**£14 million financial support for England’s zoos unveiled**

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The government has today (Monday 4 May) launched a £14 million support fund for zoos and aquariums in the latest step to protect businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

The social distancing guidance, urging people to stay at home and save lives, has meant that zoos and aquariums have had to close temporarily for the safety of their staff and customers.

Zoos are undertaking valuable work at this time to ensure that their animal welfare standards are upheld and the animals’ health needs continue to be met. This funding will help zoos cover costs relating to animal keeping such as feed, heating and security.

Animal welfare remains a top priority for this government and the Department for Environment will continue to work with some of the largest zoos to discuss additional concerns about funding in the longer term.

“Even in these very difficult times, the government remains absolutely committed to high standards of animal welfare. We know that many of our zoos are facing real pressure as a consequence of coronavirus, and we have made support available to them, including business rates relief and the business interruption loan scheme,” said Lord Goldsmith, Animal Welfare Minister.