

Glasgow Zoo: the hidden truth



A report by
Jordi Casamitjana

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Glasgow Zoo: the hidden truth

Introduction

In the last two years Glasgow zoo has received lots of attention; not from the visitors, who are still not reaching the zoo's desired number to guarantee the minimum revenue the zoo needs to survive, but from the press, animal welfare groups, animal behaviour experts and the government.

All this attention is based on one main issue: the standard of the zoo is low, and unless the situation is improved the possibility of closure remains a strong one. How low is this standard is still a matter of debate. Some say that the standard is so low that the zoo should close as soon as possible; others that it may have already crossed the line of illegality; others that improvements can be made; others that it is just an unfortunate situation; others that the whole problem has been exaggerated.

The zoo operators, on the other hand, have reacted in various ways to this attention: from denying that problems exist, to giving excuses of why things have gone wrong, and to even using the term 'conspiracy' to explain all the 'fuss'.

What is the truth about Glasgow zoo? Is the truth in the open, or is it somehow hidden? What do we know about it?

I personally have been investigating Glasgow zoo for quite some time. Today, as an Independent Animal Welfare Investigator, and in the past as Zoo Check's Scientific Researcher and Co-ordinator (Born Free Foundation). Having analysed all the information available, I have already formed a clear opinion about the zoo, and the best course of action to take to help its animals now. This report lays this information before the reader, so others can see how I reached my conclusions.

Press involvement

Numerous newspaper articles have recently been published about Glasgow zoo. The beginning of this last wave of media interest began with investigations to the zoo by Non Governmental Organisations 'Animal Concern' and 'Advocates for Animals' at the beginning of the year 2002, which prompted an article in the Sunday Mail with the headline 'Zoo From Hell'.



A summary of the media interest since then follows:

February 10	Sunday Mail	Zoo From Hell. Special report. Animals' suffering is revealed
	Sunday Herald:	'Squalid' city zoo faces calls to close. Welfare groups claim creatures are suffering physically and mentally at visitors' attraction
February 11	Metro.	Animal experts rap 'squalid' zoo
	Daily Express	Few creature comforts. Hard-up zoo in survival battle as animal welfare groups attack 'squalid' conditions
	Daily Record	Snakes stolen in raid at zoo
	G. Evening Times	Zoo loses out to law of the jungle
	The Scotsman	Vandals steal snakes from 'run-down' city zoo
February 12	Metro	Zoo hits back at criticism
May 21	G. Evening Times	Before the council looks at Glasgow Zoo's licence...it should study these pictures
June 3	G. Evening Times	Zoo bosses sell off land to fund revamp. Troubled Animal park in multi-million pound deal for luxury flats.
June 9	Scot. on Sunday	Did Glasgow's zoo feed its unwanted pets to the snakes? Volunteer says he left because animals were treated so badly.
June 15	Herald	Animal welfare group claims Glasgow Zoo should close because of squalor

June 26	Daily Mail Times Sun	Closure threat to zoo where only the rats run free Glasgow zoo faces new check Rats plague zoo cages
July 1	Metro	Crisis time at zoo. A Safe and Healthy Haven? Or a Centre for mistreatment of animals?
July 9	G. Evening Times	Zoo seeks political support
July 18	Metro	Little Sapphire sparkles on home about
July 19	Mirror	The main attraction
July 30	Daily record	Born Freaks. Parents of zoo's lion cubs are brother and sister
July 31	The Scotsman	Zoo lions inbred
August 23	G. Evening Times	Jessie gives redundancy money to Glasgow Zoo. £1000 donation gives a massive boost to the campaign to save east end animals
Sept. 17	G. Evening Times	Crisis bid for cash as zoo condemned by inspectors
Sept. 19	Herald G. Evening Times The Glaswegian	Zoo told to clean up its act or face closure. Council Will pull plug on park's licence if owners fail to address health and safety concerns. Calls grow to shut down city zoo Calderpark lion set for the snip. Zoo bids to stop interbreeding
October 26	Daily Mail	Edge of Extinction. In this age of nature specials on TV, is there any reason for zoos to stay open?
October 27	The People	Dammed! Fight to end zoo animals' plight
October 30	G. Evening Times	Crisis-hit zoo set to miss deadline for vital clean-up. 12 month action plan hit by cash shortfall.
October 31	Herald Mail Sun The Scotsman	Zoo faces threat of shutdown despite time to sort out finances Final warning to debt-ridden zoo Zoo faces cash fight Activist hit out as Glasgow Zoo wins a reprieve
Novem. 10	Sunday Herald	Builder buys animal feed for Glasgow Zoo

Novem. 11 The Scotsman Glasgow Zoo being kept afloat by housebuilders.
 Novem. 14 Daily Record Zoo in lions loan row

Animal welfare group claims Glasgow Zoo should close because of squalor

HELEN PUTTRICK

A LEADING animal campaign group yesterday called for the immediate closure of Glasgow Zoo because of alleged squalor and neglect.

Advocates for Animals sent a report to Glasgow City Council's licensing committee after entering what it described as a series of inspections at the zoo.

The organisation claims the report reveals a catalogue of health and safety problems, including evidence of abnormal animal behaviour, inappropriate housing conditions for the animals, and a general lack of maintenance.

It has sent the report to the convenor of the licensing committee and to Strathclyde Fire Brigade.

Les Ward, director of Advocates for Animals, said yesterday: "The first impressions for anyone entering Glasgow Zoo are of squalor and neglect. It has nothing to offer as a visitor attraction or educational resource."

Mr Ward said the zoo was the worst he had encountered and said the group's report urged the licensing committee to close the zoo to the public with immediate effect.

A spokesman at the zoo defended conditions at the attraction and said he believed the claims by the campaigning group were "politically motivated".

He said: "The zoo staff are deeply committed to the welfare of five animals and the animals are humanely looked after and in good health."

"It has been well published for several years, but the animals have not suffered as a result."

Roger Edwards, chief executive officer for the zoo, said he felt the population of Glasgow would be "poorer" without the zoo to bring animals into their city lives.

The campaign group claims the zoo is so badly maintained that animals, staff, and visitors are at risk.

The report is another problem for the attraction, where two former volunteer workers claimed pet animals handed in for safe-keeping were killed and fed to two python snakes, a claim which was rejected by the zoo.

The council is already investigating other official and private complaints about the zoo, which might have its six-year licence revoked or suspended.

The group's report is by Samantha Scott, an animal behaviourist at the Royal Veterinary School in Edinburgh, and Jordi Cusani, a Zoo Check scientific researcher.

It alleges evidence of abnormal animal behaviour, including animals peeing inside their cages, inappropriate housing conditions for animals, insufficient environmental enrichment, including "little effort" to be imaginative in the primates' houses, and poor health care.

The report also claims buildings are run down and in disrepair, that there is a general lack of maintenance, and a lack of supervisory or security staff placing the public in danger from the animals.

One fire exit was said to be chained and partly blocked by chains, and emergency exit procedures were criticised.



ANIMALS' LIFE: A monkey in an enclosure with flaking paint.

15/4/02 +

The initial sparking of widespread press reaction created by Animal Concern and Advocates for Animals came about thanks to a report published by Advocates for Animals. This report quoted Advocates' investigators, the vet and behaviour expert Samantha Scott, and myself (through my own report created for the Born Free Foundation), and gave to the press the basis from which they started taking seriously the Animal Welfare organizations' concerns. This report was later sent to Government members at different levels, and it is still available on line on Advocates for Animals' web page (www.advocatesforanimals.org.uk).

The zoo and its sympathizers attempted on several occasions to regain a positive treatment from the press. The birth of the new lion cubs, the creation of 'Friends of Glasgow zoo', the selling of the zoo's land, the donations of cash or resources by people, etc. However, again and again new issues were made public that refueled the criticism of the zoo:

- vandalism attacks at the zoo showing its vulnerability and lack of security
- allegations that the zoo gave unwanted pets to the snakes
- revelations that the parents of the lions cubs are brother and sister
- official reports of rat infestation
- Special Inspection from the Council and the subsequent damning report
- deadline to sort out the zoo's finances given by the Council
- allegations of the zoo having broken Charity law

- discovering that the zoo has animals owned by the Chipperfield family
- allegations of a building company keeping the zoo afloat.

What else is going to be in the press about Glasgow zoo? Most likely, that the zoo has to close down, and nobody knows what to do with its animals.

Government involvement

Government levels

There are three ways a government can get involved with a zoo. Firstly, by creating the legislation that regulates their existence, and to ensure that this legislation is up to date and properly reinforced. Secondly, to license zoos through a system of minimum standards and inspections. Thirdly, to monitor zoos' activities in the context of animal welfare, public health and safety, trade and charity laws, and prosecute the zoo if it breaks any law.

In the UK the three level system works as following:

- ⌘ The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is the UK body in charge of creating the legislation and keeping it up to date. Before devolution this department dealt with the whole UK, but now each devolved authority is in charge. DEFRA (at that time DETR) was responsible for the creation of the Zoo Licensing Act 1981, which made it compulsory for all zoos to be licensed, and it is also responsible for the creation of the Standards used to license zoos, standards that are referred in the Act as the 'Secretary of State Standards of Modern Zoo Practice'.

What is the situation of this level of Government in the case of Glasgow zoo? In this case, it is the Scottish Executive that oversees the legislation that affects Glasgow zoo, but since there is not yet a specific Scottish law that deals with zoos (due to the fact devolution took place recently), officially Glasgow Zoo is still licensed under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981, and the last 'standards' published by DEFRA are still applicable to the zoo. These last standards are the 'Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice' which were published in May 2000, and are re-enforceable since April 2002.

These 'standards' were created from the advice of an 'independent' advisory group of experts (mainly from the zoo community) called the Zoo Forum. The UK Environment Minister Alan Meale created this Forum on 29th March 1999.

Therefore, at present, the Scottish Executive, and in particular Peter Begbie who is the person responsible for Zoo Licensing of the Scottish Executive's Justice Department, have to be sure that Glasgow zoo is licensed by the appropriate authority under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981, following the 'Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice 2000'.

- ⌘ The second level of Government involvement is the licensing and inspecting authority. In the UK, this is the local authority, and in the case of Glasgow zoo this is Glasgow City Council. Within the Council there is a Licensing Committee (chaired by Christine Devine) in charge of making the decisions regarding Glasgow zoo's license, and it is the Director of Environment Protection Services (Mrs. E. Corbett) who is the person in charge to ensure those decisions are implemented (including organizing inspections of the zoo).

The power of licensing zoos is given to local authorities in the Zoo Licensing Act 1981, which also stipulates the minimum number of inspections required, and who should be part of the inspection teams. DEFRA, together with the mentioned 'standards', also published a list of 'inspectors' (mainly zoo vets), from which local authorities have to choose the ones they want for their inspections. Those DEFRA inspectors visit zoos together with other local authority inspectors. The number of inspectors of each kind depends on the type of inspection (e.g. the first for a new zoo, a routine renewal, extraordinary inspection, etc) and the type of animal collection (e.g. big or small, keeping dangerous animals, etc). Glasgow zoo is categorized as a 'full licensed' zoo, and therefore requires a minimum of a full renewal inspection (composed of two DETR inspectors, one Local Authority (LA) vet and up to two optional LA inspectors) every 6 years, or any number of LA inspectors for any special or informal inspection. Section 11 of the Act authorises the LA to make any special inspection it deems necessary.

- ⌘ The third level of governmental involvement refers to the monitoring of the zoo's activities in relation to a variety of laws that zoos have to follow due to the fact they are open to the public, keep animals (some dangerous), deal in business transactions, trade goods and/or stock and some are charities. In the case of Glasgow zoo several bodies, from UK DEFRA, the Scottish Executive, Customs and Excises to Glasgow City Council, would be part of this level.

Glasgow zoo is owned by the 'Zoological Society of Glasgow and West Scotland' which is a registered charity. Therefore it should be following Scottish Charity law, which is overseen by The Scottish Charities Office of the Scottish Executive.

Since the zoo may trade in endangered animals it should follow the International Convention of Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the European Council Regulation (EC) No. 338/97, both overseen by DEFRA.

Owing to the fact that Glasgow zoo has non-domestic animals displayed to the public more than 7 days a year it has to be licensed under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 (which will automatically make redundant the need for a Dangerous Wild Animal Act 1976 licence), implemented by Glasgow City Council. The European Council Directive 1999/22/EC is the European law behind the Act, and in the near future it will introduce further changes in the UK zoo legislation.

Glasgow zoo employs staff, deals with food and it is open to the public, and therefore the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Food Safety Act 1990 are also applicable; the Environmental Protection Service of the Council implements both.

Inspections and Council meetings

Knowing the way a government can get involved with Glasgow Zoo, let's see in which way this government did get involved in recent months.

First of all, Glasgow Zoo has been licensed by Glasgow City Council for a number of years (the zoo opened in 1947). The last renewal of the zoo license, with the prior inspection on 30th June 2000, took place on 19th April 2001. Despite the licence conditions not being met before the initial deadline the Council gave to the zoo, they were, apparently, met by the second deadline. Therefore, Glasgow zoo has kept its licence and in theory does not need to renew it (with the subsequent inspections) until the year 2008. This is in theory because at any moment the Council feels it is appropriate, a special inspection can take place and the Council can revoke the licence if it sees fit.

This is more or less what happened. As a consequence of complaints received, Glasgow City Council decided to undertake a short informal inspection sending Environmental Health Officers and a veterinary surgeon to the zoo in spring 2001. The report of this visit said the animals were in good physical health and had no signs of disease. However, it also commented that the lions were showing some signs of stereotypic behaviour. Most importantly, it revealed that the standard of repair was unsatisfactory and that a serious rodent infestation existed. Mrs. E Corbett, Director of Environmental Protection Services, reported the findings of this inspection to the Licensing Committee meeting of 26th June 2002. The Committee decision was to instruct that a Special Inspection of the zoo should be undertaken in terms of Section 11 of the Zoo Licensing Act 1981.

On the 23rd August 2002 such special an inspection of the zoo took place, together with an inspection in terms of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1984. Four LA inspectors and one observer formed the team, which was lead by Professor Roger J. Wheater, who was director of Edinburgh Zoo. Representing the zoo Roger Edwards (CEO), L. Kuschinski (Curator), W Linton (Estate manager) and William Smith (Chairman), but nobody representing the Taylor Veterinary Practice (the zoo's vets) was present, which is quite surprising considering the seriousness of the inspection. The results of the inspection were made public, and were reported again to the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 18th September 2002.

These are the general remarks and conclusions of the special inspection report:

GENERAL REMARKS

1. It was noted that there has been no recent examination of trees within the curtilage of the Zoo and while the potential risk of injury to animals and members of the public arising from this source may be considered as low, (sic) It is recommended that a tree Surgeon be employed to carry an appropriate survey of the said trees
2. A contract requires to be drawn up between the zoo and George Gold with regard to the operation of the nighttime security arrangements. This contract should detail duties and responsibilities of each party
3. The signage of exhibits requires to be improved and appropriate signage is required to identify enclosures, which are currently out of use
4. Visits made by the veterinary practice of the zoo require to be recorded This should include routine visits where no treatment is provided
5. The problem of interbreeding of the lions requires to be resolved and it is suggested that the zoo enter into discussions with Glasgow Veterinary College to seek their aid in vasectomising the lion. If a cost is involved we would expect the owners of the animal not Glasgow Zoo to meet this
6. Numerous potholes, protruding tree roots and loose paving slabs throughout the grounds of the Zoo were identified as requiring attention
7. The deterioration of Zoo buildings has accelerated since the last inspection and their dilapidated condition is still a common concern Those currently affected are different buildings from those specified in the original report. This indicates a lack of routine maintenance and expenditure, which will have to be resolved within the next 12 months
8. The Inspection Team noted with disappointment that the Taylor Veterinary Practice was not represented during the Inspectors' site visits despite being invited
9. The inspectors focused on the animal welfare complaints/concerns raised by a number of interested parties and it is the opinion of the inspectors that the staff at the Zoo are dedicated to the welfare of the animals, which was considered to be very satisfactory. This confirmed the observations of the SSPCA.

INSPECTING TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Having inspected Glasgow Zoo Park operated by the Zoological Society of Glasgow and West of Scotland on 23rd August 2002

The inspection team makes the following recommendation:

It is recommended that the above collection continue to be licensed under the Act subject to the standard conditions and the following additional conditions

1. Action must be taken at the appropriate time to prevent further breeding by the lions (brother and sister)
2. The practice drills for emergency procedures must be implemented immediately

3. A formalised system for perimeter fence/high risk animal enclosure inspections must be introduced with a register utilised for record purposes
4. Firearm training must be arranged for those responsible for their use as soon as possible
5. A further inspection will be required in 12 months by which time the financial future of the zoo will have been determined
6. All redundant buildings required to be made safe/secure in order to prevent the public gaining access or coming into contact with unsuitable structures
7. When funds become available from the proposed sale of land a contractor be appointed immediately to clear the site of the redundant and dilapidated buildings
8. The overall level of maintenance is poor and requires to be improved and a maintenance programme requires to be introduced in order to focus on the main priorities The maintenance plan requires to incorporate timescales for carrying out essential repairs This programme can be expanded as funds become available to carry out replacement/refurbishment works.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT ON INSPECTION FOR GLASGOW ZOO

1. *The Zoo requires to undertake regular emergency procedures/drills and these require to be recorded/ commented upon in order to measure the effectiveness of the current systems. Any additional controls which, may be required as a result of the drills require to be incorporated into the Emergency Procedures Document.
2. *Staff qualified to utilise firearms require to receive regular firearms training.
3. *Access routes require to be maintained around perimeter fencing including fencing which is utilised to secure dangerous animals.
4. *The checking of all fencing utilised to secure dangerous animals requires to be undertaken daily and a record of these checks requires to be documented.
5. A risk assessment requires to be undertaken regarding the hazards associated with trees within the Zoo grounds and the possibility of them being blown down due to strong winds/disease and causing injury to humans/damage to enclosures.
6. All staff involved in animal handling/removal of animal waste require to be provided with suitable overalls in order to reduce the risk of zoonotic infection
7. *The legalities of the nighttime security arrangements are in some doubt. It would appear that the Zoo requires to have a formal contract with Mister Gold which details responsibilities and procedures for each party (suitable controls are required for lone working).
8. *There are numerous potholes/protruding tree roots throughout the Zoo which are liable to cause persons to trip and which require to be suitably repaired/made safe.
9. *There are a number of concrete paving slabs at various locations which are partially dislodged/loose and which require to be made safe.
10. The trailing electrical cable within the rear bear enclosure requires to be made safe

11. A suitable chain/barrier requires to be provided within the rear of the bear enclosure which will prevent visitors from entering into the designated danger area.
12. The staff bothy at the Barbary sheep enclosure requires to be suitably repaired in order to remove all defective and decayed woodwork.
13. The wooden ladder located within the "Monkey House" is part broken and requires to be removed
14. The waste pipe serving the wash hand basins within the "Display Barn" is part- detached and requires to be suitably repaired.
15. The ceiling plaster within the office is part broken and requires to be suitably repaired
16. The fragile roof of the Tropical House* is defective and leaking and requires to be suitably repaired. It should be noted that the use of crawling boards and harnesses require to be utilised by any person undertaking such repair work.

* Similar Issues included in the Zoo Licensing Report

Apart from these conclusions there are some other interesting points in the main body of the report:

- ⌘ On the Provision for Suitable Environment the inspectors state that the backup facilities for life supports systems are not adequate.
- ⌘ In relation to Education the inspectors state: "Small-scale educational provision. No formal educational programme in place and no educational staff employed. Poor signage."
- ⌘ On Conservation the inspectors state "Minimal conservation work is undertaken"
- ⌘ On Research the inspectors write "none"
- ⌘ On Conservation, Education and Research the inspectors responded with 'N/A' to each of the following questions: "are on-site education facilities commensurable with the collection and adequate for the purposes? Are the conservation efforts adequate? Are the research efforts adequate?"
- ⌘ On Public Safety the inspectors state that the maintenance of buildings does not appear adequate, and that the public areas and walkways do not appear safe.
- ⌘ On Records the inspectors answered the question "Are the animal source and destination records kept?" with a surprising "N/A"
- ⌘ Most important of all is the last point on Compliance Check, in which the answer to the question "**Have existing licence conditions been met?**" is '**NO**'.

The Licensing Committee in its meeting on 18th September decided to send the report of the inspection to the operator of Glasgow Zoo. He, in turn, was asked to comment in writing on the report of inspection and on the status of the Zoo's public liability insurance cover in view of the health and safety issues detailed in the report. The zoo's operator was also asked to attend the next meeting of the Licensing Committee to speak his comments.



Glasgow City Council
 Licensing Committee
 Report by Director of Environmental Protection Services
 Mrs E. Corbett 0141 287 6512

Glasgow Zoo

Purpose of Report

To advise committee of the written response received from the operator of Glasgow Zoo in relation to

- the report of the special inspection undertaken on 23 August 2002 and
- the request by Committee to clarify the status of the Zoo Park's public liability insurance cover.

Background

The Licensing Committee at its meeting on 18 September 2002 instructed that the operator of Glasgow Zoo be asked to submit written comments on the report of the special inspection and to confirm the status of the Zoo Park's public liability insurance cover in view of the health and safety issues detailed in the report.

The response of 22 October 2002 is attached from which it will be noted that it is incomplete and that no timescales are indicated. In addition uncertainty remains in relation to funding. No relevant information has been submitted to date in relation to the public liability insurance cover.

Recommendations

That Committee instruct that

- 1) the position in relation to the public liability insurance cover be clarified forthwith by the operator of Glasgow Zoo and
- 2) all outstanding items in the report of the special inspection be actioned no later than 31 January 2003 and that the Director of Environmental Protection Services submit a further report thereafter.

Ward No 47

Local member(s) advised yes consulted no

The zoo did write to the Committee, and Roger Edwards did attend the next meeting on 30th October 2002. In the zoo's letter dated 22nd October (made public by the Council on its web page) Mr. Edwards specifically agreed to all eight general remarks (and to all the other points in a simple sentence) giving very short comments, but on the point of maintenance he stated

“(…) until the funding problem has been resolved, maintenance remains problematical and difficult to timetable. In the meantime, priority is given to the animal enclosures, animal heating systems, health and safety issues, and refuse and litter collection (…)”

This letter did not seem good enough: at the October meeting the Director of Environment Protection Service advised the Committee that Mr. Edwards' written response was incomplete as no timescales were indicated for completion of the

outstanding items detailed in the report and that uncertainty remained in respect of the required funding. He also explained that Mr. Edwards had provided confirmation that the Zoo's public liability insurance cover was for £2m. After consideration, the Committee asked Mrs. E. Corbett to require from the zoo the most recent financial statements in respect of the operation of the zoo park, a confirmation from the insurers that the public liability cover of £2m was sufficient (and if necessary take steps to increase it), and to clarify the position with regard to the current planning application for the development of an adjacent area of land own by the zoo. The Committee also agreed that all outstanding items detailed in the special inspection report should be completed by 31st January 2003.

In other words, Edwards has until the end of next January to provide the most recent financial statements, to have clarified in detail all items mentioned in the special report, and to clarify in detail the future funding of the zoo.

Yvonne Taylor, from Advocates of Animals, attended this last Committee meeting, and she said that when Councilor John Mason pressed Edwards on the fact that the zoo was breaking the law by not having produced accounts for the last two years, Mr. Edwards responded that the zoo had been 'put in a difficult position'. Despite being unable to provide figures, Edwards claimed that the sale of land will pay off the zoo's debts and leave them with 'several hundred pounds' to spend on the new zoo, hoping to get lottery money for the new venture afterwards.

After the meeting Yvonne wrote to the Mr Logan, the zoo's accountant (who has yet to reply as far as I am aware) and this is how she described in her letter Mr. Edwards comments on the meeting:

"I personally attended the meeting of Glasgow City Council's Licensing Committee on 30 October 2002 at which the Zoo's Chief Executive, Roger Edwards, was present. According to my notes, when Mr Edwards was questioned by Councillor John Mason on the non-presentation of the zoo's accounts he claimed that the accounts had been completed by the zoo's accountants. He continued that they (the zoo) had been advised that this (not disclosing the accounts) was the best course of action. I assumed from this that the accountants had advised the zoo that this would be the best course of action. When Councillor Mason pressed the point that as a charity, by not publishing annual accounts the zoo was breaking the law, Mr Edwards agreed and vaguely said that the advice 'they' had given the zoo had placed them in a very difficult position. I and everyone else present were left with the distinct impression that it was your company Mr Edwards was referring to that had advised the zoo to withhold its accounts."

Yvonne also noted that despite Edwards admitting on the meeting that no plans have been drawn up, he outlined some plans for the new zoo:

- The zoo would move from its present location to the north of Glasgow with better access to public transport.
- The size of the zoo would be scaled down to about 20 acres.
- He believed that visitor numbers of 100,000 a year would be attainable.
- It would be 'marketed aggressively as a tourist attraction'.

- He wanted to have a 'mixed collection' of animals rather than a 'specialist collection'
- An education programme would be central to any future plans for the zoo.

It is interesting to point out that the plans to repair the present zoo and to improve its conditions are based on opening a new zoo somewhere else and spending all the funds on the new site. Possibly without realizing it, Mr. Edwards' explanation about his plans to open a new zoo seemed to be in fact a 'confession' of his intention of not repairing the present zoo and not sorting out the conditions of the animals kept in it, but instead to keep the zoo as it is expending the minimum amount of money possible in order to save funds for a new zoo somewhere else. Curiously enough this is precisely the reason that the zoo curator gave me for the bad state of the zoo when I asked him back in February during a visit I made to the zoo. This, in itself, should have convinced the Licensing Committee that they should revoke the present license since this licence could not be applied to a new zoo at another site.

Non Governmental Organizations Involvement

NGOs 'conspiracy'?

How much of the work of anti-racist organizations can be described as a conspiracy against slavery? How much of the efforts of the anti-alcohol abuse lobby can be described as conspiracy against brewers?

Surely it is not a surprise to anyone that organizations that do not object to being labelled as 'anti-captivity' share common interests, and probably also share information that helps each other to achieve their common goals. Is it really strange that when a zoo has shown itself to be sub-standard more than one animal welfare and/or animal rights group will become concerned about its animals, and probably interested in joining a campaign about it?

This is the case for Glasgow zoo. Several organizations have been involved in what Glasgow zoo would call 'a conspiracy'. In fact, it is the overwhelming evidence that something is wrong at Glasgow zoo that has attracted the NGOs' interest, not the other way around. This is the nature of any lobby and welfare movement, and this is how these movements achieve their goals.

Local NGOs have been leading the campaign to save the animals at Glasgow zoo. In particular, and leading the campaign, Advocates for Animals, based in Edinburgh, and then Animal Concern, based in Glasgow. After these, other national organizations have joined, such as the Born Free Foundation, based in the SouthEast England, and Captive Animals' Protection Society, based in the North West of England. There is nothing perverse in this. All these groups are concerned about wild animals, and all these groups did not like what they saw when they looked at Glasgow zoo. It is perfectly

reasonable to expect that local groups have had more emphasis on the campaign than non-local ones, but equally reasonable to expect that national groups have not ignored the problems of Glasgow zoo's animals.



If the organizations involved have been particularly efficient in the way they have channeled their approaches and complemented each other in their activities, this may explain why some people may think they have gone out of their way to 'target' Glasgow zoo in particular. It is the unfortunate fact that this efficiency is not always present when we look at other campaigns on other zoos, which in reality creates this impression.

Conspiracy it could have been if Glasgow zoo is in fact one of the best UK zoos; if the issues raised are totally unfounded and irrelevant; if the zoo operators themselves rather than their actions are what has been targeted; if other zoos or non animal welfare related groups are involved in the campaign in order to get rid of some 'competing' business; if the fire-alarm has been rung with not a bit of smoke in the air. This is clearly not the case.

Apart from visiting the zoo, commissioning reports, and issuing press statements about the results of their investigations, one of the aspects of the work of lobby NGOs is to encourage public participation. Advocate for Animals created a postcard which members of the public could use to write to the Council. This organization told me that they have received copies of hundreds of letters on the Glasgow zoo campaign sent to the Council from all over the world, and at the last Licensing Committee meeting it was stated that the council had received 2,618 Advocates for Animals postcards.

There has been one NGO that has been involved with the Glasgow Zoo case but not joined a campaign aimed to help the animals kept in the zoo through scrutiny and criticism: the Scottish Society for the Protection of Animals (SSPCA). They did inspect the zoo as a consequence of the complaints, but they did not issue any criticisms. I myself wrote to the SSPCA (to Ian Gardiner, Chief Executive) since I was present the same day the SSPCA was inspecting the zoo (and funnily enough they did not see many of the issues I pointed out in my report) They replied that they offered advice on one or two specific areas and that they "were of the view that there were no major grounds for concern over the animals". Interestingly, though, they replied quite differently to Advocate for Animals' later letter, stating "we have long had concerns over the condition of the fabric of Glasgow zoo (...) we agree that the conditions are not conducive to good animal welfare, and long-term delay to improving the overall site can

only be detrimental to the well being of the animals". The SSPCA's overall attitude, though, seems to remain the same: avoiding criticizing the zoo under the misguided opinion that in doing so all the animals at Glasgow zoo may end up being put down.

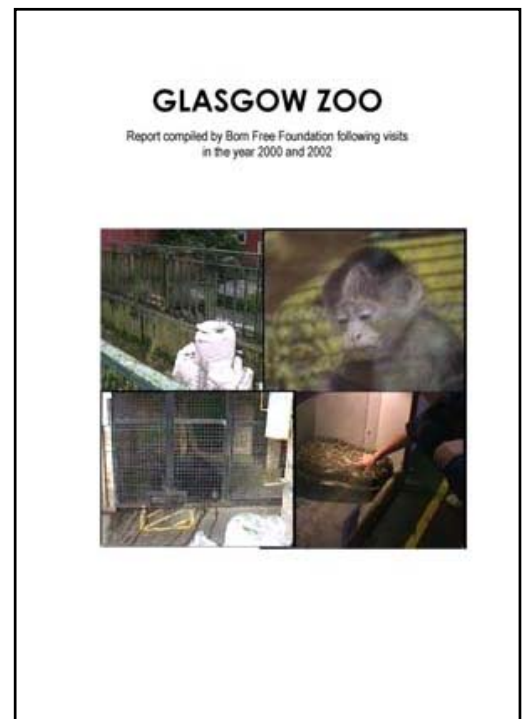
As far as 'Friends of Glasgow Zoo' is concerned, this is a small group recently founded as an initiative of a Zoological Society of Glasgow executive member, possibly to allow the zoo to receive donations that will not end in the zoo's creditors hands.

The NGOs' Reports

At the beginning of the year 2002 two reports were created by NGOs based on the visit/inspection of their members or commissioned experts. I created one for The Born Free Foundation (BFF), and it was based on two visits I made to the zoo in the period 2000-2002 (at that time as head of the Zoo Check Campaign of BFF). The other, and most publicised, was created by Advocate for Animals and was based on several visits by their members, a commissioned inspection by Animal Behaviourist Samantha Scott, and my own report. The reports had photographic and video evidence to support their claims.

The main conclusions of the Born Free Foundation report are:

- Animals like lions, rhino and tigers were seen showing stereotypic behaviour, which is often a sign of welfare problems.
- Animals showing signs of over-grooming (primates) and overgrown hooves (Barbary sheep)
- The zoo was generally run down and in a state of disrepair (e.g. lack of signage, dirty enclosures, broken fences, peeling walls)
- The periphery fence would not prevent people breaking in; in fact the newspapers reported recent cases where snakes were stolen.
- Some animals were kept in inadequate enclosures with no access to the outdoors (some birds), far too small enclosures (reptiles), wrong shelters (owls) etc.
- Some management methods seemed inappropriate, like inefficient cleaning or throwing food on the floor instead of in the right containers.



<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/jordi.casamitjana>

The main conclusions of the Advocates for Animals report are:

- Evidence of abnormal animal behaviour
- Inappropriate housing conditions for the animals
- Insufficient environmental enrichment
- Poor health care
- Buildings in disrepair and rundown
- General lack of maintenance
- Zoo poses a health and safety hazard to animals, staff and visitors
- Lack of supervision or security by staff placing the public in danger from the animals and vice versa



<http://www.advocatesforanimals.org.uk>

One statement I made in the BFF report has been quoted on several occasions both in the press and in the Advocates for Animals report:

"Glasgow zoo is, at present, one of the worse kept large zoos I have seen in the UK"

There is nothing, so far, that has made me change this opinion.

Financial state of the zoo

Everybody agrees, including the zoo itself, that Glasgow zoo is suffering strong financial difficulties. How serious, though, are their cash problems? How much debt does the zoo have? What are the real prospects of recovering from this financial crisis? These questions are more difficult to answer, mainly because the zoo seems to want to keep the answers to itself.

If we look at the press we can find the first figures in one of the first articles published on this latest zoo crisis. In the 'Zoo from Hell' article in the Sunday Mail (10th February 2002) it states that the zoo has debts of more than £2 million. It also says that in the past Glasgow City Council used to give an annual subsidy of £130,000, but this stopped. Furthermore, the article quotes the zoo's CEO, Mr. Roger Edwards, saying "We've been struggling for years – there's nothing new in that (...) it costs £400,000 a year to run the zoo and we operate entirely on a charitable basis".

I was able to confirm this information when I had a conversation face to face with the curator of the zoo, Mr. Lutz Kuschinsky, in February 2002. He told me the following:

- the zoo owed £2 million
- the zoo even owed vet bills, although the vets were good in holding bills
- the Council gave more than £100,000 every year to the zoo to help it keep going but due to internal cuts stopped giving any money two years ago
- They had a voluntary redundancy, and then an obligatory one. After that, the contracts were reduced to 3 months. Many keepers working at the zoo were volunteers.
- They received incoming money only from visitors, children's parties and from landsite tax

Most interesting was Mr. Kuschinsky's answer to the question of why he thought the zoo was in such bad shape. He said – and I am paraphrasing here –the reason was that the former director wanted to move the zoo, so that when things broke, rather than spending money repairing them they were left un-repaired; later on the deal fell through, and by then it was too late to repair, because they needed replacement instead; after that, big mammals stopped being kept, visitors stopped coming, and the Council stopped funding.

What is interesting about Mr. Kuschinsky's insight is that it describes not just the past, but the present too, since the previous management mistakes seem to be repeated by the new director who, as could be seen in his later intervention in a Council meeting (see below), is still stuck with the idea of moving – hence not repairing.

This was about a year ago, so you would expect the situation to have got worse. A few months later, on May 21st, the Glasgow Evening Times published an article mentioned that the zoo's debt was around £3 million, and also mentioned that the deal to sell part of the Calderpark land for housing, which would clear zoo's debts and give it around £1.5 million, was still tied up in red tape due to releasing 'green belt' land for development (and still is today).

In June, another article in the Evening Times seemed to offer some hope to the zoo. With the headline 'Zoo bosses sell off land to fund revamp', the article says that Stewart Milne Homes had bought an acre of prime land on the zoo's car park to build 40 luxury apartments in a multi-million pound deal. The article also mentions that the sale of 30 acres of land worth more than £2million to property firm Miller Homes the year before helped take the park out of the red, although Miller had run into planning difficulties.

So, what is it then? Are all the financial problems solved? There is only one way to find out. To look at the last financial statements of the zoo. The advantage is that the zoo is run by a charity, and therefore their financial statements are public. Scottish Charity law, in particular the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990 Section 5, says that each charity has to provide within 30 days their latest accounts statements to anyone who requests them.

John Robins, from Animal Concern, did just that on 11th July 2002; he requested the Zoological Society of Glasgow accounts. Three months later he received the 1997-98 accounts, two months overdue, and clearly not the latest. The zoo had, simply, broken Charity Law, and Mr. Robins informed the Lord Advocates about this. This is what the law says:

- 12) Where any such body, within one month of its being requested to do so by any person—
- (a) fails to provide to that person a copy of its most recent statement of accounts as mentioned in subsection (7) above; or
 - (b) fails to inform that person of its accounting reference date,
- the Lord Advocate, on a complaint being made to him by such person, may direct that the fact of such failure shall be noted for the purposes of section 1(3) of this Act.

It is not just the delay, but the fact that the latest accounts have not been sent at all. Apparently it seems that the zoo also failed to produce four-year's worth of accounts to the Scottish Charity office. An investigation is currently underway, but at Mr Edwards' recent appearance in a Council meeting he seemed to pass the blame to his accountants.

I managed to have a look to the zoos' 1997-98 accounts, and I found some interesting information in them:

- In 1998 the amount owed to creditors falling due within one year was £2,424,865
- In 1998 the land and buildings tangible assets of the zoo were £2,417,239
- In 1998 the society sustained an operating deficit for the year of £92,609
- In 1998 the zoo income from entrance fees to the park was £150,923
- In 1998 the keeper and maintenance wages were £150,220
- Comparing 1997 and 1998, the society's general fund was reduced from £99,823 to £47,865 (despite having successfully sold land for £65,978)

You can see that in 1998, if the zoo had sold all its land and buildings most of the money obtained would have ended paying its creditors (leaving only about £7000 to rebuild the whole zoo from scratch!). This was four years ago, when the situation was not as bad as it is today. At that time, still having the £130,000 grant from the Council, the zoo was spending about £93,000 a year more than its income, so after four years you would expect that its debt would have increased not less than £650,000, without counting four years of bank interest (that I believe could even reach £1m).

The figures also show that the number of visitors to the zoo was quite low, since the total of visitors' entrance fee income could only cover the wages of keepers and other staff.

In the 1998 society's annual report that goes with the accounts the zoo states:

“The financial position remained critical, jeopardising the very future of our Zoo. Thanks to continued cost-cutting and a gradual recovery in attendances after some unfavourable publicity during the past three years, the trading position continues to improve. We would

be trading comfortably were three things to happen. Firstly, if attendances recovered to the 1992 level (let alone the high of 1990 European City of Culture, and the arrival of the white tigers!). Secondly, if local authority grants were restored, somehow, to 1993 levels (a subsequent reduction of over £100.000 per annum), and, finally, some way found of eliminating or reducing the accumulated debt to the Bank in excess of £2 million”.

Four years later, the three ‘things’ needed not only have not occurred, but got even worse (the Council’s has not restored its grant to its 1993 level but the grant has totally disappeared).

Looking at the accounts and comparing 1997 and 1998 you can see that despite the selling of land the society’s funds were reduced by half (but still in the ‘black’). This makes you wonder what happened in the 1999 accounts and onwards. Did the next accounts show a general fund in the ‘red’, therefore making impossible the use of the selling of land as an asset to rebuild the zoo, in Calderpark or anywhere else? Is this why the next accounts are kept secret, or for something even worse?

Why does the zoo want to keep its latest accounts secret to the point of preferring to break the law than to make them public? Maybe the answer falls in the latest ‘scandal’ published in the press. On 10th November 2002 the Sunday Herald published an article claiming that the builder, Miller Home was paying the day-to day costs of the zoo. It says:

“The company is awaiting final planning consent to build 200 new homes on a 26-acre site purchased from the zoo. It is understood under the terms of the deal, believed to be worth more than £2million, that payment will be triggered once planning permission is granted to Miller. The Sunday Herald understands that day-to-day costs accrued will be deducted from this payment. (...)”

“Councillor Robert MacBean, the city council's representative on the zoo board, said: 'I understand, from the report given to the board, that Miller are meeting running costs including feed and heating. (...)”

“Another source close to the zoo told the Sunday Herald: 'Miller have been paying the running costs of the zoo as part of the deal to buy land from them. It is not a charitable donation, the money the zoo's receiving will be deducted from the final amount it gets for the land. That arrangement ran out about a year ago, but in October the bank was going to pull the plug on the zoo -- Miller stepped in again and are still paying the running costs.”

When the reporters of the Sunday Herald approached the zoo for comment, this is what the zoo’s spokeswomen responded:

“However, a spokeswoman for Glasgow Zoo said she could 'categorically deny' that Miller had paid a penny to the zoo, but refused to make accounts available. 'There is no mismanagement -- this is not Enron. When the deal is done we will be able to talk about it but there will be a substantial amount of money left over.' ”

Why is Miller paying, as they say, the running cost of the zoo? Is it to keep the zoo running long enough to complete the land sale? Why does the zoo refuse to show the

accounts to anyone, and has stated that it will continue refusing until the end of January 2003?

As a consequence of all these revelations, John Robins from Animal Concern has demanded in a letter to the Scottish Charity Office that Glasgow Zoo be placed under administration.

The saga continues.

Animal Welfare at the zoo

If Glasgow zoo were a theme park struggling to get enough visitors, they maybe would get lucky and have, after perseverance, the right business deals to save their enterprise. If Glasgow zoo were a museum, for instance, they could keep its doors closed waiting for better days. If Glasgow zoo were any of these it would have not attracted the attention that it has, and its critics would not have reached the headlines. However, the reality is that Glasgow zoo deals with sentient animals, and what in some other cases could just be unfortunate business and management mistakes, in the case of a zoo this may have produced suffering and death.

Everything, from the financial problems, the lack of maintenance, the lack of personnel, the breaking of Charity law, the selling or not of the land, etc, has an effect on the welfare of the animals kept at the zoo. Everything that happens at Glasgow zoo is an animal welfare issue, and this is why individuals and organizations whose interest, above all, is the welfare of animals have developed all this attention.

It should not be necessary to give examples of animal suffering to appreciate the ordeal of Glasgow zoo's animals. The fact that the zoo has not enough funds to offer its animals the best possible care they can get (not the best possible care the zoo can give), should be enough to persuade anybody that we a dealing here with an animal welfare problem.

Nevertheless, if somebody needs examples, lets give some from the two recent reports:

- The White rhino showing signs of possible stereotypic behaviour (circling), which is normally associated with difficulties in coping with captive life, or frustrated territorial patrolling
- One tiger showing signs of possible stereotypic behaviour (pacing), which is normally associated with difficulties in coping with captive life, or frustrated territorial patrolling (see picture)



- Both lions showing signs of possible stereotypic behaviour (pacing), which is normally associated with difficulties in coping with captive life, or frustrated territorial patrolling
- Cotton top tamarins showing strong signs of over-grooming on their tails (normally associated with stress)
- Capuchin monkeys showing signs of over-grooming (normally associated with stress).

- Barbary sheep showing overgrown hooves, which could be caused by poor health care (see picture)



- Tigers being unable to have enough privacy from visitors, with subsequent possibility of stress
- Macaw showing signs of over-preening (often associated to stress)

- Snakes in small tanks with not enough gradients of temperature, UV light or water to be free from distress.

- Budgerigars deprived of direct sunlight, preventing them expressing most natural behaviour

- Capuchin monkeys in enclosures that do not prevent the monkeys peeling the paint and eating it, with the subsequent risk of intoxication (see picture)



- Iguana showing signs of Interaction with Transparent Boundaries, with the subsequent risk of injury.

- Snakes and birds being handled by humans with the subsequent diseases risk, due to the fact that normally humans have not washed their hands before (or if they had, they may be leaving soap droplets on the animal's skin)

- Birds of prey tethered and kept in small sheds preventing them expressing their most natural behaviour

- Animals (bears, for instance) in enclosures that are falling apart, and may damage the animals at any time.

- Animals (ponies, for instance) in dirty and unhygienic enclosures that can infect the animals at any time.
- Animals (primates, for example) having to eat food soaked with urine and feces, with the subsequent risk of infection (see picture).



All these examples are the ones that a couple of people could see with a few hours of observation; with no access behind closed doors, no access to vet records (nobody has because they do not exist), unable to witness the whole life the animals are asked to spend in the conditions they are kept. Nevertheless, like the tip of an iceberg, what has been seen indicates that there is much more going on 'underneath'.

The second time I went to the zoo and talked to the curator, he told me that the cheetah, which was very old and had a kidney problem, had been taken off its medication due to, among other things, the cost of it. The curator was relieved to see that this had not made its life worse. However, a few months later I found out that the cheetah had died. Did she die because the medication stopped? Did she die of old age? Did she die because the zoo had not enough funds? I probably never will know.

It is likely that it is not the keepers' fault, since they work with few or not much resources. Whose fault is it, then? The vet's? The Management's? Society?

What kind of message are we sending to the world if lack of funds is an accepted excuse for institutional neglect? What kind of response to animal welfare problems is it to complain of not having cash?

If anybody still thinks that the lack of funds and animal welfare problems do not go hand by hand, you can read the following zoo statement in its 1998 annual report:

"The necessity for cut-backs and energy saving had quite an impact on the reptile collection, with on-going maintenance problems having to remain unsolved. This has, in turn, affected the breeding results."

...and this is the zoo talking, not me.

Conservation, Education and Research issue

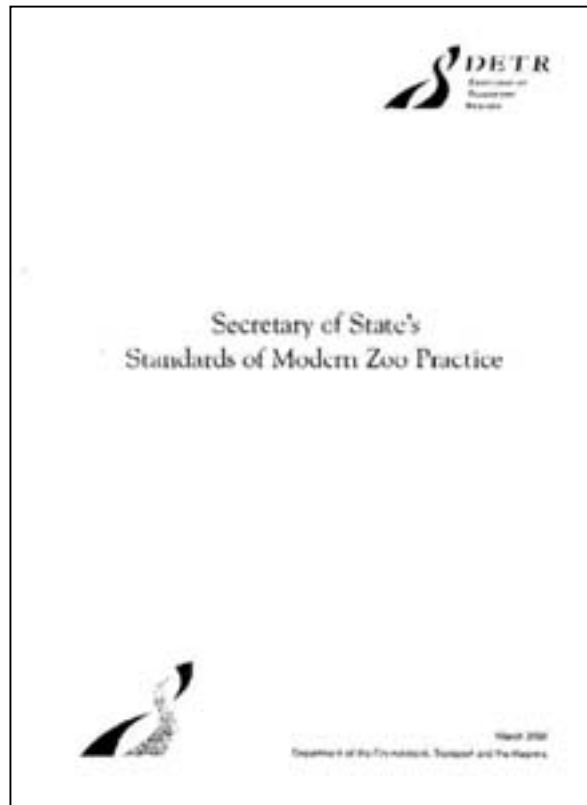
Many modern zoos have one thing that Victorian zoos did not have: PR departments. These, in recent years, have been busy trying to sell the idea that zoos play an important role in conservation, education and research. This could have been just that, a new way to sell the product, but to the surprise of some a minority of zoos tried to take this new concept more seriously than most; and this, together with pressure from NGOs, made the legislation change.

In 1999 the European Union approved the Council Directive 1999/22/EC. This was the legislation that relates to the keeping of wild animals in zoos, and it entered into force on 29th March 1999. The directive provides for the licensing and inspections of zoos and for good standards of animal care. As far as the UK is concerned this was just as well, because we had our own licensing system since the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 was approved. However, the new Zoo Directive did something else; it also set the framework for the participation of zoos in conservation, research and education. Those three concepts no longer could only be PR luring tools; they had to become a reality.

Specifically, the Directive will require Member States to ensure that zoos:

- 'participate in research from which conservation benefits accrue to the species, and/or training in relevant conservation skills, and/or the exchange of information relating to species conservation and/or, where appropriate, captive breeding, repopulation or reintroduction of species into the wild'
- 'promote public education and awareness in relation to the conservation of biodiversity, particularly by providing information about species exhibited and their natural habitats'

The first step of the UK legislators was to adopt the directive changes within the 'Secretary of State Standards'. The new version, published in May 2000, does incorporate in some form these issues. However, changes in the 'Standards' are not enough to accommodate the European Directive, so the Zoo licensing Act 1981 itself has to be amended to incorporate fully the conservation requirement, slightly change the definition of zoos, and review the concept of 'exception'. Until this happens (which should have already happened since the deadline was April 2002), the 'standards', which are already enforceable, cover some of the conservation requirements (although not as strongly as if they were a specific part of the Act itself).



The points in the 'Standards' where the issue is dealt are:

CONSERVATION, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

PRINCIPLES

7.1 Although recognised as an important feature of UK zoos, conservation, education and research will become subject to legislative control in Britain when the EU Zoos Directive comes into force. The Directive will make it a formal requirement for the first time that zoos implement the following conservation measures:

a) Participating in research from which conservation benefits accrue to the species, and/or training in relevant conservation skills, and/or the exchange of information relating to species conservation and/or, where appropriate, captive breeding, repopulation or reintroduction of species into the wild and;

b) Promoting public education and awareness in relation to the conservation of biodiversity, particularly by providing information about the species exhibited and their natural habitats.

(See Appendix 1 - The EC Zoos Directive and Zoo Closures)

7.2 Zoos should establish ethical review processes or seek appropriate help in planning and implementing their conservation, education and research strategies.

(See Appendix 2 - Ethical Review Process)

CONSERVATION WITHIN AND BEYOND THE ZOO

7.3 Where the relevant species are held, a zoo must be an active participant in recognised species management programmes. The programme must contribute something beyond a basic interpretation of conservation in the wild.

7.4 Zoos should demonstrate measurable performance in conservation, education and research. Areas to be examined will include:

- overall conservation and education policy, and how this relates to the World Zoo Conservation Strategy;*
- type and level of input into intentional conservation programmes;*
- the educational role of the zoo as set out in any mission statement;*
- whether there is a written education and research plan and how it applies to different sections of the zoos' visitors.*

EDUCATION

7.5 A zoo must have a written education strategy and an active education programme.

7.6 Suitable facilities should be available for education purposes.

7.7 Accurate information about the species exhibited must be available. This should include, as a minimum, the species name (both scientific and common), its natural habitat, some of its biological characteristics and details of its conservation status.

RESEARCH

7.8 Zoos should be able to demonstrate that they encourage research. Research can be developed through forging links with Higher Education Institutions. Full details of such projects should be available on request.

7.9. In any research carried out, care must be taken to comply with all relevant legislation and be subject to ethical review. Protocols, licences (if held) and associated publications should be available at inspections.

In my opinion, one of the important statements of the 'standards' is the sentence in point 7.3 that says: "The programme must contribute something beyond a basic interpretation of conservation in the wild". Implicitly it suggests that some zoos in the past only used the 'basic' interpretation of conservation, but this no longer would be allowed. This approach, today present in the 'standards', and in the near future in the new Zoo Licensing Act, would ensure that old-fashioned zoos that do not adapt to the 21st century should no longer be allowed to exist.

What about Glasgow zoo? How does it rank in Education, Conservation and Research? Well, the NGOs that are part of the Glasgow zoo campaign would say 'very low'. Myself, who has visited the zoo several times, would also say 'extremely low' (no participation in captive breeding programmes, no support of in situ conservation, no research whatsoever, very poor educational value, etc). But let's see what the Council inspectors had to say about it in their last inspection (23rd August 2002):

- ⌘ In relation to Education the inspectors state: "Small-scale educational provision. No formal educational programme in place and no educational staff employed. Poor signage."
- ⌘ On Conservation the inspectors state "Minimal conservation work is undertaken"
- ⌘ On Research the inspectors write "none"
- ⌘ On Conservation, Education and Research the inspectors responded with 'N/A' to each of the following questions: "are on-site education facilities commensurable with the collection and adequate for the purposes? Are the conservation efforts adequate? Are the research efforts adequate?"

It is puzzling that, despite the Standards and the EU Directive indicating the importance of Education, Conservation and Research, it seems the inspectors considered that Glasgow zoo should be an exception above these laws and regulations and therefore these issues are 'Non-applicable' to it. However, ignoring this, the truth is that the few comments the inspectors write indicate that they also rank Glasgow zoo very low in these issues.

So, everybody seems to agree in this. Well, perhaps the zoo does not. After all Mr. Edwards did comment that they do conservation by keeping one white rhino alive, as Yvonne Taylor (Advocates for Animals) witnessed him saying in the last Council meeting.

Taking all this into consideration, in the extremely unlikely event that the zoo solves all its financial problems overnight, that all enclosures are repaired and rebuilt and all the animal welfare problems are dealt with swiftly, the zoo should still lose its licence following the present European legislation and the UK Secretary of States' Standards of Modern Zoo Practice. Rather than a run down zoo that is falling apart on most fronts, it would be a stable old-fashioned zoo that does not fulfill the criteria to be licensed in the 21st century.

It is not that Glasgow zoo needs to sort out its act, but it appears that this might be insufficient. Glasgow zoo may be just a relic from the past.

Ownership of the animals

When a zoo is licensed in the UK this basically means two things: that a particular site where wild animals are kept in captivity is allowed to be opened to the public, and that particular wild (non-domesticated in the UK) animals are allowed to be displayed at such premises.

For the licensing system to work it is fundamental, then, that the licence is given in relation to a particular site and particular animals at that site. If a licence was given to a person to keep any animal anywhere he/she likes the whole licensing system would collapse because nobody would know which local authority should issue the licence, which site was to be inspected and which type of licence should be given.

For these reasons zoo operators are expected to keep the animals they declare they have when first inspected at the site where the licence was granted; if they go somewhere else or new animals come, they have to inform the local authority about it. They normally inform the LA by sending an annual list of the stock they have. In doing so the LA can decide if the licence is still applicable or it has to be changed adding new conditions to it.

Imagine the following scenario: zoos dealing illegally with wild animals in the same way that organised crime deals with drugs, prostitution or money laundry. Under this analogy you would expect licences to be given to third parties rather than the owners of the site or the animals, falsified lists of animals, corrupt LA that would turn a blind eye to the obvious inaccurate lists or the lack of compliance with the licence conditions or the interchange of animals between zoos swept 'under the carpet'.

This is not the case, is it? All zoo licences are only given to those who own and keep both the site and the animals, all annual lists are perfectly accurate including all animals that have been born and died at the zoo, and all LAs are implementing the law and the Secretary of State's Standards to the last letter.

Well, in the real world you will find that most zoos fall in between those two possible scenarios. What about Glasgow zoo? Does it fall closer to the 'speak easy' analogy, or to the 'good citizen' analogy?

Let's see. It does appear that the licence is given to The Zoological Society of Glasgow & West of Scotland for the Glasgow Zoopark at Calderpark, Glasgow. I assume that the licensee would be the zoo's chief executive Roger Edwards. So far so good, but let's look at the animals for which the zoo is licensed. If you ask either the zoo or the LA for the annual stock list compiled every year, you probably will find out that this list is 'a secret'. Only the zoo, and perhaps the LA also, knows which animals are really in the zoo and who owns them. If we give the benefit of the doubt by assuming this is to protect the zoo's interest against other 'competing' organisations, and that probably all animals kept at the zoo are owned by the zoo, we may find that we have been too naïve.

On the 13th February 2002 I visited Glasgow zoo on behalf of the Born Free Foundation, and after looking around I introduced myself to the staff and I asked to talk to Mr. Edwards. Unfortunately he was not there at that time, but I met Lutz Kuschinsky, the general curator of the zoo, and Billy Wintow, an Estate manager and former senior keeper, talked to me. At that time, both were probably not aware of the implications of the information they were giving to me, because their perception may have been that Born Free was not part of any campaign 'against' them. In the course of the conversation the curator



clearly told me that the White Rhino kept in the zoo does not belong to the zoo, but to Whipsnade Animal Park (owned by the Zoological Society of London), and that the tigers do not belong to the zoo either, but to Longleat Safari Park. When colleagues of mine from the Born Free Foundation (Tricia Holford and Nicky Hewitt) asked later of both Longleat Safari Park (Keith Harris, big cat head keeper) and Whipsnade Animal Kingdom (to the receptionist who later phoned back with the answer) about it, both zoos denied Glasgow zoo allegations, although they appeared not to be willing to elaborate in their denial.

Although the probability of this being a misunderstanding was small, there was not much we could do to clarify the case further, due to the intense lack of transparency about it. However, more things happened: after the Glasgow zoo lions gave birth to cubs, and it was made public that the parents were brother and sister, many newspapers wrote about it. As a consequence the LA, which already had decided to do an extra inspection of the zoo following the concerns raised by NGOs and the general public, also looked at the lion's breeding. In the report of their inspections they recommended the prevention of further breeding between the lions, but in doing so they wrote, in the point 5 of page 7 of their report, the following:

“The problems of inbreeding of the lions requires to be resolved and it is suggested that the zoo enter into discussions with Glasgow Veterinary College to seek their aid in vasectomising the lion. If cost is involved we would expect the owners of the animal; not Glasgow zoo to meet this”.

This implied that the lions do not belong to Glasgow zoo either, and the LA knew about it. It does appear, though, that the ownership of Glasgow zoo animals is still a mystery. Advocates for Animals asked the LA about this, and so far no clarification has been given, other than the issue would be investigated and the zoo asked about it. Born Free Foundation enquiries (Tricia Holford) directly to the chief executive about the lions were apparently replied with an abrupt ‘none of your business’.

Eventually, in a leak on Glasgow zoo's own web page (in their public forum where people can talk to keepers, and which was not totally controlled by the zoo at that time) Paul Paterson, senior keeper at the zoo, ‘confessed’ that the lions at the zoo belong to Mary Chipperfield's daughter. Here are copies of the actual forum web pages:



[home](#) [forum](#) [user cp](#) [register](#) [calendar](#) [members](#) [f.a.q.](#) [search](#)

Glasgow Zoo > General Topics > General Discussion > Big Cats

[Go to first unread post](#)

[Last Thread](#) [Next Thread](#)

Author	Thread	new thread	post reply
Rookeyper New Site Member Registered: Nov 2002 Location: Posts: 3	Big Cats Is it true that Glasgow Zoo's Lions belong to Animal Abuser Mary Chipperfield?		
Report this post to a moderator IP: Logged			
11-03-2002 10:15 PM	profile search buddy	edit	quote
PAUL PATERSON Moderator Registered: Aug 2002 Location: Baillieston Posts: 19	No, they do not belong to Mary Chipperfield but to her daughter.		
Report this post to a moderator IP: Logged			
11-04-2002 05:54 PM	profile pm search buddy	edit	quote
Rookeyper New Site Member Registered: Nov 2002 Location: Posts: 3	Why does Glasgow Zoo have dealings with the Chipperfields? Surely housing animals belonging to that family only assists them in thier efforts to own, control and abuse animals? What's to become of the cubs when they need to move on? Is thier future in the circus trade, to be split up and 'trained' for film & television work? Is the Born Free Foundation aware that the zoo has dealings with the Chipperfields? I find this to be incredibly un-nerving.		
Report this post to a moderator IP: Logged			
11-04-2002 07:25 PM	profile search buddy	edit	quote

PAUL PATERSON
Moderator

Registered: Aug 2002
Location: Baillieston
Posts: 19

Hold on here, thats five questions that I can not and will not answer. You will have to speak to the zoos Chief Executive Officer, that person will be able to put your mind at ease. Therefore I would suggest that either call or write or better still make an appointment to see him.

I can not give out confidential material about animals, especially those that do not belong to the zoo. I am not qualified to do so.

You do not have to worry, nothing bad or wrong will happen to those animals, and they will not be going to any circus or film studio or will not be abused !!!!

So please, if you are that worried, please call the zoo office tomorrow and speak to those who are above myself, ie. the CEO.

Thank you for your concern

Paul
Section Keeper
Glasgow Zoo.

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file:///C:/My%20Documents/Glasgow/Glasgow%20Zoo%20-%20Big%20Cats.htm (2 of 2) [27/11/02 02:30:37]

Not surprisingly, after this leak got to the press, the 'damaging' statement was withdrawn from the web page and the forum became heavily censored; but fortunately, as you can see, I saved the pages before they 'vanished'.

Since Mary Chipperfield and her husband Roger Cawley were convicted in 1999 on several counts of animal cruelty in relation to their circus work, the name Chipperfield has been associated by many to the kind of people that you do not want to be involved with if you care for animals. In fact, it is not just the husband and wife Chipperfield that are involved with wild animals. The whole family is considered a 'dynasty' that deals with wild animals commercially. They own several companies that trade and supply animal acts for films and television work, circuses, and also deal with animal transport. Animal Defenders, who exposed the case of Mary Chipperfield which led to the conviction, also accused her daughter, Suzanne Cawley (Chipperfield), of being involved with the same sort of business as her parents. Apparently Suzanne got a Dangerous Wild Animals Act Licence in 1999 for her Hampshire Farm, which Animal Defenders was firmly opposed to. Suzanne Cawley appears to be the only daughter of Mary and Roger Chipperfield.



Are the lions the only animals at the zoo that belong to the Chipperfield's clan? What about the tigers? The zoo curator mentioned that they belong to Longleat Safari Park, although Longleat's cat keeper denied it. However, Longleat itself was founded by Jimmy Chipperfield (Mary's father) a long time ago. Is this a coincidence?

So, basically, it seems that nobody other than Glasgow zoo itself knows how many animals they keep and who owns them; also, when you ask the other zoos the Glasgow Zoo curator referred to, it seems they deny any ownership and are not willing to elaborate at all on the issue; finally, after failing to prevent the public knowing who owns the Glasgow zoo lions, it turns out that they are owned by members of a well known family that commercially deals with wild animals all over the world, often with circuses, and which some of its members have been already convicted of animal cruelty.

The final straw on this issue is the answer to the question 8.4 of the last special inspection report conducted by the Council to the zoo. Question: are animal source and destination records kept? Answer: N/A.

Let's look again at those two scenarios...

Federations and Associations

It would be foolish to say that zoos have not changed at all in the last 50 years ago. Many may say, including me, that the fundamental aspects of keeping wild animals in captivity are still the same, but few would disagree that one of the changes is the way some zoos today try to work more in a co-operative way than they did in the past. Associations and federations that gather together zoological collections are one of the ways zoos co-ordinate themselves these days. On one hand, these groups can facilitate 'business' transactions between zoos, and on the other hand they can set up standards to follow which in theory should be motivated by a need for constant improvement.

In the UK there are several of these groups. The Federation of Zoological Collections of Great Britain and Ireland (FZGB), and the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA), which as its name shows covers the whole of Europe, are the most important. Both organizations have their own minimum standards based on animal welfare issues, public safety, conservation, etc. If a new applicant does not follow these standards, it is not accepted.



The question is: does Glasgow zoo belong to any of these two organizations (or to alternative ones if they exist)? The answer is simple: no, it does not belong to either of those, and as far as we know to any other group equivalent of those.



The next question that comes to mind is: 'why?' Some collections may have decided not to join any of those organizations because they disagree with them, their principles or the way they are run. In fact it is possible that some zoos perceive themselves to have higher standards than those of the aforementioned groups, which could explain not being part of them. Is Glasgow zoo one of these zoos? No, clearly it is not, because Glasgow zoo did indeed belong to both FZGB and EAZA before. It seems it was these groups that asked the zoo to leave.

If you officially ask those groups why they required Glasgow to leave, they probably will reply that this is confidential information, but you can imagine why. I have been told by a colleague from Born Free Foundation (Daniel Turner) that he has spoken to higher members of EAZA (Corinne Bos) and was told Glasgow zoo was 'expelled' from the European association, although when we requested an official explanation the 'confidentiality' barrier came up.

Conclusions

The main conclusion to take after reading this report is that the recent media, NGOs, and Government attention of Glasgow zoo is justifiable. In other words, that indeed there is fire behind the smoke.

The present Glasgow zoo crisis exists because Glasgow zoo has many problems, many problems on many fronts; namely:

Zoo licence	Breeding policy
Public Health and Safety	Education
Insurance	Research
Business deals	Personnel
Funding	Records
Debt	Animal welfare
Federations membership	Charity status
EAZA membership	Legal
Public attendance	Ownership of animals
Site suitability	Credit
Maintenance	Planning
Conservation	Leadership
Public relations	Transparency

Above all, this crisis has generated in itself a very serious problem for the zoo: LACK OF CREDIBILITY.

How can a zoo that keeps its accounts secret, the ownership of their animals secret, and their plans to solve its crisis secret have any credibility left when trying to defend itself from allegations of mismanagement, illegality and negligence?

How can a zoo respond to the demands for improvement by saying that it is planning to open a new zoo somewhere else and move there at one point in the future, and not lose credibility with such response?

How can a zoo go to the extremes of being prepared to break the law in order to keep afloat, and still expect to be trusted by the authorities?

How can a zoo that owes millions, has decreasing public visitation, has a geriatric stock and no involvement in serious conservation, education or research claim that it has a 'magic' plan to become a 21st century zoo overnight, and expect this would appease inspectors, animal welfare groups, the media and the general public who would then stop 'complaining'?

What is the impression that people all over the world would have of the City of Glasgow when they realize that a zoo in such state is allowed to exist for such a long time with all these questions unanswered?

Every crisis has, though, its solution. It is not too late for the Zoological Society of Glasgow to abandon their efforts to save what seems un-savable, and concentrate their energy on preserving animals in their natural habitats. This is what many wildlife charities do, so it would not even be a change of direction.

It is not too late to get everybody involved in this crisis to sit together face to face in order to phase out Glasgow zoo properly, in the best possible way, minimizing animal suffering. This, in my opinion, is the best solution to the crisis.

Some business/enterprises just fail, but animals should not be paying the price for this failure. It is everybody's responsibility to free innocent animals from human misfortune, since they cannot free themselves from it.

Glasgow zoo's problems may have been hidden from the general public for quite some time, but not anymore.

Glasgow zoo's hidden truth is getting out in the open.

It is time to act on it.

November 2002

Jordi Casamitjana

Independent Animal Welfare Consultant and Investigator.

jordi@casamitjana.freeserve.co.uk

<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/jordi.casamitjana> (a copy of this report can be obtained in this web page)

Mob: 07968 800124