

Charity regulator launches statutory inquiry into The Howletts Wild Animal Trust

Press release

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into The Howletts Wild Animal Trust over serious concerns about the charity's governance and financial management.



[The charity](#) has objects to promote education in zoology, and the conservation of wildlife. It runs two wildlife parks in Kent.

The regulator began looking into the charity in December 2019 due to concerns about the charity's management of conflicts of interest and a related-party transaction. The trustees have co-operated fully with the Commission since it first engaged with them last year.

The Commission still has concerns about related party transactions, meaning that it is now necessary to examine these issues as part of a formal statutory inquiry. The inquiry will further examine the concerns identified at the charity, including:

- the administration, governance and management of the Charity by the trustees with specific regard to how conflicts of interest have been dealt with and managed and the charity's management of related party transactions; and
- whether or not the trustees have complied with and fulfilled their duties and responsibilities under charity law

The regulator may extend the scope of the inquiry if additional regulatory issues emerge.

The opening of an inquiry is not a finding of wrongdoing. It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as

part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were.

Reports of previous inquiries are [available on GOV.UK](#).

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.
2. The Commission has today announced a separate statutory inquiry into [The Aspinall Foundation](#). The two charities have a number of trustees in common, but are separate entities.

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