumn season, with updates to planning structures, resources and delivery. As part of a coordinated marketing plan, promotional approaches were also revised, including the capture of marketing content at a November workshop (with full consent) to support future outreach. These combined efforts contributed to increased participation and stronger engagement in the autumn period.



In September 2025, Dublin Zoo introduced Irish Sign Language (ISL)-interpreted videos accessible via QR codes across the site, becoming the first zoo in Ireland to do so. Launched during International Week of Deaf People, the initiative included a wake-up experience at the Asian elephant habitat and an in-person ISL-interpreted talk for members of Chime's Dublin Deaf Group and their families. The initiative formed part of an expanded visitor engagement and accessibility programme to develop scripted zookeeper talks designed to incorporate ISL. This cross-departmental project brought together Marketing, the Animal Care Team and Conservation Education in collaboration with Chime, Ireland's national charity for deaf and hard of hearing people.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The creation of a full-time Community and Campaign Coordinator role under the Conservation Education Masterplan marked a key milestone in Dublin Zoo's community outreach programme. The new coordinator, Roseanne Leddy, developed this position by building relationships and partnerships across the community, creating opportunities for inclusive education and engagement. In

May, she organised a visit for 306 service users and 183 carers from the Rehab Group to mark Biodiversity Week; Rehab is one of Ireland's leading disability organisations, and this was one of their largest excursions to date. Also in May, Roseanne worked with the International Organisation for Migration to facilitate an on-site visit for a group of people living in Direct Provision. Roseanne secured funding from the South County Dublin Partnership and St. Mark's Primary School, Tallaght, to deliver a Home School Liaison outreach programme for parents and children aimed at improving school attendance. The programme consisted of five school-based sessions starting in May, focusing on adaptations, conservation and behaviour, and included enrichment activities developed with support from the Animal Care team. During a Zoo visit, participants observed the enrichment they had prepared being given to the big cats by keepers. In July, Roseanne delivered adaptation and conservation themed workshops to prisoners at the Mountjoy Adult Education Centre using discussion, biofacts and visual materials. The programme was funded by the City of Dublin Education and Training Board, and the sessions generated a high level of engagement.



(Bottom left) Volunteers at biofact carts

In October, Roseanne hosted an event in Dundalk Library in collaboration with scientist and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) communicator Dr Niamh Shaw as part of Space Week. In November, Roseanne hosted a Dublin Zoo Conservation Station at the Dublin Book Festival in the family hub at the Irish Museum for Modern Art (IMMA). There were 500 people in attendance throughout the day. She also initiated a six-week outreach programme with Frontline Make Change, an addiction service that runs a children's project with preschool and afterschool support for children whose parents are in recovery. Dublin Zoo delivered six outreach sessions with the afterschool group, including one session at the Zoo. Participants will attend a final session with their families in January 2026. During the year, Roseanne developed a new approach to visitor engagement through Hotspot Events, featuring hands-on STEM activities linked to conservation messages. Delivered onsite with the assistance of volunteers, these activities were often timed to coincide with international animal awareness days and Zoo events.

VOLUNTEERS

The Dublin Zoo volunteer programme saw strong growth in 2025. It started the year with 95 active volunteers and 11 resting; the recruitment of 51 seasonal volunteers increased active numbers to a peak of 130, with July recording the highest engagement at 121 volunteers. Following the summer season, 31 new recruits were retained, and the programme closed the year at 98 active volunteers and 17 resting. Together, the volunteers completed 17,714 hours in 2025, including 67 tours delivered to 1,502 visitors representing 59 different organisations. The Better Impact volunteer scheduling app, introduced in December 2024, was fully adopted by February, achieving the target for transition. New features were rolled out during the year to improve efficiency, planning and impact measurement. The app also provided

volunteers with digital resources to support delivery of the Zoorassic Trail experience.

The 2025 seasonal volunteer recruitment received an impressive number of applications and, following an open day, 51 new volunteers undertook the programme. This larger cohort was manageable due to the improved efficiency of the volunteer scheduling app and the expansion of the volunteer coordinator role to full-time in September 2024. The Volunteer Centre was reorganised to accommodate the increased numbers, with a secondary area created for breaks and briefings. The training programme underwent a comprehensive review and update; topics covered safe volunteering, introduction to conservation, animal welfare messaging and engagement skills training. The graduation ceremony took place on 12 April with a behind-the-scenes visit to the elephants and a ceremony addressed by Dr Christoph Schwitzer. Long-term volunteers were recognised with a service pin presentation, and a scavenger hunt around the Zoo was held for all volunteers. In April, a new refresher training programme was introduced for long-term volunteers to prepare for the summer season. The training covered radio use, child safeguarding, STEM engagement and insights from the 2024 visitor survey, including how these findings would inform more strategic interaction. A total of 63 volunteers attended across two days.

Volunteers played a key role in delivering conservation messaging throughout the year through meeting visitors at key habitats, pop-up activities and themed hotspot events. These included Discovery Carts and seasonal hotspots such as those linked to species featured on the Zoo TV programme, the reintroduction of the lions, the birth of the okapi calf and the arrival of Miri the orangutan. Following a 2024 research project exploring visitor satisfaction and animal visibility, volunteers worked in 2025 alongside Lucy

Stratford, Dublin Zoo's Behaviour and Welfare Scientist, to apply these findings in practice. Building on the research, they implemented strategic engagement approaches at key habitats using biofacts and direct visitor interaction. Early insights showed that interaction with volunteers helped to mitigate dissatisfaction when animals were not visible. Hands-on STEM activities were delivered during themed events such as World Giraffe Day in June and International Orangutan Day in August, providing informal educational experiences for visitors alongside conservation messaging about the featured species. The volunteer presence in the Nocturnal House, begun in 2024, was expanded this year to two volunteers at a time. They provided safety guidance and explained to visitors about how their behaviour can positively impact the welfare of the aye-ayes.

In July, 32 volunteers supported Dublin Zoo's 'Run for Wildlife', acting as stewards along the race route as well as handing out medals, welcoming runners and keeping



(Bottom right) Volunteers who supported Run for Wildlife 2025

spirits high during the event. In August, volunteers supported the BioBlitz 'Spotted on Site' campaign by contributing observations and running a pop-up station to encourage visitor participation. Their efforts helped Dublin Zoo achieve third place overall, with a total of 6,576 observations. Also in August, surveys of both seasonal and long-term volunteers assessed satisfaction and role preparedness; results indicated high satisfaction with training, programme culture, and how valued the volunteers felt. These insights directly informed targeted refresher training for the volunteers.

In September, ten volunteers welcomed and assisted guests at the 'Zoorassic Trail Takeover' evening events. In November, they maintained a presence at the cockatoo habitat during the week-long Troy Parrott cockatoo campaign, talking to visitors about our cockatoos and conservation partners. At the end of the year, volunteers collaborated with the Conservation and Science Team on a PhD research project related to the elephants. Throughout the year, volunteers assisted with Parent and Toddler workshops, conservation

classes and guided tours for Special Olympics groups.

In October 2025, our Supported Volunteer Programme was launched in partnership with the Central Remedial Clinic. Six adults with disabilities took part in the twelve-week programme, supporting visitor engagement activities and animal enrichment while working alongside long-term volunteers who acted as mentors. The programme concluded in December with a graduation ceremony attended by the volunteers and their families; certificates were presented by the director.

This year, Dublin Zoo became a signatory to the Volunteer Charter with Volunteer Ireland. This collaborative framework strengthens partnerships between volunteers and organisations by setting out shared expectations. It serves as a two-way guide that promotes inclusion, respect and open communication, while supporting high-quality volunteering experiences through a focus on safety, training and recognition for everyone involved.



(Bottom left) International Volunteer Day celebrations
(Bottom right) Volunteers in Discovery Centre



COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

Overall, 2025 delivered year-on-year growth across social media reach, engagement and website sessions. Social media reach increased significantly to 26.8m (vs 14.1m in 2024); engagement rose to 668,666 (vs 556,553); and website sessions reached 1.62m (vs 1.50m). Newsletter subscribers increased to 107,611 (vs 102,064), while full-year NPS declined to 28 (vs 32 in 2024). In January, the Dublin Gazette City Edition listed Dublin Zoo third in 'Ireland's top 25 attractions by visitor numbers', behind the Guinness Storehouse and the Cliffs of Moher. And in July, Dublin Zoo was recognised as a Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Award winner, placing it among the top 10% of attractions worldwide based on visitor reviews and ratings.

Animal news and stories generated positive national media and social media coverage throughout the year. Working closely with the Animal Care Team, the Marketing Team delivered a steady stream of social media and PR content highlighting Dublin Zoo's animals, animal welfare and conservation work. In February, we announced the arrival of Imani the hippo, attracting significant public and media interest. A month later, the announcement of the birth of an eastern bongo calf noted that fewer than 100 eastern bongos remain in the wild and that the species is classified as Critically Endangered by the IUCN Red List. The announcement received extensive media coverage, with a photograph by Patrick Bolger selected as 'Picture of the Week' in the Irish Examiner. Following a successful social media naming competition, the calf was named Nia.

In April, the death of Leonie, the Bornean orangutan who had lived at Dublin Zoo since 1984, received national media coverage, including Virgin Media News and RTÉ Six One News. Zookeeper Anthony McClure was interviewed for RTÉ, and Team Leader Ciaran McMahon published a tribute on the Dublin Zoo website reflecting on her life and impact.



In May, an Irish Independent interview with zookeeper Francesca McAllister explored how animals cope with hot weather. In June, Pat Kenny broadcast live from Society House on Newstalk, speaking with members of the Zoo team, including Team Leader Christina

Murphy about the Asian elephant herd. Earlier in the month, Head of Conservation Education Niamh Potter appeared on Newstalk's Moncrieff Show. At the end of June, 'Dino Don' Lessem gave a series of interviews with Irish media. In July, Brooke Scullion visited the Zoo for the 'Visiting Critic' segment on the Oliver Callan Show. July and August also saw several outside broadcasts from the Zoo, including RTÉ 2FM's The Laura Fox Show, 98FM's Thunderbus, Virgin Media's Ireland AM, and RTÉ 2FM's Doireann Garrihy Drive. In July, a press release announcing the birth of a female okapi calf, accompanied by photography by Patrick Bolger, received widespread national media coverage. In August, we announced the arrival of Miri, a female Bornean orangutan. We also promoted the 'Last Chance to Roar', a promotion offered 10% discount on tickets, with coverage across print and digital media. Later that month, on World

Orangutan Day, Zoo tickets were discounted by 25% and a mural of Sibú and Leonie by artist James Kirwan was unveiled. During the year, we also marked other key international animal awareness days, such as the Red Panda Day, World Rhino Day and World Gorilla Day.



(Top right) Don Lessem (CEO of Dino Don Inc.) at Dublin Zoo's Zoorassic Trail

(Bottom right) Broadcaster Pat Kenny interviewing Dr Christoph Schwitzer live outside Society House as part of Newstalk Radio's 'Summer Tour' 2025



A major exhibition, Zoorassic Trail, opened at Dublin Zoo on 12 March. Early-year media performance was driven by teaser content for the trail, building momentum ahead of a highly successful March launch that generated significant PR and influencer reach. Developed in collaboration with Dino Don, Inc., the trail featured more than 40 animatronic dinosaurs and interactive elements located throughout the Zoo, with models produced under palaeontological supervision. Its timing coincided with the St Patrick's Festival, during which Dublin Zoo participated in the St Patrick's Day Parade with two floats featuring a dinosaur-themed showpiece. This alignment contributed to exceptionally strong visitor numbers in March and April. The launch generated national media coverage across print, radio, television and online channels. On 18 March, RTÉ's *The Today Show* broadcast live from Dublin Zoo, with presenter James Patrice speaking with staff about the exhibition and the Zoo's conservation work. From 26–29 June, the Commercial Operations Team hosted the 'Zoorassic Trail Takeover', a series of dino-themed, family-friendly and 16+ events with world-renowned dinosaur expert 'Dino Don' Lessem. The Trail was further promoted through family media outlets, a live weather segment from the Zoo on Virgin Media One's Ireland AM, and a cross-promotion with the 3Olympia Theatre for the dinosaur-themed show *Dinosaur World Live*.



Zoorassic Trail closed in early September. Dublin Zoo retained some models that had been purchased second-hand from Copenhagen Zoo; these will be displayed in the African Plains.



The twelfth season of *The Zoo* television series (Moondance Productions) was broadcast on RTÉ One at prime time on Friday evenings from 25 April for eight weeks. Stories featured in this series included the death of orangutan Sibu and the birth and hand-rearing of his son SJ; the EEHV outbreak in the elephant herd; veterinary procedures involving gorillas and sea lions; and Team Leader Eddie O'Brien's work with Proyecto Eremita on the reintroduction of waldrapp ibises in Spain. Promotion of the series included interviews with Team Leader Helen Clarke in the RTÉ Guide and *The Irish Times*. Dublin Zoo also partnered with sustainability sponsor SSE Airtricity for a week-long promotion on RTÉ 2FM's *The Laura Fox Show*, offering



listeners the chance to win annual family passes, with one winner receiving a year's free electricity. Laura Fox broadcast live from the 2FM Roadcaster at Dublin Zoo on the day the first episode aired.

In September, Dublin Zoo announced two initiatives

(Top left) Artist James Kirwan and Team Leader Ciaran McMahon at the mural which commemorates beloved orangutan pair Sibu and Leonie
(Top right) Dublin Zoo's 'Zoorassic Trail' showpiece as part of the St. Patrick's Festival 2025
(Bottom right) RTÉ 2FM Roadcaster broadcasting live outside Dublin Zoo



focused on accessibility and inclusion. A collaboration with Chime introduced ISL-interpreted videos accessed via QR codes across the Zoo. Launched during

International Week of Deaf People, the initiative generated national television, print, radio and online coverage. Dublin Zoo also partnered with Age Action Ireland as part of Positive Ageing Week, attracting coverage across national newspapers, online outlets and radio. Media interviews in October further highlighted Dublin Zoo's work in the community. Eddie O'Brien spoke to The Irish Times about the Zoo as a 'multi-generational workplace', while Dr Christoph Schwitzer gave an interview on RTÉ Radio 1's The Business.



Redevelopment of the Dublin Zoo website, in partnership with Fáilte Ireland's 'Digital That Delivers' programme, continued during the year. The design concept and phased delivery plan were agreed, alongside the production of a supporting video, 'We Are Dublin Zoo'. The video was created to showcase Dublin Zoo today, highlighting its mission, the breadth of its offering, the important conservation roles it plays, and the dedicated people behind

the scenes who make this work possible. The project remains on schedule for the launch of a mobile-first, fully accessible website in early 2026, in line with EU accessibility requirements.

The Commercial Operations Team revamped the post-visit survey to better identify recurring issues in the visitor experience, while the Digital Team continued to review feedback and monitor emerging trends. Overall, NPS performance in 2025 reflected a mix of event-led visits and operational factors. Higher scores aligned with Zoorassic Trail, which was frequently cited as a reason for visiting, while lower scores corresponded with feedback relating to overcrowding, construction activity and limited animal visibility. Positive feedback during June highlighted animal habitats, nature-focused landscaping and the Zoo's diverse range of animals.

During the year, we announced several significant milestones for Dublin Zoo in conservation partnerships and international engagement. In February, the Zoo was awarded Global Humane Certification, with coverage on 98FM news bulletins and strong social media engagement. The election of Dublin Zoo Director Dr Christoph Schwitzer as chair of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) received coverage on Today FM and in national print media. In July, as part of the promotion for 'Run for Wildlife', founder of Selamatkan Yaki, Indonesia, Professor Vicky Melfi was interviewed on FM104.

Finally, Dublin Zoo received several communications awards during the year. In June, at the Public Relations Consultants Association (PCRA) Spotlight Awards, Teneo in collaboration with Dublin Zoo won two awards, including Best Crisis/Issues Management and Campaign of the Year for EEHV communications. In July, Dublin Zoo received Runner-Up

in the Marketing, PR, Digital & Events category at the 2025 BIAZA Awards for the campaign 'Breastfeeding Volunteers & the Birth of a Critically Endangered Bornean Orangutan'. The campaign reached more than 21 million people internationally and highlighted Dublin Zoo's commitment to animal welfare and conservation storytelling.

EVENTS

Early in the year, a brochure promoting events at Dublin Zoo was produced and, following the appointment of Niamh Talbot as Corporate Partnerships and Events Lead in June, the programme developed steadily, with Family Fun Days forming the core of the offer. Strong levels of repeat business were recorded alongside new bookings from a wide range of clients, including both corporate off-site meetings and family-oriented visits. The offer included room hire, catering, volunteer-led tours, and the opportunity to use Dublin Zoo as a distinctive setting for meetings, award ceremonies and staff events. In July, the Zoo hosted its first evening corporate function, a bespoke experience that demonstrated the potential for future evening events. While Haughton House remains the focal point for these activities, one long-standing corporate booking has grown sufficiently to move to the larger space available in the Discovery Centre. During the quieter winter months, the back room of the Meerkat Restaurant was also used, including as a base for groups attending mulled wine receptions during Wild Lights.

The Events Team coordinated several major events, including a family day in March for Defence Forces families with loved ones currently deployed overseas. In August, 98FM returned to host their Family Fun Day in Haughton House, further strengthening our ongoing partnership. After applying online, a total of 600 listeners were invited to attend the event. Based in Haughton House and around Zoorassic Trail, there

were games, face-painting/hair chalk, a €15 voucher for any catering outlet or gift shop and Dublin Zoo goodie bags. Magic Memories was also present to take pictures. The 98FM Thunderbus was located outside the entrance during the Paul Bonass show from 10am – 2pm. Also, in August, we hosted Rare Ireland, creating an inclusive and impactful day for families of children with rare conditions.



The Dublin Zoo Events Team organised numerous public events during the year. In March, the St Patrick's weekend saw record visitor numbers, and activities included face painting and a Zoorassic Trail quiz. Easter week featured music and activities on the Haughton House balcony, appearances by the Easter Bunny, and the Roar Roar Dinosaur programme in Zoorassic World, which combined dinosaur-themed experiences with STEM-based activities. Face painting was also available in the Farmhouse and, when the rain stopped, we had roaming dinosaurs. From 26-29

June, Dublin Zoo hosted a series of sold-out family-friendly and over-16s events in conjunction with the Zoorassic Trail exhibition. A highlight of the events was the visit by 'Dino' Don Lessem, world-renowned dinosaur expert, science

(Middle right) Dublin Zoo participating in the 2025 St. Patrick's Festival, showcasing two 'Zoorassic Trail' showpieces

(Middle right) Face painting is a key feature of events at Dublin Zoo

(Bottom right) Members of the Dublin Zoo Commercial Operations and Animal Care Teams at the 'Zoorassic Trail Takeover' events in June 2025

advisor to Steven Spielberg on the Jurassic Park movie and creator of the Zoorassic Trail. Family events included the opportunity to meet Dino Don, take part in interactive fossil sessions and learn about dinosaurs; Ranger Dan and the Roar Roar Dinosaur Crew delivered their interactive shows. The adults-only evening event featured keeper tours, a barbeque and a panel discussion on extinction and conservation with Dino Don, Dublin Zoo educator Brandon Farrelly, and Irish naturalist Éanna Ní Lamhna. In August, two themed weekends – the Roar-Gust Bank Holiday and The Last Prehistoric Party – helped drive visitor numbers and raise awareness of the Zoorassic Trail ahead of its conclusion at the end of the month.



From 8-10 August, Dublin Zoo hosted the winners of sponsorship partner SSE Airtricity's special 'Roar and Snore' competition for the fourth year. The prize offered a family of five the chance to

spend a night glamping in Haughton House, with time to enjoy the Zoo until 6.30 pm on the day of arrival, followed by meals, a movie with snacks and popcorn, and an early-morning tour the following day before the Zoo opened to the public. SSE Airtricity ran two draws, one for each night, and one open to the public, the other for SSE Reward members; winners were selected at random.



In Autumn, Dublin Zoo and Age Action Ireland collaborated for Positive Ageing Week 2025. Visitors over the age of 65 were given free entry to the Zoo, an offer widely promoted on

radio stations and various online news websites. A standout event was 'Time for Tea', a morning of tea, conversation and shared stories attended by about 80 people. The 'Elephant Family Matters Trail' along the Kaziranga Forest Trail was also a great success; open to all ages and led by our volunteers, the trail celebrated blended stories about elephant herd life, drawing parallels with human connections and intergenerational wisdom in line with the theme 'Wisdom of the Herd: Connecting Generations.' The initiative reflected the shared values of Dublin Zoo and Age Action Ireland, particularly in recognising the vital contribution of volunteers.



In October, the Zoo's popular Halloween programme took place during the mid-term break. Promotion began in early October and continued

throughout the month, with the event featured in family 'What's on' listings during the school holidays. The programme included a week of themed activities such as a free scavenger hunt, Halloween disco, face painting and a 'Kids Go Free' offer on Halloween itself. The scavenger hunt proved especially popular, while three days of pumpkin-carving workshops attracted 348 participants. These sessions received very positive feedback, reflecting improvements following visitor feedback from the previous year. This year's Santa's Grotto experience was redesigned and bundled with Wild Lights as the Glow-Ho-Ho package, opening at the end of November and offering visitors a timed Santa visit before exploring Wild Lights at their leisure; sales reached full capacity.

WILD LIGHTS

This year's Wild Lights festival, themed The Wild Kaleidoscope, celebrated the diversity of colour in the natural world, with each zone inspired by animals and plants associated with a particular colour and supported by interpretative signage on the role of colour in nature. The display included the tallest lantern ever featured at Wild Lights – a 16-metre-high rainbow eucalyptus tree on the Great Lawn. Once again, Chinese company Vya Creative Lantern Company created and mounted the displays. The theme was revealed to the public on 24 September with a press release, photographs by Patrick Bolger and a video produced by creative agency Piquant. The campaign received extensive coverage in print, broadcast and online media. Wild Lights coverage continued throughout the month of October, with media partners 98FM speaking about the event multiple times across radio and their social channels. Three cycles of outdoor advertising were delivered with JCDecaux between October 2025 and January 2026, with coverage across approximately 80 locations throughout Dublin. The campaign used a mix of DigiPanels, DigiPoles, Digi48s and iVision screens, with

the advertisement displayed more than 650,000 times across the three cycles. The Wild Lights campaign was awarded JCDecaux's Campaign of the Month for November 2025.

Following a PR preview on 4 November, Wild Lights opened to the public on 6 November and ran until 31 January 2026, operating on Saturdays only during the final three weeks. A total of 161,494 people visited Wild Lights in 2025; this figure includes 13,345 people who visited the 2024/25 season of Wild Lights in January. Promotions this year included the 'Glow Ho-Ho' bundle that gave visitors a ticket to Santa's Grotto and Wild Lights. This package sold out quickly. A very successful sensory night was organised by the Visitor Operations team on 1 December with 1,124 visitors and 77 visiting the sensory-friendly Santa's Grotto. On the commercial side, Wild Lights corporate bookings performed well, with 19 group bookings. Three companies opted to enhance their experience with private evening events in Haughton House and Meerkat Restaurant. For general visitors, the festival included a 'Winter Glow Village' with a festive food market featuring freshly baked pizza, mulled wine, crêpes and waffles.



(Bottom left) 'The Wild Kaleidoscope' billboard advertisement in Clonliffe, Dublin and Digipanel in Dublin City Centre
(Bottom right) Barnardos Ambassador, Richie Sadler and Dublin Zoo Marketing Manager, Róisín Healy along with Barnardos representatives switching on the lights at the opening night of Wild Lights



CONSERVATION AND SCIENCE

2025 was a productive and collaborative year for the Conservation and Science Team, with significant progress across conservation partnerships, research, animal welfare and public engagement. A highlight of the year was the approval, in August, of Dublin Zoo's application for membership of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), strengthening our institutional role in international conservation networks and enabling broader engagement with global initiatives. Our membership status gave us voting rights at the IUCN World Conservation Congress, which was held in October.

Protecting Ireland's Wildlife

Throughout the year, Dublin Zoo continued to provide financial support to a variety of field conservation partners in Ireland, directly supporting conservation efforts for more than 20 Irish species. In March, as part of the implementation of our strategic vision 'Dublin Zoo 200' and under the Conservation Master Plan, Dublin Zoo signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). The MoU formalised a partnership on the Centre for Species Survival: Ireland (CSS: Ireland) to consolidate and strengthen strategic capacity to support assessments, planning and action for the conservation of native species in Ireland. The partnership is key to the implementation of Dublin Zoo's targets as part of Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP). In June, the first joint workshop was held to align institutional efforts towards biodiversity conservation and to agree a workplan for the remainder of the year. Facilitated by Dublin Zoo's Species Survival Officer, Louise Enderby, the workshop marked a significant step in strengthening coordinated conservation action across Ireland. A follow-up meeting between Dublin Zoo and NPWS at the end of the year reported results and developed a workplan for 2026.

(Far left) Wild Lights 'The Wild Kaleidoscope' promotional image
(Top right) Louise Enderby, Species Survival Officer, undertaking on-site biodiversity monitoring.



There was also significant progress with CSS: Ireland's plans for crayfish recovery in Ireland and the establishment of ex situ crayfish hatcheries at Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park. Crayfish are freshwater relatives of the marine lobsters and are found across the world in North America (300 species), Australia (100 species) and Europe (seven species), with Ireland only having one naturally occurring species - the white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*).

The populations in Europe have been badly affected by the impact of introduced species, in particular by a disease carried by many American crayfish, which is called 'crayfish plague' and is caused by a fungus-like pathogen, *Aphanomyces astaci*. Crayfish plague appeared in Ireland in 2015 and has wiped out the native crayfish in the majority of rivers and lakes where they lived. As of yet, we do not know how the disease is spreading, but extensive surveys have found no American crayfish present in Ireland.

In 2024, Fota Wildlife Park took in some of the last remaining crayfish from the Awbeg River, a tributary of the Blackwater,



which has lost most or all of its crayfish, and now Fota has a breeding population which in the long run can be restored to the river. One of the targets for CSS: Ireland is to establish an ex situ breeding facility for the white-clawed crayfish at Dublin Zoo in collaboration with the NPWS. CSS: Ireland will also support habitat surveys and restoration, research and outreach activities, and eventually the translocation of zoo-bred crayfish back to Ireland's lakes and rivers. Throughout the year Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park worked together on a joint proposal for the proposed activities, which was submitted to NPWS and approved in 2026.

Throughout the year, representatives from Dublin Zoo including Dr Andrew Mooney and Louise Enderby stayed in regular contact with the main agencies responsible.

Dublin Zoo worked with Fota Wildlife Park through the Breeding Waders European Innovation Partnership (EIP) to develop capacity for the 'head-starting' of Ireland's breeding waders, such as the curlew, by incubating and rearing chicks for release. Ireland's breeding populations of

curlew and dunlin have declined sharply in recent decades: curlew numbers have fallen by 97% since the 1980s, with fewer than 150 breeding pairs remaining, while the native breeding dunlin population has declined to fewer than 50 pairs nationally. In January, a Dublin Zoo team attended a Breeding Waders EIP steering group meeting on dunlin head-starting and worked with Fota to strengthen staff skills in incubation, rearing and chick care. Preparation of incubation, rearing and curlew head-starting facilities began in December in advance of the planned receipt of curlew eggs in 2026.

Louise Enderby continued extracting and cleaning data for a comprehensive gap analysis of conservation efforts for native Irish species. She also joined an organising team working with BIAZA and SEA LIFE UK on a Species Action Plan for the undulate skate (*Raja undulata*) in Ireland and the UK. In November, CSS: Ireland and Dublin Zoo hosted a Marine Mammal Stranding Workshop, delivered in partnership with the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group, which brought together experts from across Ireland and the UK. Delivered in collaboration with Dublin Zoo's veterinary team, this workshop identified clear gaps in Ireland and opportunities for collaboration and research.

In April, Louise Enderby led further meetings with the Amphibian Survival Alliance, Buglife UK and Plan Bee to explore potential collaborations with CSS: Ireland, resulting in the installation of solitary bee nesting aids in the Society House Garden in collaboration with Plan Bee. In May, the Conservation and Science Team organised and celebrated the return of Native Species Festival, with more than 25 Irish conservation organisations and government bodies coming together to share their native species conservation successes. This was followed once again by an equally successful event for schools, organised in collaboration with the Conservation Education Team. In August, Dublin Zoo

took part in the BIAZA *Spotted on Site* campaign. More than 6,500 biodiversity observations were submitted, supported by significant cross-departmental collaboration and visitor engagement.

Protecting Wildlife Globally

Throughout the year, Dublin Zoo continued to provide financial support to more than 20 field conservation projects around the world, directly supporting conservation efforts for more than 40 threatened species. In April, Dublin Zoo signed an MoU with conservation partner Selamatkan Yaki, formally establishing the Zoo as their primary funder and deepening our commitment to the conservation of the Critically Endangered Sulawesi crested macaque (*Macaca nigra*) on the island of Sulawesi, Indonesia. The MoU was approved by the Zoological Society of Ireland Conservation, Education and Science Committee. Its official launch was marked in July by a series of public events in partnership with the Indonesian Irish Association, including Run for Wildlife, which featured a three-kilometre run around the Zoo, a public lecture by Professor Vicky Melfi and Dr Susan Wiper, and cultural activities celebrating Indonesian biodiversity. The event attracted over 700 participants and included a visit from Mrs Sahadatun Donatirin, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Indonesian Embassy in London. 1,600 medals for the event were manufactured by a local entrepreneur in Sulawesi. Funds were raised in support of the Sulawesi crested macaque.

Dublin Zoo's commitment to African primate conservation also continued this year, with support provided for the running of an in-person workshop to further develop the actions outlined in the 'IUCN *Cercocebus* and *Mandrillus* Action Plan 2024-2028', published in late 2024 by the IUCN SSC Primate Specialist Group. Dublin Zoo also contributed

financially to the publication of the action plan, which aims to conserve nine species of African monkeys, including the white-naped mangabey. In Spain, Dublin Zoo supported key



(Top right) Launch of Dublin Zoo's partnership with Selamatkan Yaki with Dr Christoph Schwitzer, Dr Andrew Mooney, Prof Vicky Melfi, Founder of Selamatkan Yaki, and Dr. Sue Wiper, Selamatkan Yaki Programme Director.

(Middle right) Members of the Indonesian Irish Association celebrating Run for Wildlife at Dublin Zoo
(Bottom right) Visitor taking part in Dublin Zoo's first-ever Run for Wildlife

conservation activities for the regionally extinct waldraap ibis (*Geronticus eremita*) through the Proyecto Eremita conservation programme. This work included nest site improvements and bird ringing, allowing for continued population monitoring and up-to-date information on population status and trends. The total free-ranging population is now estimated to be 280 individuals, including both breeding and non-breeding birds. And, more recently, following the arrival of Northeast African cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus soemmeringii*) to Dublin Zoo in 2024, we added the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) to our list of Conservation Partners in 2025. Founded in Namibia in 1990, CCF's mission is to be the internationally recognized centre of excellence in the conservation of cheetahs and their ecosystems. CCF works with all stakeholders to develop best practices in research, education and land use to benefit all species, including local communities living alongside the cheetah.



Cryopreservation and biobanking continued to play a significant role in the Zoo's conservation programme. In May, we organised the transportation of female orangutan Leonie's heart to the EAZA Biobank as part of the Great Ape Heart Project, and her brain to the Max-Planck Institute for Anthropology in Leipzig as part of the Ape

Brain Connectomics project. In October, during the IUCN World Conservation Congress, we launched a new memorandum of understanding on cryopreservation between Dublin Zoo, Toronto Zoo and Chester Zoo to expand our efforts in wildlife cryobanking. Meetings were also held with Species360 and the University of Galway.

Science

In 2025, Dublin Zoo participated in 58 different research projects, in collaboration with 39 different partners and institutions, including 26 universities around the world. The projects contributed to 16 undergraduate degrees (BA/BSc), 10 master's degrees (MSc/MRes) and 9 doctoral degrees (PhD). In 2025, Dublin Zoo also helped co-author, contributed data to, or financially supported, 6 peer-reviewed scientific publications, a Zooquaria magazine article, and the new WAZA Welfare Strategy, which features contributions from Miguel Bueno highlighting industry-leading examples of Dublin Zoo's welfare practices.

Collaboration with Irish universities continued, with undergraduate and postgraduate students from Queens University Belfast and Munster Technological University commencing placement opportunities at Dublin Zoo. Dublin Zoo's paid Conservation and Science internship programme also continued this year, with Victoria Eigler and Marlene Völker each joining the team for 16 weeks.

In the autumn, Kees Groot, a PhD student at Copenhagen Zoo and the University of Copenhagen, visited Dublin Zoo as part of a study looking at mate aggression in white cockatoos EEPs. As EEP Coordinator for the citron-crested cockatoo, Dr Mooney has been working with the other white cockatoo EEP coordinators on this issue, as mate aggression

is one of the biggest challenges in managing these species. This research will help better inform how we care for and manage this species. This year, Dublin Zoo also provided financial support for a PhD project looking at the physiology and ecology of sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*) across Norway, Ireland and Portugal. This work is being undertaken by Seán O'Callaghan, a PhD candidate based at the Marine and Freshwater Research Centre (MFRC) at the Atlantic Technological University (ATU). Seán also visited Dublin Zoo in November, and delivered a talk on his work as part of the Conservation Lecture Series. Elsewhere, Lucy Stratford continued coordinating a study looking at the behaviour of our aye-ayes (*Daubentonia madagascariensis*), in collaboration with both the placement students and the Animal Care Team. This is now being analysed and prepared for publication. Elsewhere, Lucy has also been meeting with aye-aye holders globally and the EEP Coordinator to better understand knowledge gaps and plan for a broader scale project on aye-aye behaviour and husbandry.



In other activities, the Conservation and Science Team continued to deliver the free public Conservation Lecture Series, hosting six talks during the year, including an evening lecture by the Conservation and Science team on careers in

(Bottom left) Aye aye behavioural observations as part of ongoing research

(Bottom right) Lucy Stratford, Behaviour and Welfare Scientist, supporting placement students with behavioural observations

conservation and a guest lecture by Laurie Marker from CCF on efforts to protect cheetahs in the wild. Meanwhile, Lucy Stratford continued to work collaboratively with teams across the Zoo to develop a public-facing Animal Welfare Master Plan for Dublin Zoo, which will be launched in 2026.

In September, Dr Mooney was invited to become the Conservation Advisor for the EAZA Western Lowland Gorilla EEP and Louise Enderby was invited to join the BIAZA Conservation Committee. Finally, Dublin Zoo was recognised for its outstanding work at the 2025 British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA) awards when Conservation and Science Manager, Dr Mooney, won the prestigious 'Rising Star Award'. This honour recognises his exceptional leadership and significant impact on conservation science and community engagement, and for revolutionising Dublin Zoo's approach to conservation and research.



CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Africa

- Cheetah Conservation Fund, Namibia (cheetah).
- Giraffe Conservation Foundation (Nubian Giraffe Conservation Working Group), Kenya (Nubian giraffe).
- IUCN Cercocebus and Mandrillus Action Plan 2024-2028 Workshop, Kenya (all ten species of mangabeys (genus *Cercocebus*), mandrill and drill).
- Lemur Conservation Association, Madagascar (several lemur species, including blue-eyed black lemur).
- Mountain Bongo Surveillance Project, Kenya (mountain bongo).
- Okapi Conservation Project, Democratic Republic of the Congo (okapi).
- Save the Rhino (Lowveld Rhino Trust), Zimbabwe (black and white rhino).
- Scimitar-Horned Oryx Reintroduction Programme, Tunisia (scimitar-horned oryx).
- Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, Sierra Leone (western chimpanzee).
- West African Primate Conservation Action, Ghana (several primate species, including white-naped mangabey).

Asia

- Asian Turtle Program (*Mauremys annamensis* Project), Vietnam (Vietnamese pond turtle).
- Citron-Crested Cockatoo Conservation (Burung Indonesia/ZGAP), Sumba, Indonesia (citron-crested cockatoo).
- Orangutan Foundation (Lamandau Wildlife Reserve), Borneo, Indonesia (Bornean orangutan).
- Red Panda Network, Nepal (red panda).
- Save the Rhino (Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary), Sumatra, Indonesia (Sumatran rhino).
- Selamatkan Yaki, Sulawesi, Indonesia (Sulawesi-crested macaque).
- Snow Leopard Trust, Central Asian range states (12) (snow

leopard).

- WildCats Conservation Alliance, China (Amur tiger and Amur leopard).
- Wildlife Trust of India (Right Of Passage: National Elephant Corridors Project), India (Asian elephant).

South America

- Golden Lion Tamarin Association, Brazil (golden lion tamarin).
- Sphenisco, Chile (Humboldt penguin).

Europe

- Proyecto Eremita, Spain (waldrapp ibis).

Ireland

- Bat Rehabilitation Ireland, Limerick (all nine species of bats in Ireland).
- BirdWatch Ireland (raptor research and monitoring), Ireland (Irish raptors).
- Irish Grey Partridge Conservation Trust, Ireland (breeding waders).
- Irish Peatland Conservation Council, Kildare (marsh fritillary butterfly).
- Kildare Wildlife Rescue, Kildare (Irish wildlife).
- Louth Nature Trust, Louth (little tern).
- Seal Rescue Ireland, Wexford (grey and harbour seal).

Global

- IUCN Conservation Planning Specialist Group

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Staff-led Research at Dublin Zoo

- Activity budgets and social interactions of two cohabiting Venezuelan red howler monkeys (*Alouatta seniculus*) housed at Dublin Zoo.
- All-Ireland bumblebee monitoring scheme (as part of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan).
- BIAZA Spotted on Site.
- A casebook of eight clinical cases in conservation medicine: field based challenges and veterinary approaches in conservation medicine across diverse species and contexts.
- Choice, agency, and visitor experience: evaluating the impact of keeper talks on perceptions of animal visibility and welfare.
- The contributions of EAZA member zoos and aquariums to the in situ and ex situ conservation of European Species.
- Developing a novel personality and welfare tool for use with elephants cared for in zoos.
- Flamingo feet in Dublin Zoo.
- Flower-insect timed count (as part of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan).
- Marine ecology and the management of marine mammal strandings around Ireland: a transdisciplinary workshop model approach.
- A study developing and validating a tool to assess the welfare of chimpanzees housed in human care in zoos.
- Understanding aye-aye (*Daubentonia madagascariensis*) behaviour in human care: A case study from Dublin Zoo exploring the impact of social housing.

University-led research at Dublin Zoo

- Assessment of water and air quality in animal enclosures at Dublin Zoo. BSc. Technological University Dublin.
- Behaviour in focus: how visitor density and/or time of day shape southern white rhinoceros activity at Dublin Zoo.

BA. Trinity College Dublin.

- Comparative metabolomic profiling of animal feed formulations. BSc. Technological University Dublin.
- Effect of enrichment on the behaviour of African spurred tortoises. BSc. University College Dublin.
- Effect of enrichment on the behaviour of Indian star tortoises. BSc. University College Dublin.
- Effect of microclimate on captive dhole habitat usage. BSc. University College Dublin.
- Environmental enrichment program for Amur tigers. International Accreditation and Registration Centre.
- Environmental surveillance of bird enclosures: a one health study of pathogen transmission and antimicrobial resistance. BSc. Technological University Dublin.
- Giraffe diet analysis using Metabarcoding. BSc. University College Dublin.
- HACCP kitchen quality & carnivore enclosures. BCs. Technological University Dublin.
- Investigating the influence of environmental enrichment on spatial use in Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*) at Dublin Zoo. BSc. University College Dublin.
- *Lemur catta* behaviour at Dublin Zoo. CMZAA/DMZAA. National Zoo Academy.
- Microbiome diversity and its correlation with health parameters in captive animals at Dublin Zoo. BSc. University College Dublin.
- A novel scent enrichment to enhance welfare and trigger mating behaviours in red ruffed lemurs (*Varecia rubra*). MSc. University of Florence.
- Phytoremediation of the Flamingo Lagoon (in situ). BSc. Technological University Dublin.
- Rhythmic behaviours in siamangs (*Symphalangus syndactylus*). PhD. University of Turin.
- Sperm Whale Scale: Northeast Atlantic sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) population size, sex and age structure assessment. PhD. Atlantic Technological

University.

- Traits predicting species progression in the IUCN Conservation Cycle. MSc. Trinity College Dublin.
- The use of ultrasonography to monitor fetal development in endangered species. BSc. University College Dublin.
- What various behaviours do captive orangutans exhibit while visitors are present versus when visitors are absent. Level 5. Sparsholt College.

Multi-institution research

- Advocacy in digital democracy. King's College London / University of Copenhagen.
- An analysis of the critical public display components that make up the design of great animal exhibit in zoos. PhD. Universiti Sains Malaysia.
- Ape heart project. Twycross Zoo / EAZA Biobank / University of Nottingham / University of Birmingham.
- Ape brain connectomics. Max-Planck Institute for Anthropology in Leipzig.
- Assessing the vitamin D status in zoo-housed great apes. EAZA / University of Nottingham.
- Cancer prevalence in vertebrates and relationship to life history traits. PhD. University of Nottingham / University of Birmingham.
- Darwin Tree of Life Project. University College Dublin.
- EAZA Elephant TAG EEHV Fund. Ongoing. EAZA / Erasmus University Rotterdam / University of Houston.
- Elephant milk research. Swansea University.
- An evaluation of putative dinosaur socio-sexual behaviour and its implications for paleobiology. University of Portsmouth.
- Exploring opportunities to evolve the future purposes of accredited zoos and aquariums. MSc. Auckland Zoo.
- An investigation into the prevalence and aetiology of regurgitation and reingestion (R/R), coprophagy and hair plucking in great apes in EAZA zoos. MSc. University of Chester.
- Is breeding live food more cost effective than buying from suppliers? BSc. Reaseheath University.
- Methods of formal animal welfare assessment across European zoos. PhD. University of Wolverhampton / Twycross Zoo.
- Orangutans in Ramat Gan: maternity cultures in a time of global trade and local destruction. The Max Planck Society for the History of Science.
- Parasite conservation within captive breeding and reintroduction programmes of threatened species. MSc. University of Leeds / Zoological Society of London.
- Project welfare sense. Neurogreentech / Oceanogràfic Valencia.
- Reducing mate aggression to increase breeding success in captive populations of endangered cockatoos. PhD. Copenhagen Zoo / University of Copenhagen.
- Retrospective analysis of pathological findings in captive callitrichid species. PhD. University of Portsmouth.
- A retrospective mortality review of four species of *Mauremys* turtles held in institutions in the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) between 2014 and 2024. MSc. Zoological Society of London.
- A retrospective mortality review of the common hippo EEP for the last 25 years. MSc. Utrecht University.
- The surplus animal problem: Understanding the issues for zoos in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally. University of Auckland.
- Understanding the decision-making process in the creation of zoo interpretation to incorporate more globally inclusive approaches in interpretation planning. Liverpool John Moores University.
- Utilising naïve observers in animal behaviour and welfare research: methodological developments and impacts on conservation education outcomes. PhD. Harper Adams University.

PUBLICATIONS

(Dublin Zoo staff highlighted in bold font)

Andrews, J. & **Mooney, A.** (2025). Population management, records and animal welfare. In *Zoo Animal Welfare* (pp. 299-310). CRC Press. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003429425-23>

Brereton, J. E., Spooner, S. L., Walker, S. L., **Mooney, A.**, Wilson, P., Mastromonaco, G. F., Hunter, E. & White, S. (2025). When to cryopreserve and when to let it go? A systematic review of priorities in wild animal cryobanking. *Theriogenology Wild*, 6, 100119. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.therwi.2025.100119>

Davison, S., Mascellani Bergo, A., Ward, Z. et al. Cardiometabolic disease risk in gorillas is associated with altered gut microbial metabolism. *npj Biofilms Microbiomes*, 11, 33 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41522-025-00664-3> [Dublin Zoo provided faecal samples and dietary information for this project.]

Farrelly, B. (2025). Bringing Conservation Genetics to the Classroom for Secondary School Students. *International Zoo Educators Association Journal*.

LaDue, C. A. & Schiffmann, C. (2025). Males Matter: On the Status and Future Direction of Male Elephant Management in EAZA Institutions. *Zoo Biology*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1002/zoo.70040> [Dublin Zoo completed a survey as part of this study.]

Mc Gill, N., **Bueno, M.** & Anderson, N. E. (2025). Using the Welfare Quality® framework to develop a welfare assessment protocol for captive chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*). *Animal Welfare*, 34, e54. <https://doi.org/10.1017/awf.2025.1002>

Mileham, K., Baylina, N., **Mooney, A.** & Stadler, A. (2025). Centres of Excellence, *Zooquaria* (125), 16-17. https://strapieaza.net/uploads/ZQ_125_web_85af5f05c4.pdf

Powell, D. M. (Ed.). (2025). Advancing Animal Welfare: The World Zoo And Aquarium Animal Welfare Strategy. World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA). <https://www.waza.org/aniwelstr> [General Curator Miguel Bueno contributed several case studies and contributed to the writing of Chapter 2.]

Rutherford, L., Murray, L., Holmes, L. & Williams, E. (2025). Personality in Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*): Temporal stability and methods of assessment. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 232, 112851. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2024.112851>

Simeone, C. A., **Schwitzer, N.**, Johnson, S. P., Almansa, C., Debosschere, Y., Force, J., Forsayeth, A., Gawor, J. P., Gracis, M., Holmstrom, S., Legendre, L., Mestrinho, L. A., Sogorb, A. R., Steenkamp, G., Tucker, R., Tutt, C., Urgel, I. V. & Woody, A. (2025). Management of dental disease in eared seals (family Otariidae): a Delphi approach. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2025.1619326>

CONFERENCES, TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL VISITS

February

Director Dr Christoph Schwitzer chaired a virtual Board meeting of AEECL, the Lemur Conservation Association, on the 6 February.

Dr Schwitzer attended the Dublin Chamber AGM on the 26 February on invitation from Zoological Society of Ireland (ZSI) Board member Peter McKenna.

In her role as Irish representative, Head of Conservation Education Niamh Potter hosted a BIAZA CEC Irish Regional meeting on 10 February at Emerald Park, with representatives from Galway Atlantaquarium, Emerald Park, Exploris NI, Belfast Zoo, Secret Valley and Ardmore Farm in attendance.

Conservation & Science Manager Dr Andrew Mooney delivered a talk 'Resurrecting Biodiversity: Realising the Conservation Potential of Biobanking' to the Department of Animal and Veterinary Sciences Seminar Series, University of Vermont.

Dr Mooney contributed to a panel discussion entitled 'Reversing the Red: National Species Impact' at the Reverse the Red Day Online Forum.

March

The DEAI Working Group held an event in Society House to celebrate International Women's Day, featuring a panel discussion with four female panellists who talked about their roles at Dublin Zoo; these included ZSI Chair Carmel O'Connor.

Niamh Potter and Dr Christoph Schwitzer attended the EAZA Conservation Education conference at Chester Zoo from 18 to 20 March. Niamh presented two talks at the conference: one on strategic planning for volunteering and one on

how our conservation education work links to the WAZA CE strategy. Christoph took part in a panel discussion on leadership in conservation education.

Dr Mooney attended the WAZA 2030 Conservation Goal Summit, hosted by Seattle Aquarium.

Behaviour and Welfare Scientist Lucy Stratford commenced EAZA's 'Introduction to Animal Welfare Assessments' and 'Introduction to Animal Welfare' online training course.

As part of the Conservation Lecture series, Dr Jonny Hanson, conservationist and author, delivered an evening talk on his work concerning human-wildlife co-existence.

April

Dr Mooney, Species Survival Officer Louise Enderby and Dr Schwitzer attended the annual partnership review meeting of the Centre for Species Survival: Ireland (CSS: Ireland), conducted by the IUCN SSC Chair's office.

Dr Schwitzer attended the EAZA Directors' Days at Oceanogràfic Valencia from the 1 to the 4 April, where he was elected to the role of EAZA Chair.

Louise Enderby attended the Chartered Institute of Environmental Ecology Managers Conference at Fota Island Resort.

Lucy Stratford delivered a workshop entitled 'Incorporating Personality for Positive Zoo Animal Welfare' as part of the All-Ireland Welfare Forum at Moore Park, Cork.

Lucy Stratford presented a paper 'Catering for individuality in zoo animal management: an elephant case study' at the regional meeting of the International Society of Applied

Ethology, at Moore Park, Cork.

As part of the Conservation Lecture series, Dr Ellen Williams (Harper Adams University) and Lucy Stratford (Dublin Zoo) delivered a lunchtime and an evening talk on their work assessing personality in zoo-housed elephants.

Dr Mooney was appointed a member of the BIAZA Membership & Licensing Committee.

The Conservation Education Team went on a team trip to Explorium, the National Sport and Science Centre in Sandyford, Dublin, to see their science exhibition and learn about the activities and engagement they have on offer.

Volunteer coordinator Muireann Walshe attended the National Volunteer Management Conference in Athlone.

May

Dr Schwitzer chaired a board meeting of AEEL (Association Européenne pour l'Étude et la Conservation des Lémuriens), the Lemur Conservation Association.

Miguel Bueno, Dr Mooney and Dr Schwitzer hosted the Operational Group meeting of the Breeding Waders EIP at Dublin Zoo.

Miguel Bueno and Lucy Stratford attended the fourth International Symposium on Zoo Animal Welfare (ISZAW) at Brookfield Zoo, Chicago; Lucy presented two posters: Developing a Welfare Master Plan for Dublin Zoo, and Incorporating Personality for Positive Zoo Animal Welfare.

Lucy Stratford attended the BIAZA Technology & Zoo Animal Welfare Meeting at Nottingham Trent University, UK.

Community and Campaign Coordinator Roseanne Leddy completed 'Climate Justice Education Training for Community Workers', run by Warrenmount Adult Education Centre, Dublin

Niamh Potter hosted a BIAZA Irish Region meeting online.

June

Dr Schwitzer recorded a video message for the French Zoo Association's (AfDPZ) official launch of their IUCN Centre for Species Survival: France.

Dr Mooney attended the BIAZA Annual Conference hosted by Jimmy's Farm and Wildlife Park.

Lucy Stratford attended the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) online International Animal Welfare Conference.

As part of the Conservation Lecture series, Dr Laurie Marker, founder and director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), delivered a lunchtime and an evening talk with discussions about CCF conservation work in Namibia and Somaliland.

Louise Enderby attended the Education Leaders' Forum for Nature Restoration held in the Ashling Hotel, Dublin.

Niamh Potter attended an Education Leaders' Forum on Nature Restoration, a stakeholder engagement programme on Ireland's Nature Restoration Plan.

Acting Head of Conservation Education Martha Whelan completed Designated Liaison Person training, run online through Barnardos.

July

Dr Mooney delivered a talk 'The contribution of EAZA members to the conservation of European Species' at the BIAZA Research Conference in Chester Zoo; Lucy Stratford also attended the conference.

As part of the Conservation Lecture Series, and to mark the official launch of Dublin Zoo's partnership with Selamatkan Yaki, a talk was delivered by Prof. Vicky Melfi, founder, and Dr Susan Wiper, programme director of Selamatkan Yaki. Mrs Sahadatun Donatirin, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Indonesian Embassy in London, attended as a special guest.

In her role as Irish representative, Niamh Potter hosted the quarterly BIAZA Conservation Education Committee meeting.

Dr Mooney delivered a presentation 'Maximizing the potential for living cell banks to contribute to global conservation priorities' at the virtual 2nd Annual Species360 Conservation Science Alliance Research Symposium.

Educator Victoria Eigler was awarded a 16-week conservation internship with the Conservation and Science Team, starting in mid-July.

Martha Whelan completed training in Monitoring and Evaluation in Conservation Education, run online by Chester Zoo.

August

Dr Mooney and Louise Enderby visited Centre for Species Survival partners in the UK, including Hertfordshire Zoo (CSS: UK) and The Big Cat Sanctuary (CSS: Big Cats).

Dr Schwitzer chaired a meeting of the EAZA Executive Committee at Dublin Zoo.

Dr Schwitzer attended meetings of the Primate Specialist Group (PSG) Executive Committee and the PSG Madagascar Section, in his role as Deputy Chair of the IUCN SSC PSG.

September

Dr Schwitzer chaired the opening and closing session at the EAZA Annual Conference in Łódź, Poland, 10 to 14 September. He chaired various meetings of the Executive Committee and EAZA Council and attended meetings of the Membership & Ethics Committee.

Dr Schwitzer chaired the AGM of AEEL, the Lemur Conservation Association.

Dr Mooney and Louise Enderby attended the EAZA Annual Conference in Łódź, Poland. Dr Mooney delivered a talk 'The contribution of EAZA members to the conservation of European Species' to the EAZA Records Group Meeting; and chaired and gave a presentation to the EAZA Cryopreservation Interest Group. He also presented a poster 'The contribution of EAZA members to the conservation of European Species'.

The quarterly Discover Centres Network meeting convened by Research Ireland was hosted at Dublin Zoo. The day included a presentation from Martha Whelan detailing the educational work at Dublin Zoo and a tour with Educator Brandon Farrelly in the afternoon. 31 education practitioners from organisations across Ireland were in attendance.

October

Dr Mooney and Louise Enderby attended the IUCN World Conservation Congress. Dr Mooney contributed to a panel discussion 'Accelerating the Recovery of Life on Earth', while Louise delivered a workshop entitled 'Information Session on Citizen Science' at the Nature-Based Education Pavilion.

Dr Mooney delivered a talk 'Resurrecting Biodiversity: Realising the Conservation Potential of Biobanking' to the Department of Animal and Veterinary Sciences Seminar Series at the University of Vermont.

Louise Enderby facilitated the 'BIAZA Undulate Skate Species Action Plan Workshop' at SeaLife Birmingham, England.

Louise Enderby delivered a talk 'The contribution of EAZA members to the conservation of European Species' and presented a poster 'The State of Ireland's Biodiversity: a Gap Analysis' at the BIAZA Conservation Conference in the Yorkshire Wildlife Park, England.

Dr Schwitzer, Dr Mooney and Martha Whelan attended a meeting in TU Dublin on 22 October to meet different faculty members, tour the campus and discuss possible opportunities for future collaborative work.

November

Dublin Zoo hosted a Marine Mammal Strandings Workshop delivered in partnership with the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group. This was organised by head vet, Frank O'Sullivan, in conjunction with the Conservation & Science Team and the Events Team. It brought together experts from across Ireland and the UK, and was attended by representatives from NGOs, academic institutions and state agencies. Dr Schwitzer delivered the opening address.

Dr Mooney delivered a public talk 'Wildlife Heroes: How Zoos Help Save Species' at Explorium – National Sport and Science Centre as part of their Science Week activities.

In November, Dr Mooney and Louise Enderby attended the first stakeholder meeting for the development of a national Species Action Plan for the white-clawed crayfish.

Martha Whelan and Roseanne Leddy attended the annual BIAZA Conservation Education Conference in Hertfordshire Zoo from 11 to 13 November.

PhD candidate Seán O'Callaghan, who is based at the Marine and Freshwater Research Centre (MFRC) at the Atlantic Technological University (ATU), delivered a talk about his work as part of Dublin Zoo's Conservation Lecture Series. His research project is looking at the physiology and ecology of sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*) across Norway, Ireland and Portugal.

Dr Mooney, Registrar Kelly Taponen and veterinarian Emma Flynn delivered a talk 'Conservation Science and Samples at Dublin Zoo' at the UCD School of Biology and Environmental Science Seminar Series.

Lucy Stratford delivered a guest lecture 'Behaviour & Welfare at Dublin Zoo' at the School of Biological Sciences Seminar Series, Queen's University Belfast.

Louise Enderby completed the IUCN CPSG 'Ex Situ Conservation Assessment' course and the IUCN SSC's 'IUCN Green Status of Species Training' course.

December

Claire Damicog observed in a primary school early years setting on 10 December to support her professional development and to strengthen our Parent & Toddler offering.

Conservation Education Office Coordinator Christine O'Connor completed a project management course in UCD supported by the Staff Development Fund.

CENSUS OF ANIMALS IN DUBLIN ZOO DURING 2025

Summary of census of animals in Dublin Zoo on 31 December 2025

Taxon	Total Species	Total Specimens
Mammals	31	124
Birds	10	171
Reptiles	14	41
Amphibians	1	1 group
Total vertebrates	56	336
Invertebrates	3	3 colonies

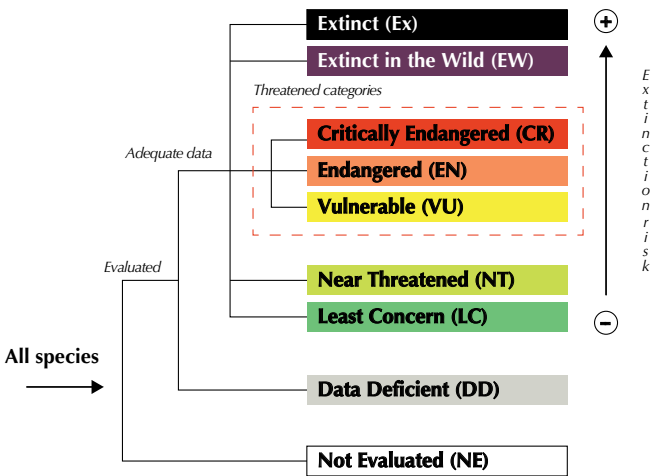
Summary of births and hatchings of vertebrate animals in Dublin Zoo during 2025

Taxon	Total Species	Total Specimens
Mammals	5	10
Birds	3	14
Reptiles	2	10
Amphibians	1	Multiple in group
Total vertebrates	11	34

Summary of animal taxa on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species in Dublin Zoo during 2025

IUCN status	Number of species/ subspecies
Extinct in the Wild – EW	-
Critically Endangered – CR	12
Endangered – EN	15
Vulnerable – VU	12
Near Threatened – NT	5
Least Concern - LC	21
Not Evaluated - NE	4

Source: IUCN 2021. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.



Version 2021-1. <https://www.iucnredlist.org>

During 2025, Dublin Zoo held 69 non-domestic species/subspecies, of which 39 (56%) have been assessed as being globally threatened, i.e. falling into the IUCN Red List categories from Vulnerable to Extinct in the Wild. A further five (7%) species/subspecies fell into the Near Threatened category. The remaining species/subspecies are either of Least Concern (30%) or have not been evaluated yet (5%).

Note – the domestic breeds in Family Farm are not included in these figures.

Summary of species management programmes which Dublin Zoo was part of during 2025

Number of EEPs (EAZA Ex situ Programme)	36
Number of European studbooks (ESB)	3
Number of species not part of a managed programme	18

Key to Census Tables

-  Part of an EEP (EAZA Ex situ Programme/ European Endangered species Programme).
- ESB Recorded in a European studbook.
- Column 1:** The number of animals in the collection at 1 January 2025.
- Column 2:** The number of animals received in 2025 through donation, loan or exchange.
- Column 3:** The number of animals born or hatched during 2025.
- Column 4:** The number of animals dying within 30 days of birth or hatching, in 2025.
- Column 5:** The number of animals dying having survived more than 30 days, in 2025.
- Column 6:** The number of animals leaving the collection through donation, loan, exchange, theft etc. during 2025.
- Column 7:** The number of animals in the collection at 31 December 2025.

The first figure indicates the male numbers, the second female numbers, and the third unsexed numbers, e.g. 1.2.4 reads 1 male, 2 females and 4 unsexed specimens.

Male	Female	Unknown
♂	♀	?

This census does not include animals which have been sent on loan to other collections, nor does it include wild animals living within the zoo, e.g. many native bird species.

	CITES	IUCN Status	SPECIES		Total at 01.01.25	Arrivals	Births	Deaths within 30 Days	Deaths	Departures	Total at 31.12.25
			VERTEBRATES	VERTEBRATA							
			CLASS: MAMMALS	MAMMALIA							
			PRIMATES	PRIMATES							
	I/A	EN	Ring-tailed lemur	<i>Lemur catta</i>	4. 1. 0				1. 0. 0		3. 1. 0
	I/A	CR	Red ruffed lemur	<i>Varecia rubra</i>	1. 4. 0				1. 0. 0		0. 4. 0
	I/A	VU	Goeldi's monkey	<i>Callimico goeldii</i>	1. 1. 0				0. 1. 0	1.0.0	0. 0. 0
	II/B	LC	Bolivian squirrel monkey	<i>Saimiri boliviensis boliviensis</i>	4. 0. 0			1. 0. 0			3. 0. 0
	II/B	LC	White-faced saki	<i>Pithecia pithecia</i>	3. 1. 0						3. 1. 0
	I/A	EN	White-naped mangabey	<i>Cercocebus lunulatus</i>	3. 5. 0		1. 0. 0				4. 5. 0
	II/B	CR	Sulawesi crested macaque	<i>Macaca nigra</i>	13. 4. 0				1. 0. 0		12. 4. 0
	I/A	EN	Siamang	<i>Symphalangus syndactylus</i>	2. 1. 0						2. 1. 0
	I/A	CR	Western lowland gorilla	<i>Gorilla gorilla gorilla</i>	2. 4. 0						2. 4. 0
	I/A	EN	Chimpanzee	<i>Pan troglodytes</i>	2. 0. 0						2. 0. 0

	CITES	IUCN Status	SPECIES		Total at 01.01.25	Arrivals	Births	Deaths within 30 Days	Deaths	Departures	Total at 31.12.25
	I/A	CR	Western chimpanzee	<i>Pan troglodytes verus</i>	1. 2. 0						1. 2. 0
	I/A	CR	Bornean orangutan	<i>Pongo pygmaeus pygmaeus</i>	0. 2. 0	1. 1. 0			0. 1. 0		1. 2. 0
	II/B	NT	Venezuelan red howler	<i>Alouatta seniculus</i>	1. 0. 0	0. 1. 0			0. 1. 0		1. 0. 0
	I/A	EN	Aye aye	<i>Daubentonia madagascariensis</i>	3. 1. 0						3. 1. 0
			XENARTHANS	XENARTHRA							
ESB	NL	LC	Linne's two-toed sloth	<i>Choloepus didactylus</i>	1. 1. 0						1. 1. 0
			CARNIVORES	CARNIVORA							
	II/A	LC	Grey wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>	5. 0. 0				5. 0. 0		0. 0. 0
	I/A	EN	Red panda	<i>Ailurus fulgens fulgens</i>	1. 4. 0						1. 4. 0
	NL	LC	Slender-tailed meerkat	<i>Suricata suricatta</i>	3. 0. 0				3. 0. 0		0. 0. 0
	I/A	EN	Asiatic lion	<i>Panthera leo persica</i>	1. 3. 0						1. 3. 0
	I/A	EN	Amur tiger	<i>Panthera tigris altaica</i>	1. 0. 0	0. 1. 0					1. 1. 0
	I/A	VU	Snow leopard	<i>Panthera uncia</i>	1. 1. 0						1. 1. 0
	NL	LC	California sealion	<i>Zalophus californianus</i>	0. 3. 0						0. 3. 0
	II/B	EN	Chinese dhole	<i>Cuon alpinus lepturus</i>	5. 0. 0				1. 0. 0		4. 0. 0
	IA	VU	Northeast African cheetah	<i>Acinonyx jubatus soemmeringii</i>	0. 1. 0	0. 2. 0	0. 0. 3	0. 0. 3		0. 2. 0	0. 1. 0
			ELEPHANTS	PROBOSCIDEA							
	I/A	EN	Asiatic elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>	1. 3. 0						1. 3. 0
			ODD-TOED UNGULATES	PERISSODACTYLA							
	NL	NT	Grant's zebra	<i>Equus quagga boehmi</i>	1. 4. 0						1. 4. 0
	II/B	VU	South American tapir	<i>Tapirus terrestris</i>	0. 2. 0						0. 2. 0
	I/A	NT	Southern white rhinoceros	<i>Ceratotherium simum simum</i>	1. 5. 0						1. 5. 0
			EVEN-TOED UNGULATES	CETARTIODACTYLA							
	NL	LC	Red river hog	<i>Potamochoerus porcus</i>	2. 0. 0	1. 1. 0			1. 0. 0		2. 1. 0
	II/B	VU	Hippopotamus	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>	0. 2. 0						0. 2. 0

	CITES	IUCN Status	SPECIES		Total at 01.01.25	Arrivals	Births	Deaths within 30 Days	Deaths	Departures	Total at 31.12.25
	II/B	VU	Giraffe	<i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>	2. 1. 0						2. 1. 0
	II/B	CR	Nubian giraffe	<i>Giraffa camelopardalis camelopardalis</i>	2. 2. 0						2. 2. 0
	I/A	EN	Okapi	<i>Okapia johnstoni</i>	1. 1. 0		0. 1. 0				1. 2. 0
	NL	CR	Eastern bongo	<i>Tragelaphus eurycerus isaaci</i>	0. 2. 0		0. 1. 0				0. 3. 0
	I/A	EN	Scimitar-horned oryx	<i>Oryx dammah</i>	0. 5. 0				0. 1. 0		0. 4. 0
			DOMESTIC								
	NL		Tamworth pig	<i>Sus scrofa scrofa tamworth</i>	1. 0. 0	0. 1. 0	0. 0. 4	0. 0. 1		0. 0. 3	1. 1. 0
	NL		Friesian cow	<i>Bos taurus taurus friesian</i>	0. 1. 0						0. 1. 0
	NL		Kerry cow	<i>Bos taurus taurus kerry</i>	0. 2. 0					0. 1. 0	0. 1. 0
	NL		Small East African goat	<i>Capra hircus domestic small east african</i>	2. 2. 0				0. 2. 0		2. 0. 0
	NL		Domestic Sheep	<i>Ovis aries</i>	0. 5. 0	0. 2. 0				0. 5. 0	0. 2. 0
	NL		European rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	2. 0. 0				1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0	0. 0. 0
			CLASS: BIRDS	AVES							
			PENGUINS	SPHENISCIFORMES							
	I/A	VU	Humboldt penguin	<i>Spheniscus humboldti</i>	11. 7. 0		0. 0. 5	0. 0. 1			14. 8. 0
			HERONS/STORKS	CICONIIFORMES							
	I/A	EN	Waldrapp ibis	<i>Geronticus eremita</i>	14. 13. 0		0. 0. 5		0. 2. 3		15. 12. 0
			FLAMINGOS	PHOENICOPTERIFORMES							
	II/B	NT	Chilean flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus chilensis</i>	54. 42. 0				0. 1. 0		54. 41. 0
			GALLINACEOUS BIRDS	GALLIFORMES							
	III/C	LC	Common peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	2. 2. 0		0. 0. 4	0. 0. 1	0. 0. 2	0. 0. 3	1. 1. 0
	NL	VU	Crested wood partridge	<i>Rollulus rouloul</i>	1. 0. 0				1. 0. 0		0. 0. 0

	CITES	IUCN Status	SPECIES		Total at 01.01.25	Arrivals	Births	Deaths within 30 Days	Deaths	Departures	Total at 31.12.25
  	I/A	CR	PARROTS	PSITTACIFORMES							
			Citron-crested cockatoo	<i>Cacatua sulphurea citrinocristata</i>	1. 3. 0					0. 2. 0	1. 1. 0
	NL	VU	HORNBILLS ETC.	CORACIIFORMES							
			Abyssinian ground hornbill	<i>Bucorvus abyssinicus</i>	1. 1. 0						1. 1. 0
	NL	NE	DOMESTIC FOWL								
			Indian runner duck	<i>Anas platyrhynchos domestic indian_runner</i>	1. 5. 0						1. 5. 0
	I/A	LC	OSTRICHES	STRUTHIONIFORMES							
			North African ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus camelus</i>	0. 0. 0	1. 0. 0					1. 0. 0
	I/A	LC	Common ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>	0. 0. 0	0. 2. 0					0. 2. 0
	NL	LC	PELICANS ETC.	PELECANIFORMES							
			Black-crowned night heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	0. 0. 0	1. 0. 3		0. 0. 1			1. 0. 2
	II/A	LC	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	0. 0. 0	5. 4. 0					5. 4. 0
	NL	LC	DUCKS, GEESE ETC.	ANSERIFORMES							
			White-faced whistling duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	0. 0. 0	2. 4. 0					2. 4. 0
  	I/A	CR	CLASS: REPTILES	REPTILIA							
			TURTLES	TESTUDINES							
	I/A	CR	Annam pond turtle	<i>Mauremys annamensis</i>	6. 3. 2				0. 0. 1		6. 3. 1
	III/C	CR	Chinese stripe-necked turtle	<i>Mauremys sinensis</i>	1. 0. 0						1. 0. 0
	NL	NE	Central America wood turtle	<i>Rhinoclemmys pulcherrima manni</i>	0. 2. 0						0. 2. 0
	II/B	NE	Red-footed tortoise	<i>Chelonoidis carbonaria</i>	0. 3. 0						0. 3. 0

	CITES	IUCN Status	SPECIES		Total at 01.01.25	Arrivals	Births	Deaths within 30 Days	Deaths	Departures	Total at 31.12.25
	I/A	VU	Indian star tortoise	<i>Geochelone elegans</i>	0. 2. 4					0. 0. 4	0. 2. 0
	II/B	EN	African spurred tortoise	<i>Centrochelys sulcata</i>	1. 1. 0						1. 1. 0
			CROCODILES	CROCODILIA							
	I/A	LC	West African Nile crocodile	<i>Crocodylus suchus</i>	1. 1. 0						1. 1. 0
			LIZARDS	SAURIA							
	NL	LC	Green crested lizard	<i>Bronchocela cristatella</i>	3. 0. 0				1. 0. 0	2. 0. 0	0. 0. 0
ESB	I/A	CR	Turquoise dwarf gecko	<i>Lygodactylus williamsi</i>	0. 1. 0	2. 0. 0	0. 0. 7	0. 0. 3	0. 0. 1		2. 1. 3
ESB	I/A	EN	Lau banded iguana	<i>Brachylophus fasciatus</i>	1. 0. 0						1. 0. 0
	II/B	LC	Giant Madagascar day gecko	<i>Phelsuma grandis</i>	1. 2. 0		0. 0. 3				1. 2. 3
			SNAKES	SERPENTES							
	II/B	LC	Green tree python	<i>Morelia viridis</i>	1. 0. 0						1. 0. 0
	II/B	VU	Burmese python	<i>Python bivittatus</i>	2. 0. 0						2. 0. 0
	II/B	NT	Royal python	<i>Python regius</i>	0. 0. 2						0. 0. 2
	/D	LC	King ratsnake	<i>Elaphe carinata</i>	1. 0. 0						1. 0. 0
	NL	LC	Cornsnake	<i>Pantherophis guttatus</i>	1. 0. 0					1. 0. 0	0. 0. 0
	NL	LC	Viperine snake	<i>Natrix maura</i>	0. 0. 1				0. 0. 1		0. 0. 0
			CLASS: AMPHIBIANS	AMPHIBIA							
			FROGS	ANURA							
	II	VU	Phantasmal poison dart frog	<i>Epipedobates tricolor</i>	1 group						1 group

	CITES	IUCN Status	SPECIES		Total at 01.01.25	Arrivals	Births	Deaths within 30 Days	Deaths	Departures	Total at 31.12.25
			INVERTEBRATES	INVERTEBRATA							
			CLASS: INSECTS	INSECTA							
			STICK INSECTS	PHASMATODEA							
	NL	NE	Indian green stick insects	<i>Carausius morosus</i>	1 colony						1 colony
	NL	LC	Macleays spectre	<i>Extatosoma tiaratum</i>	1 colony				1 colony		none
	NL	CR	Black beauty stick insect	<i>Peruphasma schultei</i>	1 colony						1 colony
	NL	NE	Zompro's/Thai stick insect	<i>Parapachymorpha zomproi</i>	1 colony						1 colony

* approximate numbers

FOTA WILDLIFE PARK: DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Visitor attendance for 2025 totalled 408,453, representing a 4.7% decrease from 428,745 in 2024. The first three quarters of the year tracked consistently ahead of 2024 figures, with strong attendance recorded across the Easter and summer holiday periods supported by the introduction of a new commercial visitor attraction, the Panoramic Wheel. The overall decrease in annual attendance is attributable entirely to the government-mandated closure of Fota Wildlife Park from 13 October to 19 December 2025, following the detection of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N1) in the Park's bird population.

AVIAN INFLUENZA OUTBREAK

On 13 October 2025, Fota Wildlife Park was directed to close by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) following the detection of H5N1 in the Park's greylag goose population. This occurred within the context of a broader national H5N1 wildlife disease emergency driven by wild bird movements, affecting multiple sites across Ireland. It represented a force majeure event entirely beyond the Park's control, and one that reflects the particular challenge of facilities maintaining large outdoor avian collections in natural wetland environments.

The confirmation of the virus in the greylag goslings was devastating for the team. In response, stringent biosecurity protocols were immediately put in place, complementing an already extensive and well-established immunisation programme. The Park Director and Senior Management Team responded swiftly, ensuring every dimension of the crisis - operational, financial, regulatory, and communicative - was managed with close attention and clear accountability. The Board of Governors convened an Avian Influenza Management Sub-Committee, which met weekly with the Senior Management Team throughout the crisis to oversee

the operational response, financial impact assessment, and stakeholder engagement. The Park worked in close cooperation with DAFM and the National Disease Control Centre (NDCC) to implement comprehensive biosecurity measures, including the complete separation of the Park's bird collection into separate epidemiological units. The Park's pre-existing vaccination programme proved highly effective, with all vaccinated birds remaining healthy and disease free throughout the outbreak.

A government-enforced housing order required all free-roaming birds across the Park to be brought into controlled indoor housing. Meeting the strict epidemiological separation criteria set by DAFM and NDCC necessitated very difficult decisions. The free-roaming bird populations that had historically given the Park much of its distinctive open character, including species such as peafowl and guineafowl that visitors had enjoyed for decades, were among those lost through humane euthanasia. Painful as this was, it was necessary to protect the conservation-priority collection, all of which survived the outbreak intact. This action was taken in close consultation with DAFM veterinary officers, the Veterinary and Animal Care Teams, and the Ethics Committee. The remaining birds subsequently underwent two full rounds of PCR testing, conducted 21 days apart, with all tests returning negative results for H5N1. Media coverage of the Park's response to this national crisis and public sentiment was consistently sympathetic, recognising the conservation importance of the Park, the excellent standards of animal care and the government-mandated nature of the closure. The goodwill shown by the public and the wider media was a source of genuine encouragement to a team navigating one of the most demanding periods in the Park's history.

Sincere gratitude is due to An Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD and Minister of State Christopher O'Sullivan TD, whose

emergency support of €700,000, channelled through the National Parks and Wildlife Service, protected vital native species conservation programmes, and safeguarded the decades of investment in conservation infrastructure the Park has built.

The Park fulfilled all DAFM and NDCC reopening requirements and welcomed visitors back on 20 December 2025 with a community event hosted in the Education, Conservation and Research Centre (ECRC). We wish to acknowledge and thank the local and national community, the chambers of commerce, and business partners for the remarkable goodwill shown to the Park and its team throughout this challenging period.



PARK ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENTS

STRATEGIC PLANNING

2025 marked a pivotal year in Fota Wildlife Park's long-term strategic development. A comprehensive planning process, led by the Park Director and supported by external consultants Teneo and Wilson Creative, engaged staff and stakeholders across all departments to establish the Park's Purpose, Vision, Mission, and Values. The 2027–2031 Strategic Plan is built around four pillars: Protecting Wildlife Powered by Science; Leading with World Class Animal Care;

Inspiring Action through Education and Experience; and Building a Sustainable Future for Fota Wildlife Park. The plan will be presented for formal Board approval during 2026.



IUCN MEMBERSHIP

2025 saw Fota Wildlife Park admitted to membership of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a recognition of the Park's standing as a conservation organisation of national and international significance. Membership of the IUCN places Fota Wildlife Park within the world's most influential conservation networks. This membership reflects the Park's conservation credentials and opens new avenues for international collaboration.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Capital investment continued in 2025, supported by the Government through the Office of Public Works (OPW), maintaining the sustained infrastructure programme that has been transforming the Park's facilities since 2021. Capital grant funding of €1.4 million for 2025 was approved by the Government through the OPW to deliver on an ambitious range of projects at the Park, with €713,000 received by year end. By agreement with the OPW, €686,000 was deferred to 2026 to align with the completion of capital projects placed on hold during the Park closure. The Governors wish to thank the Government, through the OPW, for their continued support and for their understanding in deferring grant funding

(Middle left) The Carrigtwohill Gospel Choir singing Christmas Carols at the reopening event at Fota Wildlife Park on Saturday, 20 December 2025.

(Top right) The Fota Wildlife Park senior management team and staff during the 2025 strategic planning process, which established the foundations of the Park's 2027–2031 Strategic Plan.

to 2026 in response to the unprecedented H5N1 outbreak.

Construction of the new Siamang Gibbon House recommenced in 2025. The new building provides purpose-designed indoor accommodation for the Siamang gibbon family, ensuring their welfare is fully supported across all weather conditions, while purpose-built viewing areas will give visitors the opportunity to observe this endangered species display their arboreal behaviour up close. The project represents a meaningful step forward in both animal welfare standards and visitor experience.

Drainage and resurfacing works in the operations yard were completed during the year, delivering significant improvements to the operational safety and efficiency of one of the Park's most active service areas. The resurfaced yard, which serves as a daily working environment for animal care, operations and maintenance staff, and a highlight of the Park's VIP behind-the-scenes tour programme, now provides a uniform, well drained surface that supports both safer operations and visitor experience.

Substantial research and tendering works were undertaken on the expansion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, a critical piece of infrastructure underpinning the Park's capacity to operate sustainably at current visitor volumes and to support future growth. The expanded facility will ensure regulatory compliance, environmental sustainability, and the operational capacity required for the Park's long-term growth. Complementing this, plans were advanced for a new Dung Stead and Composting Facility, converting a significant operational byproduct into a managed environmental asset to be used in recycling nutrients across the site.

The gift shop expansion and upgrade project progressed

through detailed design and costing phases during the year. The planned refurbishment will create a significantly enhanced retail environment for visitors, with a new layout designed to integrate the shopping experience naturally within the visitor journey and an aesthetic that reflects the Park's conservation identity. This project was postponed due to the Park closure and delivery was completed in Q1 2026.

COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

PANORAMIC WHEEL

In spring 2025, Fota Wildlife Park introduced a Panoramic Wheel through a new commercial partnership, bringing a striking new dimension to the visitor experience on Fota Island. Positioned in the Savannah area of the Park, the temporary attraction offered visitors an aerial perspective of the Park's vast habitats and the unique natural landscape of Cork Harbour. Its introduction drove a significant increase in visitor attendance during the spring and Easter period, extended average dwell times, and contributed to increased per-capita visitor spending.

The attraction achieved exceptional visitor recognition. Research conducted by Ipsos/Behaviour and Attitudes in summer 2025 found that 73% of visitors were aware of the Panoramic Wheel, of whom 42% stated that it influenced their decision to visit the Park and 47% rode the attraction. The Panoramic Wheel operated through the summer season and was supported by a multi-channel marketing campaign across outdoor, digital, broadcast, and print media, delivering substantial regional and national visibility for the Park at the start of the tourism season. The response from the public was incredibly positive and it was decided to extend the attraction until the end of the summer.



RETAIL AND CATERING PERFORMANCE

Retail performance showed year-on-year growth through the first three quarters of 2025, supported by increased visitor dwell times and the relocation of the ice cream truck to the main plaza, which had a significant positive impact on revenue. Catering operations continued to perform well under Kudos Catering across the Savannah Café, Oasis Restaurant, and event catering in the ECRC. The ECRC continued to grow its commercial bookings pipeline, hosting corporate clients alongside academic and non-commercial events throughout the year.

ANIMAL CARE

2025 was a very difficult year for the Animal Care Team. The detection of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in October and the subsequent government-mandated closure placed unprecedented demands on staff, requiring swift and difficult decisions to be made under significant pressure and in deeply distressing circumstances.

The free-roaming Patagonian mara group suffered losses which took intense veterinary research to understand. Following postmortem, the deaths were linked to an infection, which caused a rapid decline in affected animals despite every veterinary intervention.

(Top) The Panoramic Wheel, introduced in spring 2025, offered visitors an aerial view of the Park's habitats and the natural landscape of Cork Harbour.



Against this backdrop, Fota Wildlife Park maintained its commitment to the highest standards of animal welfare throughout 2025, a commitment formally recognised at the annual zoo inspection. The birth of Ireland's first drill monkey (*Mandrillus leucophaeus*) in July, a male born to long-established residents Lewa and Ekona, represented a landmark conservation moment for a critically endangered species with an estimated wild population of only 3,000 to 4,000 individuals. The Animal Care Team also welcomed red panda cubs (*Ailurus fulgens*), ring-tailed lemurs (*Lemur catta*), European bison (*Bison bonasus*), and François langurs (*Trachypithecus francoisi*) among the year's notable arrivals which is a testament to the levels of care given by the team. Sadly, the Rothschild giraffe breeding programme experienced the heartbreak of two calf losses in May however both breeding females recovered fully under veterinary monitoring.



The genetic diversity of the Park's Northern cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus soemmeringii*) coalition was enhanced through the arrival of a male from Wadi Al Safa Wildlife Centre in Dubai. Humboldt penguin (*Spheniscus humboldti*) numbers were strengthened through arrivals from Dingle Ocean Aquarium and Parc Zoologique d'Amiens, France. Female Nubian

(Far left) Ireland's first drill monkey, born at Fota Wildlife Park in July 2025.
(Bottom left) Red panda cubs born at Fota Wildlife Park in 2025.

giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) 'Nóinín' was successfully transferred to Blair Drummond Safari Park, Scotland, as part of the coordinated EEP breeding programme.



Throughout the year, the dedicated animal care team provided excellent welfare management, ensuring the health and wellbeing of the Park's diverse collection while addressing natural life cycle events with the skill and compassion that defines their approach to animal care.

CONSERVATION

2025 was a significant year for native species conservation at Fota Wildlife Park, reinforcing the Park's position as a leader in native species recovery.

DUNLIN HEADSTARTING PROGRAMME

On 30 May 2025, Fota Wildlife Park became the first facility in Ireland and only the second in Europe to successfully hatch dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) under a recognised headstarting programme. Three clutches comprising eleven eggs from County Mayo sites were collected, with initial hatching success demonstrating the programme's viability. Eleven dunlin were subsequently released to the Roonagh area of County Mayo, where all birds were observed foraging alongside adult populations on established feeding grounds, confirming the success of the headstarting approach for this critically threatened wading species.

(Middle right) Nawab, a male Northern cheetah, arrives from Dubai in May 2025.



CURLEW HEADSTARTING PROGRAMME

The curlew (*Numenius arquata*) headstarting programme, delivered in partnership with the Breeding Waders European Innovation Programme (EIP) managed 24 eggs across six clutches during the 2025 season, with viable chicks successfully released at Lough Ree. The programme continued to make a measurable contribution to the recovery of one of Ireland's most threatened wading birds, a species that has seen population declines of up to 98% in recent decades.

NATTERJACK TOADS

Fota Wildlife Park has been involved in natterjack toad (*Epidalea calamita*) conservation since 2016. The 2025 season added further toadlets to a cumulative total of over 13,000 released into the Maharees in County Kerry since the programme commenced, making a significant and growing contribution to the conservation of this endangered species in Ireland.

WHITE-CLAWED CRAYFISH

Fota Wildlife Park continued with Ireland's white-clawed crayfish conservation effort throughout 2025. On 21 February, the Park hosted a significant multi-stakeholder meeting in the ECRC, convened by the NPWS, bringing together representatives from Cork County Council, the National Marine Institute, Dublin Zoo, and independent ecologists alongside the Fota Wildlife team. The purpose of the gathering was to identify arc sites across Ireland suitable for future repopulation with plague-free crayfish, a critical step in securing the long-term survival of this endangered native species. The Park's rapid development of the programme drew considerable praise from all stakeholders in attendance. Progress with on-site breeding encountered a seasonal setback when few eggs survived the winter months; however, newly established breeding tanks, designed to better regulate temperature fluctuations than the previous outdoor facilities, were commissioned to address this challenge and to strengthen breeding success in the seasons ahead.



CORNCRAKE

Fota Wildlife Park's involvement in corncrake (*Crex crex*) conservation continued to develop in 2025, with the Park deepening its engagement with the Corncrake LIFE Project in its role as an Associated Beneficiary. On 29 and 30 April, Head of Animal Care, Conservation and Research Declan O'Donovan and Registrar John McLaughlin undertook a strategic visit to Deepdale Conservation Trust in Penthorpe, UK, alongside colleagues from the Corncrake LIFE Project, to assess captive breeding and release methodologies for corncrake and curlew species. This visit evaluated the potential expansion of Fota Wildlife Park's involvement through dedicated captive breeding programmes designed to supplement wild populations of corncrake and positioned the

Park for deeper engagement in this critical species recovery initiative. The programme also attracted the attention of Minister of State Christopher O'Sullivan during his visit to the Park in March, reflecting the significance of the corncrake's recovery at national level.

EDUCATION

Fota Wildlife Park's education programmes delivered significant impact in 2025, reaching students across a broad range of age groups through formal school programmes and an ambitious public engagement calendar. School engagement remained strong, with secondary and primary bookings performing well across the year despite slightly smaller group sizes in some cohorts. The most popular modules continued to be the second level practical field ecology programme and the primary level conservation module, with the autumn term forward booking schedule already substantially committed by the end of the summer season. The Park closure coincided with these planned bookings and school visits had to be cancelled; many subsequently rescheduled to Spring 2026.

Four public education weekends were hosted in the ECRC through the spring and summer months, each drawing on specialist expertise from partner organisations: Biodiversity Weekend during National Biodiversity Week on 24-25 May, showcasing the Park's native and non-native conservation work; Wild Science Weekend on 12-13 July, bringing together Tyndall, UCC's Alimentary Pharmabiotic Centre, The Lifetime Lab, and the Irish Bee Conservation Project; Native Species Weekend on 26-27 July, drawing sixteen conservation exhibitor organisations to the ECRC; and Big Bug Bonanza on 16-17 August, engaging families with invertebrate conservation through the Irish Bee Conservation Project and the UCC Zoology Department.

(Top left) Multi-agency stakeholders convene at the ECRC, Fota Wildlife Park, on 21 February 2025, to advance Ireland's white-clawed crayfish conservation strategy. (Middle left) Minister O'Sullivan viewing the white-clawed crayfish facilities at Fota Wildlife Park during his visit on 28 March 2025.



The Education Team developed a new interactive Leaving Certificate Geo-Ecology module exploring the impact of infrastructural development on the Amazon rainforest biome, combining satellite imagery, environmental science, and critical thinking in a programme linked directly to the LC Geography curriculum. This expanded the Park's formal curriculum offering for second-level students and opened new relationships with secondary school teachers across Munster and Leinster.

Beyond the Park, the Education Team participated in the Dublin Zoo Native Species Festival on 17-18 May and the Carnival of Science at Fitzgerald Park in Cork on 7-8 June, extending Fota's public engagement reach into the wider community. The ECRC continued to grow its profile as a leading academic event venue, hosting events in partnership with UCC's INFANT Research Centre and a range of institutional partners throughout the year.

RESEARCH

Fota Wildlife Park continued to develop and deepen its research partnerships in 2025 and continued to work with the School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences (BEES), University College Cork, in the fields of animal behaviour, environmental enrichment, population biology

and ecology, alongside a growing range of collaborative research partnerships with institutions across Ireland and the UK.

POST DOCTORAL

- *The distribution of cheetahs in Iran.

DOCTORAL DEGREE

- Behaviour of the black and white ruffed lemurs.
- *An investigation into how conservation strategies, employed both in captive and wild settings, inform our understanding of animals' movement and behaviour.

MASTERS DEGREE

- Behaviour and habitat use of wallabies in autumn/winter.
- Anticipatory behaviour of felids.
- *Improving presentation and delivery of food to captive primates to increase welfare.
- Controlled administration of medicinal products.

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Non-invasive investigation of faecal glucocorticoid metabolites (fGCM) in male and female giraffe. Chester Zoo
- Understanding factors that contribute to reproductive success in managed tiger breeding programmes within European zoos. Chester Zoo
- Moorhen Re-trapping Adults for Survival (RAS). British Trust for Ornithology
- Grey Heron ringing at Fota Wildlife Park. NPWS

STAFF-LED RESEARCH - SPARSHOLT COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- Introducing seasonal variability in light and temperature to kaiser newts (*Neurergus kaiseri*) to promote breeding behaviour.

- Affiliative behaviours between a breeding pair of Roloway monkeys (*Cercopithecus roloway*).
- *The research work undertaken at Fota Wildlife Park would not have been possible without the valuable co-funding provided by Research Ireland. Research Ireland provided two thirds of the funding and Fota Wildlife Park provided the remaining third for these research projects.

ZOO LICENCE

The annual zoological licence inspection, conducted on 8 July 2025 by experienced independent zoo inspectors, delivered an exceptionally positive outcome. Operating under a newly implemented rotating inspection protocol which focused in-depth at this inspection on conservation, research, and education, the inspection concluded with comprehensive commendations across all areas reviewed. Inspectors described the Park's animal welfare programmes as of an exceptionally high standard and its conservation, education, and research delivery as 'exceptional in breadth and scope', noting that the programmes redefine what can be achieved by a passionate team and that the potential across these areas appears limitless. The inspection reinforced Fota Wildlife Park's standing as one of the leading zoological facilities in Ireland and Europe.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

2025 was one of the strongest years on record for media coverage and brand visibility at Fota Wildlife Park, with the Park's conservation milestones generating sustained national and regional media interest across multiple campaigns.

The announcement of Ireland's first drill birth in July generated comprehensive national media coverage across print, broadcast, and digital platforms, with an estimated

advertising value exceeding €100,000. The birth of red panda cubs in August achieved a total reach of 4.8 million within 24 hours, with equivalent advertising value exceeding €134,000, including a live interview on RTÉ Radio 1's Ray D'Arcy Show reaching over 90,000 listeners. Combined, these two campaigns generated a total media reach approaching 12 million and a combined advertising value of over €234,000 during the commercially critical August bank holiday period.

The Panoramic Wheel press launch on 11 March was supported by a multi-channel campaign spanning outdoor, digital, television, and radio, achieving significant reach among family audiences nationally. The Park's conservation communications partnership with the Breeding Waders EIP rolled out in March continued to deliver high-impact content, positioning Fota as a leader in native species conservation.



Following DAFM's directive to close the Park during the national avian influenza outbreak, Fota Wildlife Park implemented a proactive communications strategy to shape public understanding of the crisis and its far-reaching impact. Key stakeholders were educated on the financial consequences of the closure, including the loss of visitor revenue, and the potential impact on vital national and

international conservation programmes. Through timely updates, public goodwill was maintained, stakeholder support was strengthened and confidence reinforced in the organisation throughout the closure.

The communications outreach positioned Park Director, Aileen Tennant, as the voice of the organisation throughout the closure, securing a series of high-profile media opportunities to communicate key messages and shape public understanding of the crisis. This included a high-impact Op-Ed in the Irish Examiner (8 November), a major Irish Examiner feature (15 November) including interviews with Aileen Tennant and members of the animal care team, and national broadcast interviews on Morning Ireland and Virgin Media News (19 December). These platforms enabled the Park to highlight the €120,000 weekly revenue loss during closure, demonstrate the implications for animal welfare and conservation programmes, and communicate the significance of the Park's reopening on 20 December.

VISITOR SURVEY

Fota Wildlife Park conducted its annual visitor exit survey with Ipsos/Behaviour and Attitudes from 22 July to 14 August, providing valuable insights into visitor satisfaction and a continued barometer for operational planning. Visitor satisfaction reached its highest recorded level, with 99% of those surveyed rating their experience as excellent or very good. The survey confirmed continued strong intent to return among visitors.

The survey also identified trends consistent with broader industry research, with weather cited as the primary deterrent to future visits by 60% of respondents, a 20-percentage-point increase on 2024, reflecting the impact of a challenging summer on visitor confidence.



(Bottom) Chair of the Board of Governors, Richard Healy, Minister of State Christopher O'Sullivan, TD, with Park Director Aileen Tennant, reopening Fota Wildlife Park on 20 December 2025, marking the end of the ten-week government-mandated closure.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Fota Wildlife Park maintained strong relationships with its key government partners throughout 2025. Minister of State Christopher O’Sullivan, TD, with Special Responsibility for Nature, Heritage, and Biodiversity, visited the Park on 28 March 2025, taking a particular interest in the Park’s preparatory work for the curlew and corncrake breeding season and the conservation collaboration between Fota Wildlife Park and the NPWS. Minister O’Sullivan also conducted the release of the final cohort of natterjack toadlets reared at the Park in the Maharees Peninsula, Kerry, on 8 August 2025, alongside colleagues from the NPWS and Dingle Ocean Aquarium.

The relationship with the NPWS proved particularly significant in 2025, with the Service demonstrating its recognition of Fota Wildlife Park’s critical national conservation role through its response to the H5N1 closure, reflecting the depth of the partnership built over many years

of collaborative work. The Park’s engagement with the OPW continued to underpin the capital investment programme, with the OPW demonstrating exceptional flexibility in deferring 2025 grant funding to 2026 in response to the closure. The support of local chambers of commerce, business partners, and the broader Cork community during the closure period was warmly appreciated by the Board and management team.

EVENTS

The ECRC sustained strong demand for corporate and institutional events throughout the year. Corporate bookings included PepsiCo, Network Cork, Merck, and Marei Conference, while academic bookings included a UCC symposium and events with the UCC School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences and the Irish Naturalists’ Association, collectively welcoming several hundred delegates across the year. On 5 March, the ECRC hosted "Everyone Makes an Impact," a keynote



(Bottom) Minister of State Christopher O’Sullivan, TD, with Aileen Tennant, Fota Wildlife Park and members of the NPWS and Dingle Ocean Aquarium at the 2025 natterjack toadlet release, Maharees Peninsula, County Kerry on Friday 8 August 2025



and panel event featuring sustainable fashion entrepreneur Aoife McNamara, delivered in partnership with Local Enterprise Office South Cork as part of Local Enterprise Week 2025, reinforcing the ECRC's growing role as a venue for business and sustainability events in the region. Tauck Tours brought weekly international visitor groups to the Park each Wednesday between June and August as part of their Ireland Forever family travel programme, reflecting the Park's growing profile as a premium ecotourism destination.

The Concert for Conservation returned on 29 March in the auditorium of the ECRC, with a Madagascar theme raising funds for lemur conservation. The string quartet Cascade Strings performed to 78 patrons in an event that continues to build Fota Wildlife Park's reputation as a venue connecting conservation science with community engagement.

On Saturday, 9 August, the ECRC hosted the ELEVATE Family Fun Science Day (Roar for Research), organised by UCC's INFANT Research Centre under the ELEVATE research programme. The event welcomed children with cerebral palsy, their families and carers alongside general

park visitors in a vibrant science fair, offering families the opportunity to meet researchers, connect with the cerebral palsy community, and engage directly with the ELEVATE programme's work, reflecting the ECRC's growing role as a venue for inclusive community and research engagement beyond the zoological sector.



The Eagle Athletic Club launched the Cheetah Run to take place on 15 May and tickets sold out within a day. In its fifteenth year, the race raised funds for the Giraffe

Conservation Foundation and brought together runners from athletic clubs across Cork and novice runners and walkers with their families for support for a special evening to raise vital funds for conservation.



On 20 December 2025, Fota Wildlife Park was formally reopened by Minister of State Christopher O'Sullivan, TD, with a community event hosted in the ECRC welcoming local partners, business supporters, chambers of commerce, public representatives, and members of the public who had shown solidarity with the Park throughout the closure period.

Fáilte Ireland, together with the Convention Bureaux of Ireland, awarded a Conference Ambassador Recognition Award on Thursday, 27 November 2025 honouring Fota Wildlife Park's outstanding contribution in bringing the EAZA Directors' Days 2024 to Cork.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, REPRESENTATION AND TRAINING

Fota Wildlife Park maintained an active programme of professional development across all departments in 2025.

The Park Director presented at the EAZA Conservation

Education Conference at Chester Zoo on 18-20 March, attended the EAZA Directors' Days Conference 2-4 April at Oceanographic Valencia, represented Fota at the BIAZA Regional Meeting at Emerald Park on 20 May to advocate for the specific needs and interests of BIAZA's Irish membership.

On 14 May, she presented at 'greenloop', blooloop's annual international online conference on sustainability in visitor attractions, contributing to a session on rethinking sustainability engagement, sharing insights and case studies on involving visitors in sustainability.

The EAZA Annual Conference hosted in Łódź, Poland from 9-13 September was attended by the Park Director, the Head of Animal Care, Conservation and Research and the Registrar. At this event a separate Felid TAG committee meeting took place to progress plans for the Northern Cheetah Studbook which is held by Fota Wildlife Park.

The Marketing and PR Manager attended a BIAZA Commercial Working Group meeting in October and had been requested to present at the BIAZA Communications Conference at Yorkshire Wildlife Park in 5-6 November, a recognition of the Park's expertise in digital crisis management but withdrew due to work commitments with the HPAI outbreak at the Park.

Education Officer Rachael Taylor attended the BIAZA Conservation Education Conference at Hertfordshire Zoo on 11-13 November. Two executive development workshops were delivered to the senior management team by an external leadership specialist, focusing on collaborative leadership and team effectiveness.

On 11 November, during the HPAI closure period, the Park Director presented at the AIB Sustainability Champions event

at Fota House and Gardens, sharing the Park's approach to conservation-led sustainability.

Staff capacity building in native species conservation was prioritised, with Luke Hitchman completing specialist incubation training and playing an active role in the curlew and dunlin breeding season, and Ranger Jess Hodnett attending a GPS tagging seminar delivered by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in conjunction with NPWS and the Breeding Waders EIP. Declan O'Donovan and John McLaughlin visited Deepdale Conservation Trust in the UK to assess corncrake captive breeding methodologies, while the Operations Manager and the Fota Wildlife Park Design Team visited Dublin Zoo to inform the Park's capital programme. Under the stewardship of the Operations Manager, health and safety training was strengthened across the organisation, with the first aid team completing a structured skills drills programme across dates in late May and quarterly First Aid Team meetings established to strengthen the team. Manual handling training was extended to include Education and Retail staff.

OPERATIONS

The Operations Team undertook significant site infrastructure work in the first quarter of 2025 to accommodate the Panoramic Wheel installation in the Savannah area. Key works included the removal of a large earth mound, relocation of the internal train stop, installation of permanent post-and-rail fencing, and implementation of a new double-gate airlock system for safer entry and exit to the Savannah for the operations and animal care teams. These modifications improved visitor flow, enhanced the aesthetics of the Savannah area, and increased the safety of staff accessing the giraffe paddock.

A systematic programme of habitat improvements progressed throughout the year. Primate island climbing structures were replaced and enhanced with bamboo across multiple islands, including the Howler Monkey, Black and White Ruffed Lemur, Siamang Gibbon Family, and Drill Monkey islands, improving the welfare and natural behaviours of the Park's primate collection. The Savannah playground was comprehensively refurbished ahead of the Easter peak period, receiving strongly positive feedback from annual pass holders and regular visitors.



Following the H5N1 outbreak in October, the Operations Team played a critical role in implementing a series of enhanced biosecurity infrastructure measures at pace, including the construction of polytunnels for bird housing during the testing period, establishment of permanent winter housing for the avian collection, installation of a vehicle wash station, and deployment of foot baths at strategic points across the site. These measures, delivered under demanding conditions and in close coordination with DAFM and NDCC, were essential to satisfying the biosecurity criteria. The team were then challenged with preparing the Park for reopening to the public at short notice on 20 December 2025. Great effort was put in to having the Park looking its best ahead of the Christmas school holidays.

SPECIES CONSERVATION SUPPORTED BY FOTA WILDLIFE PARK FUNDING

- Talarak Foundation, Philippines - Spotted Deer and Warty Pigs
- Marwell Wildlife, Tunisia - Scimitar Horned Oryx
- Wildlife Rescue Cork - Various wildlife
- West African Primate Conservation Action - Roloway Monkeys
- Madagascar Pochard Captive Breeding and Release Project - Madagascar Pochard
- Irish Corncrake Captive breeding and wild population augmentation project - Corncrake
- Irish Breeding Waders European Innovation Partnership - Curlew and Dunlin
- Sumatran tiger conservation Kerinci Seblat National Park - Sumatran Tiger
- Giraffe Conservation Foundation, Kenya - Nubian Giraffe
- Red Panda Network, Nepal - Red Panda
- Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) work in Somaliland - Northern Cheetah
- Cork Bat Group annual survey - Native Bat Species
- IUCN Conservation Planning Specialist Group

CENSUS OF ANIMALS AT FOTA WILDLIFE PARK DURING 2025

	IUCN	Common Name	Taxonomic	Beginning 01.01.2025	Births	Acquisitions	Deaths	Dispositions	Ending 31.12.2025
		INVERTEBRATES	INVERTEBRATA						
	EN	White-clawed crayfish	<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	NE	Madagascar hissing cockroach	<i>Gromphadorhina oblongonota</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	NE	Walkingstick	<i>Achrioptera manga</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
		VERTEBRATES	VERTEBRATA						
		CLASS: FISH	CLASS: PISCES						
	LC	Epaulette shark	<i>Hemiscyllium ocellatum</i>	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	LC	Laced moray	<i>Gymnothorax favagineus</i>	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0
	EN	Red line torpedo barb	<i>Dawkinsia denisonii</i> *	0.0.5	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.4
	EN	Clown loach	<i>Chromobotia macracanthus</i> *	0.0.3	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.2
	LC	Buenos Aires tetra	<i>Hyphessobrycon anisitsi</i> *	0.0.6	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.3
	NE	Tete sea catfish	<i>Ariopsis seemanni</i>	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	NE	Bristlenose catfish	<i>Ancistrus</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1

	IUCN	Common Name	Taxonomic	Beginning 01.01.2025	Births	Acquisitions	Deaths	Dispositions	Ending 31.12.2025
	LC	Plecostomus	<i>Hypostomus plecostomus</i>	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
EEP	EN	Madagascar rainbowfish	<i>Bedotia madagascariensis</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
EEP	EN	Red rainbowfish	<i>Glossolepis incisus</i> *	0.0.11	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.9
EEP	EN	Boeseman's rainbowfish	<i>Melanotaenia boesemani</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
EEP	LC	Goyder River rainbowfish	<i>Melanotaenia trifasciata</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	VU	Powderblue panchax	<i>Pachypanchax omalonota</i> *	0.0.9	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.9
	EN	Panchax	<i>Pachypanchax sakaramyi</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
EEP	EW	Butterfly splitfin	<i>Ameca splendens</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
EEP	EW	Golden sawfin	<i>Skiffia francesae</i> +	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	LC	Pot-bellied seahorse	<i>Hippocampus abdominalis</i> *	0.0.10	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.2	0.0.0	0.0.8
EEP	EN	Banggai cardinalfish	<i>Pterapogon kauderni</i> +	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	LC	Banded archerfish	<i>Toxotes jaculatrix</i> *	0.0.6	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.6
	NE	Diamond fish	<i>Monodactylus argenteus</i>	0.0.6	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.5
	NE	African silverfish	<i>Monodactylus sebae</i> *	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	LC	Copperband butterflyfish	<i>Chelmon rostratus</i>	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	LC	Schooling coachman	<i>Heniochus diphreutes</i>	0.0.3	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.3
	NE	Anemonefish	<i>Amphiprion</i>	0.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.1.0
	LC	Clown anemonefish	<i>Amphiprion ocellaris</i> *	0.0.6	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	3.2.0
	LC	Goldtail damselfish	<i>Chrysiptera parasema</i> *	0.0.2	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.2
	LC	Spotted scat	<i>Scatophagus argus</i> *	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	LC	Foxface rabbitfish	<i>Siganus vulpinus</i> *	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	DD	Fowler's surgeon	<i>Acanthurus fowleri</i> *	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	LC	Orange spine surgeonfish	<i>Naso lituratus</i>	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	LC	Palette surgeonfish	<i>Paracanthurus hepatus</i>	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	LC	Red Sea sailfin tang	<i>Zebrasoma desjardinii</i> *	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
EEP	CR	Kieneri cichlid	<i>Paretroplus kieneri</i> *	0.0.6	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.10
		CLASS: AMPHIBIANS	CLASS: AMPHIBIA						
	LC	Natterjack toad	<i>Epidalea calamita</i> *	0.5.0	0.0.0	0.0.1873	0.2.0	0.0.1862	0.3.11
	LC	Phantasmal poison dart frog	<i>Epipedobates tricolor</i> *	0.0.38	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.38

	IUCN	Common Name	Taxonomic	Beginning 01.01.2025	Births	Acquisitions	Deaths	Dispositions	Ending 31.12.2025
EEP	CR	Mountain chicken frog	<i>Leptodactylus fallax</i>	2.2.1	0.0.3	0.0.0	1.0.0	0.0.0	1.2.4
	CR	Golden mantella	<i>Mantella aurantiaca</i> *	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.1
	VU	Green mantella	<i>Mantella viridis</i> *	0.0.2	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.2
	LC	File-eared Tree Frog	<i>Polypedates otilophus</i> *	0.0.45	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.45
	VU	Tonkin bug-eyed frog	<i>Theloderma corticale</i> *	0.0.3	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.2	0.0.0	0.0.1
		CLASS: REPTILES	CLASS: REPTILIA						
EEP	VU	Red-footed tortoise	<i>Chelonoidis carbonarius</i>	1.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
	CR	Elongated tortoise	<i>Indotestudo elongata</i>	7.6.0	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	2.2.0	5.4.1
EEP	EN	Lau banded iguana	<i>Brachylophus fasciatus</i>	1.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.1.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
	LC	Green iguana	<i>Iguana iguana</i>	1.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
LC		Giant Madagascar day gecko	<i>Phelsuma grandis</i> *	2.6.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	2.6.0
	NT	Royal/ball python	<i>Python regius</i>	2.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	2.0.0
VU		Dumeril's ground boa	<i>Acrantophis dumerili</i>	3.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	3.0.0
	EEP	Jamaican boa	<i>Chilabothrus subflavus</i>	0.0.2	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.2
		CLASS: BIRDS	CLASS: AVES						
LC		Common ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>	1.3.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.3.0
	EEP	Lesser rhea	<i>Rhea pennata</i>	2.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
LC		Helmeted guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>	0.0.46	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.40	0.0.0	0.0.6
	NT	Northern bobwhite	<i>Colinus virginianus</i> *	0.0.0	0.0.0	4.4.0	2.1.0	0.0.0	2.3.0
LC		European quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i> *	1.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.1.0
	LC	Common peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	8.7.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	8.7.0	0.0.0	0.0.0
LC		Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	1.0.10	0.0.27	0.0.0	1.0.37	0.0.0	0.0.0
	LC	Pink-footed goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	0.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.1.0
NT		Emperor goose	<i>Anser canagicus</i>	1.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
	EEP	Lesser white-fronted goose	<i>Anser erythropus</i>	1.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
LC		Bar-headed goose	<i>Anser indicus</i>	1.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
	LC	Barnacle goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	1.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
EEP	VU	Red-breasted goose	<i>Branta ruficollis</i>	5.7.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	0.0.0	4.7.0

	IUCN	Common Name	Taxonomic	Beginning 01.01.2025	Births	Acquisitions	Deaths	Dispositions	Ending 31.12.2025
	VU	Hawaiian goose	<i>Branta sandvicensis</i>	1.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
	LC	Mandarin duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>	2.3.12	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.1.10	0.0.0	2.2.2
	LC	Red-crested pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>	2.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.1.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
	NT	Chilean flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus chilensis</i>	1.4.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.4.0
	LC	Corncrake	<i>Crex crex</i>	6.3.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.1.0	0.0.0	6.2.1
EEP	VU	Humboldt penguin	<i>Spheniscus humboldti</i>	8.7.0	0.0.0	3.4.0	1.0.0	0.0.0	10.11.0
	LC	Eastern white pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	1.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0
	NT	Eurasian curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.18	0.0.1	0.0.17	0.0.0
	LC	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.11	0.0.0	0.0.11	0.0.0
EEP	LC	White-tailed sea eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	1.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.1.0
EEP	CR	Blue-throated macaw	<i>Ara glaucogularis</i>	1.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.1.0
		CLASS: MAMMALS	CLASS: MAMMALIA						
EEP	LC	Eastern grey kangaroo	<i>Macropus giganteus</i>	4.13.0	0.2.0	1.0.0	0.2.0	0.0.0	5.13.0
	LC	Red-necked wallaby	<i>Macropus rufogriseus +</i>	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.3	0.0.1
ESB	LC	Linne's two-toed sloth	<i>Choloepus didactylus</i>	1.2.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.2.0
EEP	VU	Red-bellied lemur	<i>Eulemur rubriventer</i>	0.4.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.4.0
EEP	EN	Ring-tailed lemur	<i>Lemur catta</i>	6.8.0	1.2.2	0.0.0	0.1.1	0.0.0	7.9.1
EEP	CR	Black-and-white ruffed lemur	<i>Varecia variegata</i>	1.2.0	0.0.0	2.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	2.2.0
EEP	LC	White-faced saki	<i>Pithecia pithecia</i>	1.3.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.3.0
EEP	NT	Black howler	<i>Alouatta caraya</i>	1.2.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.2.0
EEP	EN	Geoffroy's spider monkey	<i>Ateles fusciceps</i>	4.6.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.1.0	4.5.0
EEP	CR	Roloway monkey	<i>Cercopithecus roloway</i>	1.1.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	1.1.0
EEP	LC	Grey-cheeked mangabey	<i>Lophocebus albigena</i>	1.2.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.2.0
EEP	EN	Lion-tailed macaque	<i>Macaca silenus</i>	7.12.3	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	2.6.0	5.6.3
EEP	EN	Drill	<i>Mandrillus leucophaeus</i>	1.3.0	1.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.1	0.0.0	2.3.0
EEP	VU	Eastern black-and-white colobus	<i>Colobus guereza</i>	2.6.2	0.0.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	2.6.3
EEP	EN	Francois' langur	<i>Trachypithecus francoisi</i>	1.3.0	0.2.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.5.0
ESP	EN	Agile gibbon	<i>Hylobates agilis</i>	2.1.1	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	1.1.1
EEP	EN	Lar gibbon	<i>Hylobates lar</i>	1.2.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.2.0

	IUCN	Common Name	Taxonomic	Beginning 01.01.2025	Births	Acquisitions	Deaths	Dispositions	Ending 31.12.2025
EEP	EN	Siamang gibbon	<i>Symphalangus syndactylus</i>	4.2.0	1.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	5.2.0
	NT	Patagonian mara	<i>Dolichotis patagonum</i> *	3.5.11	0.0.5	0.0.0	2.4.12	0.0.0	1.1.4
	LC	Capybara	<i>Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris</i>	1.2.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.2.0
EEP	VU	Northern cheetah	<i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>	0.7.0	1.2.3	1.1.0	0.1.3	0.3.0	2.6.0
EEP	VU	Asian lion	<i>Panthera leo</i>	4.3.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	4.3.0
EEP	EN	Sumatran tiger	<i>Panthera tigris</i>	2.1.0	0.0.0	0.1.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	1.2.0
EEP	LC	Meerkat	<i>Suricata suricatta</i>	3.7.0	3.3.6	0.0.0	0.0.4	0.0.0	6.10.2
EEP	LC	Grey seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	0.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.1.0
EEP	EN	Red panda	<i>Ailurus fulgens</i>	1.3.0	1.2.0	0.0.0	0.1.0	0.0.0	2.4.0
	NT	Plains zebra	<i>Equus quagga</i>	3.2.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	3.2.0
EEP	VU	South American tapir	<i>Tapirus terrestris</i>	2.2.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	2.2.0
EEP	VU	Greater one-horned rhinoceros	<i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i>	2.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	2.1.0
EEP	CR	Visayan warty pig	<i>Sus cebifrons</i>	1.1.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	1.1.0
EEP	EN	Alfred's spotted deer	<i>Rusa alfredi</i>	1.2.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.1.0	0.0.0	1.1.0
EEP	VU	Nubian Giraffe	<i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>	1.8.0	2.0.0	0.0.0	2.0.0	0.1.0	1.7.0
EEP	NT	European bison	<i>Bison bonasus</i>	3.4.0	1.2.0	0.0.0	1.0.0	0.0.0	3.6.0
EEP	EN	Scimitar-horned oryx	<i>Oryx dammah</i>	2.7.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	0.0.0	2.7.0
EEP	NT	Southern lechwe	<i>Kobus leche</i>	4.9.0	2.1.1	0.0.0	0.2.1	0.0.0	6.8.0

* = Group Inventory Counts Included In Row

** = Colony counts included in Row

+ = Both Group and Colony counts included in Row

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

**Reports and Consolidated
Financial Statements
for the financial year ended
31 December 2025**

Registered number: 207824

Registered Charity Number: 20003715

**REPORTS AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

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THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

MEMBERS OF BOARD AND OTHER INFORMATION

Members of Board:

Board President

Carmel O'Connor

Immediate past President

Ann Keenan

Ordinary Board members:

Tom Cassin
Emma Teeling (resigned 18/12/2025)
Yvonne Buckley (resigned 18/12/2025)
Sharon McCabe
Peter McKenna
Enda Faughnan
Ciaran O'Keeffe
Sam Whitbread (appointed 20/06/2025)
Fintan Fagan (appointed 18/12/2025)

Other information:

Past Presidents

Michael Daly
Tom Dunphy

Secretary and registered office

Tom Cassin
The Zoological Gardens
Phoenix Park
Dublin 8

AUDITORS

Deloitte Ireland LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm
Deloitte & Touche House
29 Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 2
D02 AY28

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

BANKERS

Bank of Ireland
2 College Green
Dublin 2

AIB
66 South Mall
Cork

SOLICITORS

Mason Hayes & Curran
South Bank House
Barrow Street
Dublin 4

CHARITY NUMBER

20003715

CHARITY TAX NUMBER

CHY 2964

COMPANY NUMBER

207824

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

BOARD’S REPORT

The Board presents its annual report together with the audited consolidated financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2025.

CONSOLIDATION

These financial statements comprise the Consolidated Financial Statements of the Zoological Society of Ireland (“ZSI” or “the Group”), incorporating the results of both Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park for the financial year ended 31 December 2025.

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The principal activities of the Group comprise:

- the operation of Dublin Zoo in Phoenix Park, Dublin;
- the operation of Fota Wildlife Park in County Cork; and

Year in Review

2025 was a challenging and operationally complex year for the Group. While both Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park continued to deliver strongly on their conservation, education and public engagement missions, trading performance was impacted by adverse weather conditions, economic pressures affecting visitor behaviour and the temporary closure of Fota Wildlife Park following an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza.

Despite these challenges, the Group continued to progress major strategic capital projects, advance its long-term conservation objectives and maintain employment and animal welfare standards across both sites.

Visitor Attendance

Visitor attendance for the financial year ended 31 December 2025 and the prior year was as follows:

	2025	2024
Dublin Zoo (including Wild Lights)	1,046,858	1,165,009
Wild Lights	150,898	229,518
Fota Wildlife Park	408,453	428,745

Dublin Zoo held the Wild Lights event once again during November, December and January. With the continued support of the public, the event further reinforced the Zoo’s position as a year-round family attraction.

The year commenced strongly in Dublin Zoo with the successful launch of Zoorassic Trail, an immersive animatronic dinosaur experience. However, as the year progressed, adverse wet weather conditions and broader economic pressures impacted trading performance and contributed to reduced attendance levels. The board is currently reviewing its operating and commercial plans to offset these issues in the future.

Fota Wildlife Park Closure and Avian Influenza Response

Fota Wildlife Park generated a surplus in the period up to 30 September 2025. However, the outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in October and the subsequent Government-mandated ten-week closure of the Park had a material impact on performance during the final quarter of the financial year.

The temporary closure resulted in the suspension of visitor

revenue together with significant unplanned operational expenditure associated with enhanced biosecurity infrastructure, bird population management measures and specialist advisory support.

All permanent staff were retained throughout the closure period to ensure the continued welfare of the Park's animal collection, regulatory compliance and the continuation of biodiversity conservation programmes undertaken both within the Park and externally.

Financial Performance

The Group recorded a deficit after depreciation and grant amortisation of €413k for 2025 compared with €649k in 2024.

The results for the year reflect the impact of reduced attendances, inflationary operating pressures and the temporary closure of Fota Wildlife Park during the final quarter of the year.

Fota Wildlife Park's results include the receipt of €700k in emergency support from the National Parks and Wildlife Service ("NPWS").

Government Support and Public Funding

The Board would like to acknowledge and thank the Government of Ireland, through the Office of Public Works ("OPW") and the National Parks and Wildlife Service ("NPWS"), for its continuing support during the year.

This support included capital grants of €3.5m together with emergency support of €700k provided to Fota Wildlife Park during 2025.

The Group also received grant support of €27,500 from Dublin City Council under the Built Heritage Investment Scheme ("BHIS") 2025 for conservation works to the historic cottage orné at Dublin Zoo.

The Board would also like to acknowledge and thank the public for its continued generous support of Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

Both Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park continue to implement their respective long-term strategic plans, which envisage significant investment in animal habitats, conservation initiatives, visitor experience and environmental sustainability.

Dublin Zoo Vision 2021–2031

The Dublin Zoo Vision 2021–2031 strategy sets out an ambition to become a zoo-based conservation organisation of national and global significance, with focused investment in species survival, conservation, research and environmental sustainability both nationally and internationally. Full details of the Strategic Plan are available on the Dublin Zoo website.

Fota Wildlife Park Vision 2030

Fota Wildlife Park's Vision 2030 strategy targets becoming one of the top ten zoological parks in Europe, with species conservation, public education and visitor engagement at its core in support of a more sustainable and biodiverse future.

During 2025, the executive team commenced development of an updated 2027–2031 Strategic Plan, which is expected to be presented to the Board for formal approval during 2026.

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The Group invested €4.8m in capital expenditure (2024: €4.8m)

Dublin Zoo Projects

Key projects undertaken at Dublin Zoo included the refurbishment of the South American House, renamed “Rainforest House”, the restoration of the historic cottage orné and ongoing upgrades to animal habitats and visitor infrastructure.

Fota Wildlife Park Projects

At Fota Wildlife Park, capital projects included the construction of the new Siamang Gibbon House and Habitat, together with the commencement of a new Dungstead and Composting Facility and the upgrade and expansion of the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Certain projects were paused during the temporary closure period and are scheduled for completion during 2026.

Grant funding

These projects were supported through Government capital grants received through the OPW together with the utilisation of existing reserves.

Capital grant funding of €4.2m for 2025 was approved by Government through the OPW, of which €3.5m had been received by year end. By agreement with the OPW, grant funding of €0.7m was deferred and will be received during 2026 following completion of the relevant Fota Wildlife Park projects.

Deferred Catering Development Project

In keeping with the strategic objectives set out in Vision 2021–2031, planning commenced during 2024–2025 for a significant expansion of catering facilities at Dublin Zoo, including a proposed new restaurant located within the African Plains area.

Planning permission for the project was obtained and the Board approved the project proceeding to tender stage. However, following a reassessment of trading performance, economic conditions and very substantial construction cost inflation in the intervening period of project planning, the Board decided to defer the project indefinitely and instead consider incremental enhancements to existing catering facilities.

The Board may revisit the project at a future date should economic and operating conditions improve. Provision has been made in the financial statements for all project costs incurred to date.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Future capital expenditure envisaged under the Group’s strategic plans is anticipated to continue over the period from 2026 to 2031 in support of conservation, education, visitor experience and critical infrastructure objectives.

While trading conditions remain uncertain, the Board remains confident in the long-term strategic position of both Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park and in the continued importance of their conservation, education and public engagement missions.

Reserves Policy

The Board strives to maintain reserves at a level that enables the Group to manage financial risk and any volatility in its annual income streams.

An amount of €3.75m (2024: €3.75m) has been set aside by the Board at 31 December 2025, to help protect against any future pandemic outbreaks, the threat of zoonotic disease or any other emergency that might impact on the ongoing finances of the group.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The Board has established clear procedures to establish the Company's appetite for risk and define and communicate policies and procedures regarding the management and oversight of risk to which it may be exposed. These procedures allow the Board and the senior management team to design and implement mitigating controls to reduce the likelihood of risks occurring, and to limit the potential impact if these risks do occur.

Risk Management process

The Board sets out and reviews the Society's risk appetite statement on an annual basis. This statement sets out the amount of risk that the company is willing to seek or accept in the pursuit of its objectives. It also sets out the framework in which the company's risk management policies and procedures operate. The Company has a detailed risk register that contains the key risks that the senior management team and the Board consider apply to it. Risk management is an integrated part of all organisational activities and procedures have been established for the monitoring and mitigation of risk.

Risk Assessment

Risks are assessed according to their likelihood to occur and their potential impact on the Company. This provides a score that identifies the principal risks and the documenting of the controls in place to mitigate these risks.

The risk register is a standing agenda item for the Board. The register is reviewed and assessed annually by the Board. Any significant changes proposed to be made to the register are reported to the Board and minuted.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board has considered the principal risks to which the Group is exposed and is satisfied that suitable processes have been put in place to identify and manage these risks.

The following principal risks and uncertainties were applicable during 2025:

- Potential impact on visitor numbers due to adverse weather conditions;
- The effect of climate change impacting animals and visitor numbers;
- Uncertainty impacting on the Group relating to an outbreak of animal disease;
- Changes in the economic environment;
- Construction inflation;
- Energy inflation;
- Data Protection;
- Health and Safety; and
- Cyber security

Specific actions have been put in place to manage each of the risks identified above.

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

The Board is conscious of the financial impact of the above risks and strives to maintain adequate cash reserves to allow it to continue to trade in the event of risks which may impact its ability to generate cashflow.

RESULTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR

The results for the financial year and state of affairs of the Group are set out in the consolidated income and expenditure account and balance sheet on pages 103 and 104.

BOARD AND SECRETARY

The members of the Board, who served at any time during the financial year except as noted, were as follows:

Carmel O'Connor	Peter McKenna
Ann Keenan	Enda Faughnan
Tom Cassin	Ciaran O'Keeffe
Emma Teeling (resigned 18/12/2025)	Sam Whitbread (appointed 20/06/2025)
Yvonne Buckley (resigned 18/12/2025)	Fintan Fagan (appointed 18/12/2025)
Sharon McCabe	

Secretary:

Tom Cassin

LEGAL STATUS

The Company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The Company has charitable status and is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority.

SUBSIDIARIES

The statutory information concerning subsidiary undertakings is provided in Note 9 to the financial statements.

STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The Company is governed by a Board of Directors, who under the Society's Articles of Association, are not entitled to remuneration for their services. The directors are legally responsible for the governance and overall control and management of the Company and bring their varied experience in their respective fields to bear on guiding the Company.

The Articles of Association set out the procedures regarding the appointment and retirement of board members and the proceedings of meeting. Training is provided for directors through their terms of office. A detailed Board Induction Pack is provided to new board members. The Board has also approved and adopted a Code of Conduct for its directors.

Conflict of Interest

The Company has a conflict of interests' policy and all board members which is reviewed and approved annually by the Board. In addition, directors sign a register of interests' declaration disclosing any conflicts when appropriate. Conflict of interest is a standing agenda item at all board meetings. If a board member has a perceived or real conflict of interest, the director concerned should declare his/her interest at the earliest possible opportunity and withdraw from any discussion, decision or action relating to the conflict.

Board Evaluation

The Board conduct a self-evaluation on an ongoing basis, with guidance from an independent expert firm. The conclusion from the most recent evaluation was that the Board operates effectively, with a strong governance

structure in place. Recommendations arising from the Board evaluation to improve effectiveness are implemented.

Governance

The Board delegates the management of the day-to-day operation of the Company and Fota Wildlife Park, and the implementation of policy and strategy to the Directors (Chief Executives) of both Zoos. The executive management teams, chaired by the Directors and consisting of key senior executives, is the main day to day decision making forum of the Zoos.

The Board believes that committing to a high level of corporate governance is essential to achieving the optimal standard of operation of the Group's activities. To accomplish this, the Group has competent executive teams. There is clear division of responsibility with the Board retaining control of major decisions, with the Zoo Directors responsible for devising strategy and policy within authority delegated to them by the Board. The Board is responsible for providing leadership, setting strategy and ensuring control.

There are clear and detailed processes for reporting management information to the Board. The Board is provided with regular information, which includes key performance and risk indicators for all aspects of the organisation. The Board meets regularly as required and met seven times during 2025.

The Board is satisfied that the Company is in compliance with the Charities Governance Code, and all relevant legal and regulatory requirements relating to its operations. The Board reviews its compliance with the Code on an annual basis.

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

The Board also considered the Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public in respect of its digital fundraising initiatives and has adopted a Fundraising Policy, Donor Charter and Donor Complaints policy.

The Board recognises its overall responsibility for the Company's systems of internal control and for reviewing their effectiveness. It has delegated responsibility for the implementation of this system to the executive team. This system includes financial controls, which enable the Board to meet its responsibilities for the integrity and accuracy of the Company's accounting records.

Committees

The Board is supported by a number of committees (not confined to Board members) established for good governance. The terms of reference for all Board committees are updated and approved by the Board on a regular basis.

ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) considerations are to the fore in all decisions made by the Zoological Society of Ireland and underpin both Dublin Zoo's and Fota Wildlife Park's strategic plans. These areas are also a specific focus of the Board committees. Environment forms part of the remit of the Conservation, Education and Research Committee and the Health and Safety and Sustainability Committee. Social matters are considered by both the Ethics Committee and the Governance and People Committee, and governance is overseen by the Governance Committee.

Finance and Audit Committee

The function of the Finance and Audit Committee is to assist the Board of the Company on matters of financial management and in fulfilling its responsibilities by providing

an independent review of financial reporting, by satisfying itself as to the effectiveness of the Company's internal controls and as to the sufficiency of the external audit process. In addition, the Committee also provides oversight over the management of the company's IT environment and related risks.

The Committee also monitors and reviews the financial performance of the Company, the annual budget for recommendation to the Board, and also advises on remuneration and commercial contract issues. The Committee comprises of three board members and met three times during the year. The Committee members also supported management on an informal basis throughout the year.

Governance and People Committee

The principal objective of the Governance and People Committee is to advise the board on good corporate governance and, in particular, to monitor compliance with the Governance Code for Charity Organisations in Ireland. In addition, the Committee ensures that there is a robust and effective process for evaluating the performance of the Board to ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities. The Committee is also responsible for identifying and appointing suitably skilled directors to the Board, taking into account the existing balance of skills, knowledge, experience and diversity of the Board. The Committee also oversees strategic HR matters. It comprises of two board members and the current President and met five times during the year.

Conservation, Education and Science Committee

The purpose of the Conservation, Education and Science Committee is to assist the Board of the Company on matters

relating to the Conservation and Education of visitors through a range of different media and to initiate and participate in appropriate Research projects and studies of endangered species and habitats within Ireland and other International Countries where the Company has an interest. The Committee helps to formulate the conservation strategy of the Company and recommends to the Board the direction this should take and which national and international initiatives are worthy of its financial support. The Committee proposes to the Board the level of support which is appropriate for nominated Conservation projects. The Committee also liaises with, and delegates to employees of the Company where appropriate, the responsibility to commission or engage in research in partnerships with relevant Universities, Higher Education Institutes or Conservation Organisations. The Committee comprises two members of the Board, the Zoo Director and some internal and external appointees (including the Head of Conservation Education and the Conservation Manager). The Committee met three times during the year.

Ethics Committee

The purpose of the Ethics Committee is to provide a forum for advice, audit, ethical review and support of animal health, animal welfare, and ethical aspects of conservation and research activities carried out or supported by Dublin Zoo to achieve its purpose and deliver its charitable objects. In compliance with the provisions of the Irish Standards of Modern Zoo Practice (Appendix 3), the Ethics Committee fulfils the requirement to ensure a robust and documented ethical review process. The Committee comprises three members of the Board, the Zoo Director and some internal and external appointees and met four times during the year.

Health, Safety and Sustainability Committee

The purpose of the Health, Safety and Sustainability Committee is to assist the Board to fulfil its responsibilities in ensuring that the Company's policies, procedures and working practices regarding Health and Safety meet or exceed any legal obligations, with the object of promoting the well-being and safety of the Zoo employees, the public, suppliers and others who may be affected by its activities. The Committee also oversees strategic sustainability matters and the implementation of the Zoo's Sustainability Master Plan.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- To maintain an overall assessment of the Zoo's key health and safety risks from which priorities for action are set and reviewed annually.
- To review and approve the Zoo's Health and Safety policy, and all other policies standards and strategy for the management of health and safety at work within the Zoo and compliance with health and safety legislative and other requirements.
- To review safety performance indicators, (accidents and near misses), investigations of significant failures, independent inspection and audit reports and associated remedial actions.
- To ensure that it and the Board is kept abreast of any regulatory changes in relation to health and safety and the impact such changes may have on the activities of the Zoo.

The Committee comprises of two members of the board, the Zoo Director, and some external and internal appointees. The Committee met twice during the year.

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

ACCOUNTING RECORDS

The measures that the directors have taken to secure compliance with the requirements of sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014 with regard to the keeping of accounting records, are the employment of appropriately qualified accounting personnel and the maintenance of computerised accounting systems. The accounting records are maintained at the Society's registered office in The Zoological Gardens, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8.

POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

No significant events have taken place since the year end that would result in adjustment to the financial statements or inclusion of a note thereto.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Company has a health and safety policy in place which is being complied with and satisfactorily operated.

POLITICAL DONATIONS

The Company did not make any political donations during the financial year, which require disclosure in accordance with the Electoral Act, 1997.

GOING CONCERN

Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in Note 3 to the financial statements.

STATEMENT ON RELEVANT AUDIT INFORMATION

Each of the persons who are directors at the time when this Directors' report is approved has confirmed as follows:

So far as each of the directors in office at the date of approval of the financial statements is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the Company's auditors are unaware; and
- The Board Members have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as Board Members in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of that information.

AUDITORS

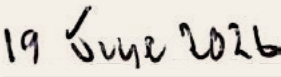
The auditors, Deloitte Ireland LLP, Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm, continue in office in accordance with Section 383(2) of the Companies Act 2014.

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

Carmel O'Connor
Board President

Tom Cassin
Director/Secretary



Date: 19 June 2026

BOARD'S RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The directors are responsible for preparing the directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with the Companies Act 2014.

Irish company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under the law, the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council ("relevant financial reporting framework"). Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at the financial year end date and of the profit or loss of the company for the financial year and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014.

In preparing those financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies for the Company Financial Statements and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for ensuring that the company keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the company, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the company to be determined with reasonable accuracy, enable them to ensure that the financial statements and directors' report comply with the Companies Act 2014 and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion on the financial statements of The Zoological Society of Ireland ("the company")

In our opinion the group and parent company financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the group and parent company as at 31 December 2025 and of the loss of the group for the financial year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the relevant financial reporting framework and, in particular, with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

The financial statements we have audited comprise: the group financial statements:

- the Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- the Consolidated Balance Sheet;
- the Consolidated Statement of Changes in Equity;
- the Consolidated Cash Flow Statement; and
- the related notes 1 to 20, including a summary of significant accounting policies as set out in note 1.

the parent company financial statements:

- the Company Balance Sheet;
- the Company Statement of Changes in Equity; and
- the related notes 1 to 20, including a summary of significant accounting policies as set out in note 1.

The relevant financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is the Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' issued by the Financial Reporting Council ("the relevant financial reporting framework").

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are described below in the "Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements" section of our report.

We are independent of the group and parent company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the group and parent company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

The other information comprises the information included in the Reports and Consolidated Financial Statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2025, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The directors are responsible for the other information contained within the Reports and Consolidated Financial Statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2025. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities Statement, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and otherwise comply with the

Companies Act 2014, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the group and parent company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the group and parent company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on IAASA's website at: <https://iaasa.ie/publications/description-of-the-auditors-responsibilities-for-the-audit-of-the-financial-statements>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

Based solely on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- We have obtained all the information and explanations which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit.
- In our opinion the accounting records of the parent company were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited.
- The parent company balance sheet is in agreement with the accounting records.
- In our opinion the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements and the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the group and parent company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the provisions in the Companies Act 2014 which require us to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions specified by law are not made.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Richard Howard

For and on behalf of Deloitte Ireland LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm
Deloitte & Touche House, 29 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2

25 June 2026

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Notes	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
INCOME	4	26,344	25,916
EXPENDITURE			
Operating costs		(25,048)	(24,652)
Administration expenses		(2,855)	(2,752)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		(27,903)	(27,404)
OPERATING DEFICIT	6	(1,559)	(1,488)
Amortisation of grants	14	1,045	839
Investment gains	7	101	-
DEFICIT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR		(413)	(649)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Actual return less expected return on pension scheme assets	15	(287)	(194)
Actuarial gain on pension scheme obligations	15	103	114
Movement in pension asset ceiling	15	184	80
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE DEFICIT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR		(413)	(649)

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

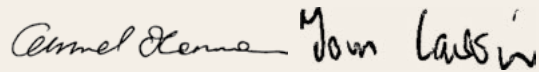
CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Notes	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	8	<u>34,063</u>	<u>34,483</u>
Current Assets			
Stocks	10	321	303
Debtors	11	1,596	1,548
Cash at bank in hand			
– Restricted – Donations			-
– Restricted – Conservation fund		48	142
– Designated funds - Conservation		113	-
– Unrestricted		7,417	15,345
Investments	12	<u>10,078</u>	<u>-</u>
		19,583	17,338
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(5,952)</u>	<u>(6,209)</u>
Net Current Assets		13,631	11,129
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		47,694	45,612
Government Grants Deferred Credit	14	<u>(13,100)</u>	<u>(10,605)</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>34,594</u>	<u>35,007</u>
Accumulated surplus		30,844	31,257
Emergency reserve		<u>3,750</u>	<u>3,750</u>
		<u>34,594</u>	<u>35,007</u>

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025 *(Continued)*

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on 19 June 2026 and signed on its behalf by:



Carmel O'Connor
Board President

Tom Cassin
Director/Secretary

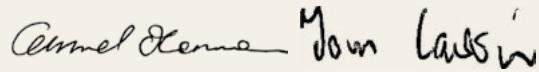
THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

COMPANY BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Notes	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	8	17,553	18,128
Financial assets	9	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>
		18,053	18,628
Current Assets			
Stocks	10	180	185
Debtors	11	1,338	1,315
Investments	12	10,078	-
Cash at bank and in hand:			
- Restricted funds - Donations		10	-
- Restricted funds - Conservation		48	142
- Designated funds – Conservation		113	-
- Unrestricted funds		<u>4,385</u>	<u>13,070</u>
		16,152	14,712
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(4,154)</u>	<u>(4,485)</u>
Net current assets		11,998	10,227
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		30,051	28,855
Government Grants Deferred Credit	14	<u>(8,556)</u>	<u>(6,612)</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>21,495</u>	<u>22,243</u>
Represented by:			
Accumulated surplus		18,495	19,243
Emergency reserve		<u>3,000</u>	<u>3,000</u>
		<u>21,495</u>	<u>22,243</u>

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of directors on 19 June 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

Handwritten signatures of Carmel O'Connor and Tom Cassin in black ink.

Carmel O'Connor
Board President

Tom Cassin
Director/Secretary

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Development Reserve €'000	Emergency Reserve €'000	Accumulated Surplus €'000	Total €'000
Balance at 1 January 2024	19,962	3,000	12,694	35,656
Deficit for the financial year	-	-	(649)	(649)
Transfer between reserves	(19,962)	750	19,212	-
At 31 December 2024	-	3,750	31,257	35,007
Deficit for the financial year	-	-	(413)	(413)
At 31 December 2025	-	3,750	30,844	34,594

In prior years, a certain amount was set aside in reserves to fund future capital investment. While the Zoo will continue to invest in the Zoo, the Directors have elected not to have a separate reserve within equity to reflect future expenditure.

The Emergency reserve represents funds set aside by the Board to protect against the impact of any zoonotic disease or other emergency which might affect the ongoing finances of the group.

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

COMPANY STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Development Reserve €'000	Emergency Reserve €'000	Accumulated Surplus €'000	Total €'000
Balance at 1 January 2024	10,975	3,000	8,741	22,716
Deficit for the financial year	-	-	(473)	(473)
Transfer between reserves	<u>(10,975)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,975</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 December 2024	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>3,000</u></u>	<u><u>19,243</u></u>	<u><u>22,243</u></u>
Deficit for the financial year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(748)</u>	<u>(748)</u>
At 31 December 2025	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>3,000</u></u>	<u><u>18,495</u></u>	<u><u>21,495</u></u>

In prior years, a certain amount was set aside in reserves to fund future capital investment. While the Zoo will continue to invest in the Zoo, the Directors have elected not to have a separate reserve within equity to reflect future expenditure.

The Emergency reserve represents funds set aside by the Board to protect against the impact of any zoonotic disease or other emergency which might affect the ongoing finances of the company.

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Notes	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
NET CASH INFLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	17	<u>3,422</u>	<u>3,838</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payment to acquire tangible fixed assets		(4,783)	(4,772)
Capital grants received relating to fixed assets		<u>3,540</u>	<u>3,000</u>
Net cash outflow from investing activities		<u>(1,243)</u>	<u>(1,772)</u>
MOVEMENT IN CASH IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR		<u>2,179</u>	<u>2,066</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year		<u>15,487</u>	<u>13,421</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year		<u>17,666</u>	<u>15,487</u>

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. They have all been applied consistently throughout the current and the preceding financial year.

General Information and Basis of Accounting

The Zoological Society of Ireland is a company incorporated in Ireland under the Companies Act 2014. The address of the registered office is given on page 88. The nature of the company's operations and its principal activities are set out in the Board's report on pages 4 to 14.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Companies Act 2014 and Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102) issued by the Financial Reporting Council. The consolidated financial statements incorporate the financial statements of the company and its subsidiary undertaking for the financial year ended 31 December 2025.

The functional currency of the Zoological Society of Ireland is considered to be Euro because that is the currency of the primary economic environment in which the company operates.

Income

Income comprises of gate receipts, donations, sponsorship, government funding and annual pass relating to the current

period. Where annual pass income is received in advance or income relates to future performance requirement, the related revenue is included in deferred income in creditors and released to the income and expenditure account in the relevant period.

Other income comprises the value of sales, excluding VAT and discounts, to third parties and is recognised once the related goods or services are provided to customers.

Foreign Currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are recorded at the rate at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies at the balance sheet date are reported at the rates of exchange prevailing at that date. Exchange differences are recognised in the income and expenditure account in the period in which they arise.

Taxation

The company and its subsidiary are regarded by the Revenue Commissioners as established for charitable purposes and, accordingly, are exempt from corporation tax.

Restricted and Designated cash

Where cash balances are ring fenced for specific purposes by donors and may not be available for general use by the Group, the cash balance is noted as being restricted.

Where cash balances are set aside for specific purposes by the Group, the cash balance is noted as being designated.

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and any provision for impairment. The charge for depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of tangible fixed assets to their estimated residual values by equal annual instalments over their expected useful lives as follows:

Plant, machinery and equipment	20%
Computer equipment and software	33.5%
Motor vehicles	20%
Habitats	3.33% to 10%

Land and assets under construction are not depreciated.

Residual value represents the estimated amount which would currently be obtained from disposal of an asset, after deducting estimated costs of disposal, if the asset were already of the age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life.

An asset is impaired where there is objective evidence that, as a result of one or more events that occurred after initial recognition, the estimated recoverable value of the asset has been reduced to below its carrying amount. The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use.

Where indicators exist for a decrease in impairment loss, the prior impairment loss is tested to determine reversal. An impairment loss is reversed on an individual impaired asset to the extent that the revised recoverable value does not lead to a revised carrying amount higher than the carrying value had no impairment been recognised.

Financial Fixed Assets

Financial fixed assets are stated at cost less provision for impairment. An asset is impaired where there is objective evidence that, as a result of one or more events that occurred after initial recognition, the estimated recoverable value of the asset has been reduced to below its carrying amount.

Government Support/Grants

The land in the Phoenix Park occupied by Dublin Zoo is used under a licence from the State, Dublin Zoo being a tenant at will. No value is reflected in these financial statements in respect of this licence or this land.

In prior periods grants under the Government Capital Investment Programme in the company were provided and accounted for by the Office of Public Works (OPW) and any related assets were therefore excluded in the financial statements. The facilities provided under this Programme are used by the company under licence from the State.

Other Government grants in respect of capital expenditure are credited to a deferred grant account and are amortised to the income and expenditure account by equal annual instalments over the expected useful lives of the related assets.

Government revenue grants received are accounted for when received or if conditions exist, when those conditions are met.

Leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term, even if the payments are not

made on such a basis. Benefits received and receivable as an incentive to sign an operating lease are similarly spread on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Animals

No value is placed on the animals belonging to the Society.

Stocks

Stocks, other than animals, are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Retirement Benefits

For defined benefit schemes the amounts charged to the operating surplus are the costs arising from employee services rendered during the period and the cost of plan introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs. The net interest cost on the net defined asset/liability is charged to the income and expenditure account. Remeasurement comprising actuarial gains and losses and the return on scheme (excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit asset/liability) are recognised immediately in other comprehensive income.

A defined benefit scheme is funded, with the assets of the scheme held separately from those of the Society, in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date.

For the defined contribution scheme the amount charged to

the income and expenditure account in respect of pension costs and other post-retirement benefits is the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet.

Financial Instruments

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Financial liabilities are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into.

All financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs), except for those financial assets classified as at fair value through the income and expenditure account, which are initially measured at fair value (which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs), unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction. If an arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, the financial asset or financial liability is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are only offset in the statement of financial position when, and only when there exists a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and the company intends either to settle on a net basis, or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Financial assets are derecognised when and only when a) the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are settled, b) the company transfers to another party substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of the financial asset, or c) the company, despite having retained

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

some, but not all, significant risks and rewards of ownership, has transferred control of the asset to another party. Financial liabilities are derecognised only when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires.

Financial assets and liabilities that are classified as receivable or payable within one year on initial recognition are measured at the undiscounted amount of the consideration expected to be received or paid, net of impairment.

Investments

Investments comprising marketable securities are classified as financial assets held for trading. These investments are initially recognised at fair value, which is normally the transaction price including any directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequently, these investments are measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised immediately in the income statement. Gains and losses arising from changes in the fair value of marketable securities are included in the income and expenditure account in the period in which they arise. This includes both realised gains or losses on disposal and unrealised gains or losses on revaluation.

If there is objective evidence of impairment, the investment is written down to its recoverable amount, with the impairment loss recognised in the income statement.

Investments are assessed as cash equivalents for cashflow purposes as the investments are readily convertible to cash within a short period.

2. CRITICAL ACCOUNTING JUDGEMENTS AND KEY SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

In the application of accounting policies, which are described in note 1, the Board members are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The following are the critical judgements and estimates that the Board members have made in the process of applying the accounting policies and that have the most significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements:

Retirement Benefit Obligations

The estimation of and accounting for retirement benefit obligations involves judgements made in conjunction with independent actuaries. There are estimates in respect of life expectancy of scheme members, increase in salaries, inflation as well as discount rates. The assumptions used are disclosed in note 15.

Useful economic lives

The annual depreciation charge for tangible fixed assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. Determination of

appropriate useful economic lives is a key judgement and the useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets.

3. GOING CONCERN

Based on budgets and cashflow projections, the Board has a reasonable expectation that the Group can meet all liabilities for a period of not less than twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements. Accordingly, the Board have prepared the financial statements of the company on a going concern basis.

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4. INCOME

Operating Income arising from the following activities undertaken wholly within Ireland.

	2025	2024
	€'000	€'000
Gate receipt income	16,686	17,707
Annual pass income	2,716	2,913
Shop income	3,364	3,794
Other income	3,578	1,502
Operating income	26,344	25,916

Given the nature of the Zoo's activities, goods and services are donated to the Zoo by other organisations where the fair value of such goods and services may not be readily determinable.

Other income includes €700k in emergency support funding from the NPWS.

5. EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Staff numbers and costs		
Average number of employees:		
Management	22	18
Administration	17	17
General staff		
- full time	95	93
- part time	45	41
Shop	29	39
	<u>208</u>	<u>208</u>

The aggregate payroll costs of these persons were as follows:

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Wages and salaries	8,227	7,683
Social welfare costs	999	921
Retirement benefit costs	451	394
	<u>9,677</u>	<u>8,998</u>

The total remuneration for 20 key management personnel for the financial year totalled €1,701,289 (2024: €1,576,465 for 19 key management personnel).

All payroll costs were expensed during the current and prior financial year.

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6. OPERATING DEFICIT

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
The operating deficit is stated after charging:		
Remuneration of Board members	-	-
Auditor's remuneration in respect of		
- the audit of the entity	30	32
- the audit of subsidiary entity	25	19
- other assurance services	4	-
- tax services	34	-
Depreciation	4,578	4,454
Provision for impairment of fixed assets	<u>625</u>	<u>-</u>

The provision for impairment of assets relates to costs incurred on a specific project where a decision was taken to postpone and reassess the project with associated costs incurred to date being provided for.

Under the Society's Articles of Association, Board members are not entitled to remuneration. Auditor's remuneration is disclosed net of VAT.

7. INVESTMENT GAINS

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Unrealised gains on investments	<u>101</u>	<u>-</u>

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Group	Land	Plant & Equipment	Computer Equipment	Motor vehicles	Build & Habitats	Total
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Cost:						
At 1 January 2025	191	3,884	1,442	963	64,136	70,616
Additions	-	192	147	135	4,309	4,783
Provision for impairments	-	-	-	-	(625)	(625)
Disposals	-	-	-	-	(49)	(49)
At 31 December 2025	191	4,076	1,589	1,098	67,771	74,725
Depreciation:						
At 1 January 2025	-	2,994	1,387	715	31,037	36,133
Charge for financial year	-	302	74	61	4,141	4,578
On disposals	-	-	-	-	(49)	(49)
At 31 December 2025	-	3,296	1,461	776	35,129	40,662
Net Book Value						
At 31 December 2025	191	780	128	322	32,642	34,063
At 31 December 2024	191	890	55	248	33,099	34,483

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS *(Continued)*

Company	Land €'000	Machinery & fixtures & fittings €'000	Computer equipment €'000	Motor vehicles €'000	Habitats €'000	Total €'000
Cost:						
At 1 January 2025	191	2,427	1,442	390	43,899	48,349
Additions	-	139	147	135	3,255	3,676
Provision for impairments	-	-	-	-	(625)	(625)
Disposals	-	-	-	-	(49)	(49)
At 31 December 2025	191	2,566	1,589	525	46,480	51,351
Depreciation:						
At 1 January 2025	-	2,253	1,387	348	26,233	30,221
Charge for financial year	-	99	74	30	3,423	3,626
On disposals	-	-	-	-	(49)	(49)
At 31 December 2025	-	2,352	1,461	378	29,607	33,798
Net Book Value						
At 31 December 2025	191	214	128	147	16,873	17,553
At 31 December 2024	191	174	55	42	17,666	18,128

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

9. FINANCIAL ASSETS

Company	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
At beginning and end of financial year	500	500

The Society's financial asset comprises its investment in Fota Wildlife Park CLG ("Fota"), a company limited by guarantee. Fota is accounted for as a subsidiary undertaking as the Society is a member of Fota Wildlife Park CLG and has the power to appoint a majority of the Governors of the Fota Board.

Details in respect of Fota are set out below:

Name and registered office	Country of Incorporation	Principal activity
Fota Wildlife Park CLG Carrigtwohill Co. Cork	Ireland	Operation of a wildlife park for exhibition and conservation of wildlife worldwide

10. STOCKS

	Group		Company	
	2025 €'000	2024 €'000	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Shops	321	303	180	185
	<u>321</u>	<u>303</u>	<u>180</u>	<u>185</u>

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11. DEBTORS

	Group		Company	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
<i>Amounts falling due within one year:</i>				
Trade debtors	504	808	442	782
Prepayments and other debtors	659	697	431	533
Amounts due from related party	-	-	32	-
VAT	433	43	433	-
	<u>1,596</u>	<u>1,548</u>	<u>1,338</u>	<u>1,315</u>

12. INVESTMENTS

	2025	2024
	€'000	€'000
Short term marketable securities	<u>10,078</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>10,078</u>	<u>-</u>

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

13. CREDITORS: (Amounts falling due within one year)

	Group		Company	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Trade creditors	1,778	1,659	1,593	1,368
Accruals	1,095	1,035	503	642
Deferred income	2,660	2,987	1,764	1,999
PAYE/PRSI	309	229	246	177
VAT	62	157	-	157
	5,904	6,067	4,106	4,343
Conservation fund	48	142	48	142
	5,952	6,209	4,154	4,485

The conservation fund relates to the conservation euro which was donated by members of the public when purchasing their ticket for entry during 2024. The remaining funds will be spent on conservation related projects in 2026.

THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

14. GOVERNMENT GRANTS DEFERRED CREDIT

Group	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Grants received:		
At beginning of financial year	12,878	9,878
Received during the financial year	<u>3,540</u>	<u>3,000</u>
At end of financial year	16,418	12,878
Amortisation:		
At beginning of financial year	2,273	1,434
Amortised to Income and Expenditure	<u>1,045</u>	<u>839</u>
At end of financial year	<u>3,318</u>	<u>2,273</u>
Net book amount	<u>13,100</u>	<u>10,605</u>

Government grants are amortised over the same period as the related asset is depreciated.

Grant funding received from the Office of Public Works in 2025 and 2024 was used in the following capital projects:

Dublin Zoo 2025 OPW Grant – Refurbishment of South America House and Cottage Orn  along with other habitat works.

Fota Wildlife Park 2025 OPW Grant – Building of the Siamang House and Wastewater treatment plant.

Dublin Zoo 2024 OPW Grant – Solar panels, Kaziranga trail works and other habitat works.

Fota Wildlife Park 2024 OPW Grant – Solar panels, Giraffe House refurbishment and remaining costs in relation to the Education, Conservation & Research Centre.

Grants received to date of €200,000 from SECAD are subject to terms and conditions and if these are not adhered to, SECAD reserves the right to deem the contract to be invalid and all grant aid shall be immediately repayable. SECAD Partnership CLG, a local development company, is a dynamic and pioneering social enterprise which works in partnership with diverse stakeholders to provide services, facilities, and investments for the benefit of the communities it serves and on behalf of a

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number of funding authorities such as Irish Government Departments and State Bodies.

Company	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Grants received:		
At beginning of financial year	8,030	6,030
Received during the financial year	<u>2,827</u>	<u>2,000</u>
At end of financial year	10,857	8,030
Amortisation:		
At beginning of financial year	1,418	747
Amortised to Income and Expenditure	<u>883</u>	<u>671</u>
At end of financial year	<u>2,301</u>	<u>1,418</u>
Net book amount	<u>8,556</u>	<u>6,612</u>

15. RETIREMENT BENEFIT SCHEMES

Group

Defined contribution scheme

The Group operates a defined contribution retirement benefit scheme for all qualifying employees. The total expense charged to income and expenditure in the financial year ended 31 December 2025 was €314,279 (2024: €311,932).

Defined benefit pension scheme

The Group operates a defined benefit pension scheme. Pension costs for the defined benefit pension scheme members are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries using the projected unit method.

The most recent actuarial valuation of the Group's pension scheme was carried out as at 1 April 2025.

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15. RETIREMENT BENEFIT SCHEMES (Continued)

The financial assumptions used to calculate the value of the defined benefit pension scheme's liabilities under FRS 102 are:

	2025	2024
	%	%
Rate of general increase in salaries	2.8	2.8
Rate of increase in pensions in payment	0.0	0.0
Discount rate of scheme liabilities	4.1	3.4
Inflation	2.2	2.2

Mortality

No mortality table used pre-retirement (all members assumed to survive to NRA). Post-retirement tables used are 62% PNML 00 (Males) and 70% PNFL 00 (females) plus allowance for future mortality improvements.

Expected Lifetime

The expected lifetime of a participant who is aged 65 and the expected lifetime (from the age 65) of a participant who will be aged 65 in 25 years are shown in years below based on the above mortality tables

AGE	Males	Females
65	23.9	25.0
65 in 15 years	25.8	26.5

Pension Asset

Amounts recognised in the income and expenditure account in respect of the defined benefit pension scheme is as follows:

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Current service cost	(14)	(18)
Net interest income	<u>16</u>	<u>13</u>
	2	(5)
Recognised in other comprehensive income		
Actuarial Gain on pension asset	103	114
Movement in Asset Ceiling	<u>(37)</u>	<u>(80)</u>
Total charge relating to defined benefit scheme	2	(5)

The amount included in the balance sheet arising from the group's obligations in respect of its defined benefit retirement scheme is as follows:

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Fair value of assets	2,461	2,678
Present value of defined benefit obligations	(2,121)	(2,301)
Asset Ceiling	<u>(340)</u>	<u>(377)</u>
Net asset recognised in the balance sheet	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

In assessing the carrying value of the defined benefit asset, the Directors have assessed what value is recoverable by the company in the foreseeable future. On that basis, the value of the asset has been reduced to €Nil.

Movements in the fair value of scheme assets were as follows:

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15. RETIREMENT BENEFIT SCHEMES *(Continued)*

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
At 1 January	2,678	2,864
Contributions	145	115
Benefits paid	(166)	(196)
Expected return on pension scheme assets	91	89
Actual return less expected return on pension scheme assets	(287)	(194)
At 31 December	2,461	2,678

Movements in the present value of defined benefit obligations were as follows:

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
At 1 January	2,301	2,517
Service cost	14	18
Interest cost	75	76
Benefits paid	(166)	(196)
Actuarial (gain) / loss on pension scheme obligations	(103)	(114)
At 31 December	2,121	2,301

The analysis of the scheme's assets at the balance sheet date was as follows:

	Fair value at 31 December 2025 €'000	Fair value at 31 December 2024 €'000
Bonds	2,461	2,678
Total market value of assets	2,461	2,678

16. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The carrying values of the Group's financial assets and liabilities are summarised by category below:

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Financial assets		
<i>Measured at undiscounted amount receivable</i>		
• Trade debtors (Note 11)	504	808
	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
<i>Measured at fair value</i>		
• Investments (Note 12)	10,078	-
	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Financial liabilities		
<i>Measured at undiscounted amount payable</i>		
• Trade payables (Note 13)	1,778	1,659

The carrying values of the company's financial assets and liabilities are summarised by category below:

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Financial assets		
<i>Measured at undiscounted amount receivable</i>		
• Trade debtors (Note 11)	442	782

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16. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS *(Continued)*

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
<i>Measured at fair value</i>		
• Investments (Note 12)	<u>10,078</u>	<u>-</u>
	2025 €'000	2024 €'000

Financial liabilities

Measured at undiscounted amount payable

• Trade and other payables (Note 13)	<u>1,593</u>	<u>1,368</u>
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17. CASH FLOW STATEMENT

Reconciliation of operating surplus to cash generated by operations

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Operating deficit	(413)	(649)
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	4,578	4,454
Amortisation of government grants	(1,045)	(839)
Impairment provision	625	-
Decrease/(increase) in stocks	(18)	87
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(48)	1,757
Decrease in creditors	<u>(257)</u>	<u>(972)</u>
Cash generated by operations	<u>3,422</u>	<u>3,838</u>

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

18. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

	2025 €'000	2024 €'000
Authorised and contracted for commitments	3,323	151
Authorised but not contracted for commitments	<u>2,588</u>	<u>8,303</u>

19. TAXATION

No liability to taxation arose during the financial year as the Society is exempt from corporation tax.

20. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

No post balance sheet events noted.

(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

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