



# ALL FOR THE LOVE OF ANIMALS: BALANCING CHARITABLE AND COMMERCIAL MISSION

[rzss.org.uk](http://rzss.org.uk)



THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CHARITY





The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS)- the wildlife conservation charity

Edinburgh Zoo and Highland Wildlife Park – gateways to the natural world

Our vision: *A world where nature is protected, valued and loved*

Our mission: *To save wildlife and empower in Scotland and around the world to protect, value and love nature*



By 2030, working in  
Scotland and around the  
world, RZSS will:

## CONSERVATION

Reverse the decline  
of at least 50 species

## ENGAGEMENT

Create stronger  
connections with  
nature for more than  
a million people

## COMMUNITY

Enable more than  
100 communities to  
better protect nature



## BEFORE

- Commercial visitor attraction messaging first, charitable second
- Very transactional
- Keeper experiences income £200K
- Small fundraising team focused on trusts and foundations with very little individual giving
- Awareness that the zoo is a charity at 49% in 2019
- £18,000 in individual giving in 2019

## AFTER

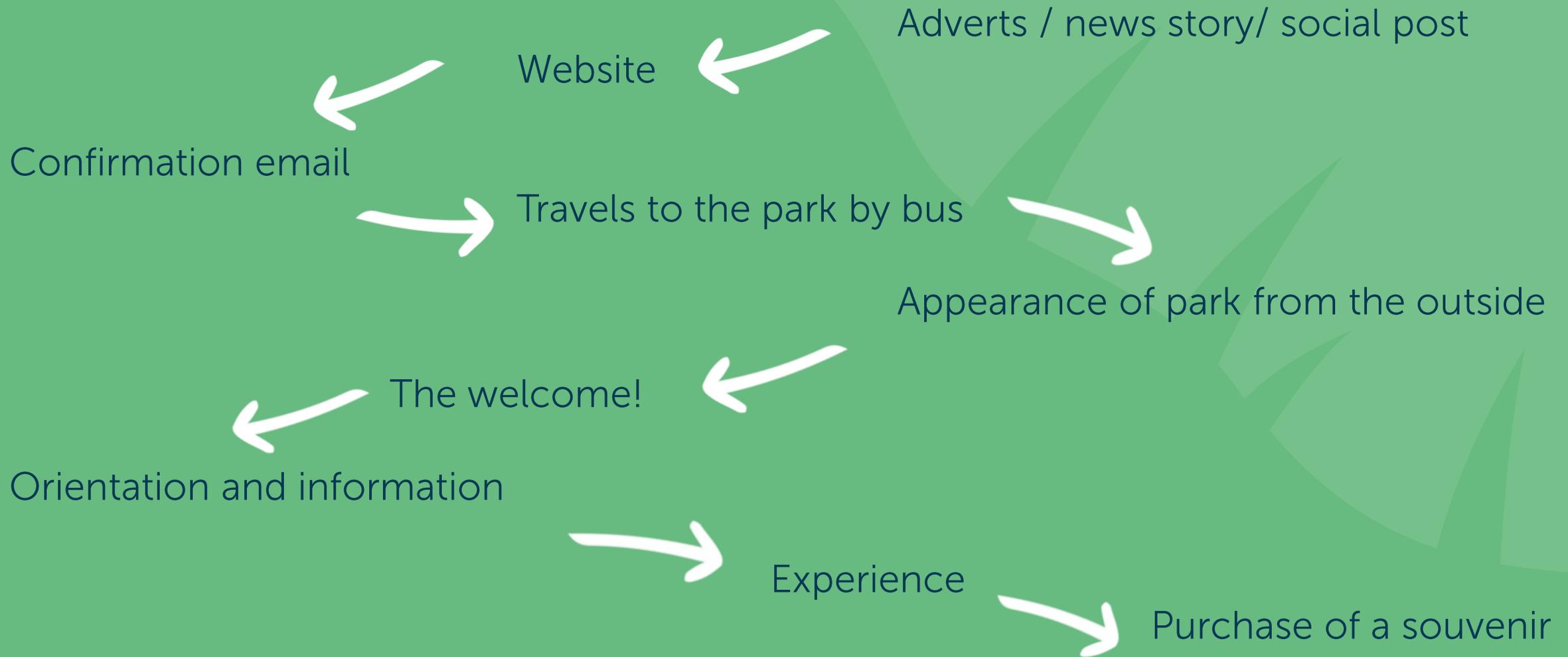
- The pandemic forced change!
- 'Feed the animals you love'
- Keeper experiences forecast to finish at £450k in '25
- Change of focus exemplified through recruitment of Individual Giving staff from 2021 onwards
- Awareness that the zoo is a charity at 57% in 2024
- £2million+ in individual giving in 2024



# INCREASING AWARENESS THAT THE ZOO IS A CHARITY

- Branding is how we look – internally and externally
- Branding builds public awareness
- Awareness puts us in a better position to ASK
- TAKE HOME: without the brand, we cannot achieve our strategic objectives
- Changing the focus in our messaging to the potential donor rather than 'us' – a long journey!

# WHAT DOES CONSISTENCY REALLY LOOK LIKE - A PARK VISITOR



## KEY TACTICS...

- Increase awareness that the zoo is a charity in need of support by offering appropriate nudges on the visitor journey
- Persuade more visitors to opt for gift aid and/or membership of the zoo, rather than simply paying a one-time entry fee
- Engage more visitors to make gifts for conservation work in a variety of ways – especially through larger gifts and legacies
- All about LOVE



## LOVE IN FUNDRAISING

- Fundraisers are increasingly urged to use words around 'love' in their donor communications
- Philanthropy literally means "love of humanity" and more than 2/3rds of people in the UK define themselves as animal lovers
- The team are now testing messages around the love of animals to engender caring emotional responses and uplift fundraising requests:
  - 'Do something special for the animals you love'*
  - tested against
  - 'Find out more and help'*



**Thank you for supporting the animals you love!**

*giftaid it*

If you are a UK taxpayer, Gift Aid allows you to significantly increase the value of

# IN OUR MARKETING



RZSS  
EDINBURGH ZOO  
HIGHLAND WILDLIFE PARK

HELP THE ANIMALS YOU LOVE!

Find out more about RZSS adoption  
[rzss.org.uk/adopt](http://rzss.org.uk/adopt)



EDINBURGH ZOO - YOUR GATEWAY TO THE NATURAL WORLD

Book now [edinburghzoo.org.uk](http://edinburghzoo.org.uk)

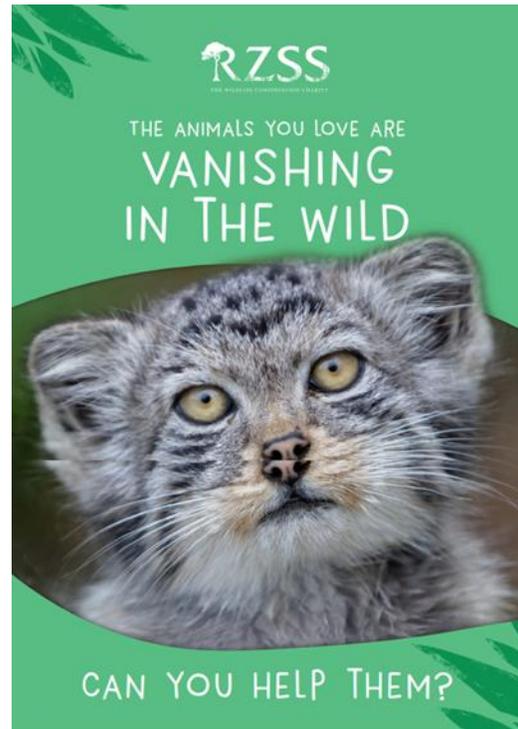
RZSS EDINBURGH ZOO



HIGHLAND WILDLIFE PARK - YOUR GATEWAY TO THE NATURAL WORLD

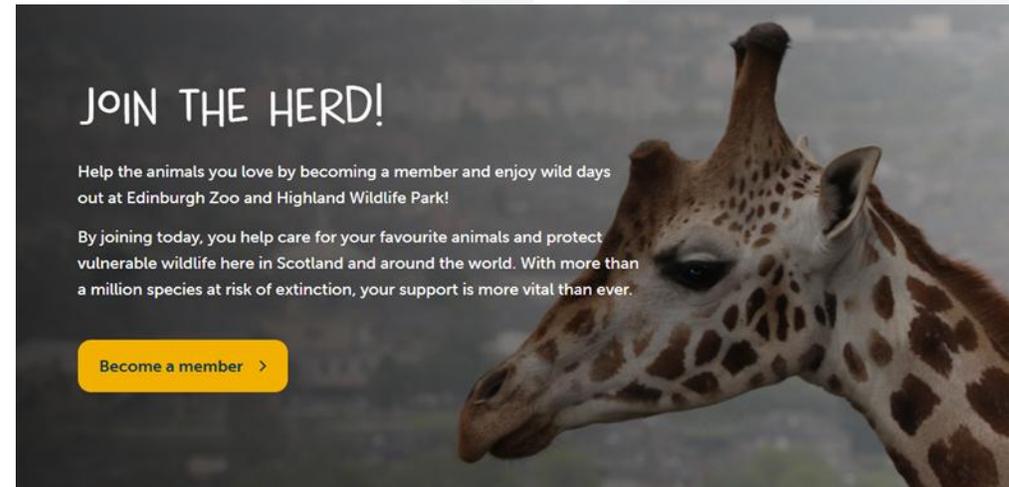
Book now [highlandwildlifepark.org.uk](http://highlandwildlifepark.org.uk)

RZSS HIGHLAND WILDLIFE PARK



RZSS  
THE ANIMALS YOU LOVE ARE VANISHING IN THE WILD

CAN YOU HELP THEM?



JOIN THE HERD!

Help the animals you love by becoming a member and enjoy wild days out at Edinburgh Zoo and Highland Wildlife Park!

By joining today, you help care for your favourite animals and protect vulnerable wildlife here in Scotland and around the world. With more than a million species at risk of extinction, your support is more vital than ever.

Become a member >

# EXAMPLES ON SITE





## ENGAGE MORE VISITORS AND MEMBERS TO MAKE GIFTS

- Through a consistent visitor experience
- Through consistent communication through our various channels
- Through a variety of events and experiences



## WHO ARE THEY – SEGMENTING OUR AUDIENCES

- 40% of visitors are 'warm zoo families' – attraction first, charity second but open to membership/donation
- 19% of visitors are 'warm zoo independents' – young, love animals,
- 28% of members fall into our 'animal loving family' segment – want value, kids first, open to donating
- 24% of members are in the 'committed conservationist' segment – value got them in, now they care

## VISITOR EXPERIENCE – START OF THE BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP

- Segmentation - 28% of family members are 'open' to donating to a campaign because they have a great day out every time
- Enjoy a coffee and 'tap your card' to feed a penguin
- Regular family events – from Bluey and Bingo to storytelling afternoons – the start of the journey!
- Accessible prize draws - Crowdfunders to win a 'once in a lifetime' experience





## CREATING FUNDRAISING ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH COMMERCIAL PROPOSITIONS

- 'Build your own' experience - £2000
- Tea and talks
- Stewardship of Patrons
- 'Circle of Life' events

# MEMBERS MAGAZINE

- Our most dedicated audience
- Now three times a year in a standard magazine format with third-party editorial
- Much more focused on fundraising activity especially legacies





*"Thank you so much for the lovely magazine, I absolutely love those magazines, I read them from cover to cover and thoroughly enjoy them. I was so glad to read your article about Pallas Cats, My late husband and I liked Pallas Cats, I think it was in about 2010 when we were so lucky to see some kittens at Cotswold Wildlife Park, they were beautiful, these magazines bring such lovely memories back for me which I enjoyed with Ian whom I miss so much.*

*I am so happy to be supporting such a well deserving cause and know it couldn't go to a better place, it makes my day to be included and I know Ian would be happy too if he knew"*



## 'COMMERCIAL' PRESENTS CAN GENERATE LEGACY GIFTS

- Margaret was a platinum adopter (tapirs) between 2007 and 2011
- Gifted gold adoption (Amur tigers) between 2009 and 2011
- Gifted membership between 2009 and 2012
- Had not been in touch since 2012 until we received her legacy in 2021



## IN CONCLUSION

- The pandemic was the catalyst for change
- The brand is at the heart of our fundraising activity
  - combined fundraising rescued the bottom line in a year of poor visitor numbers in 2024
- Marketing, membership, events and visitor experience and fundraising teams working together as **ONE TEAM** bring our audiences closer to nature
- More to come in 2026:
  - Membership flying high
  - Dedicated legacy position in the team
  - Brand guidelines check-in
  - Review of online fundraising journeys

# Thank you!

Lisa Robshaw – Head of Marketing and Sales –  
[lrobshaw@rzss.org.uk](mailto:lrobshaw@rzss.org.uk)

