

Charity regulator opens statutory inquiry into The Aspinall Foundation

Press release

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into The Aspinall Foundation over serious concerns about the charity's governance and financial management.



[The charity](#) promotes animal conservation and has objects to promote education in zoology and to conserve wild animals in danger of extinction.

The regulator began examining the charity in July 2020 over concerns about the management of conflicts of interest and related-party transactions.

It opened a regulatory compliance case and began engaging with the trustees regarding these concerns in November of last year, and the trustees have been fully co-operating with the Commission. Since that time, the regulator has identified further questions regarding the charity's governance, and it will now examine all these issues as part of a formal statutory inquiry.

The inquiry will examine:

- 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
- whether or not there has been any unauthorised trustee benefit; 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 also today announced the opening of a separate statutory inquiry into [The Howletts Wild Animal Trust](#). The two charities have a number of trustees in common but are separate entities.

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