



Work Placement Handbook 2022/2023

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1.0 About Paradise Wildlife Park

Paradise Wildlife Park (PWP) was purchased by Peter Sampson in 1984. Prior to this it was a derelict site known as Broxbourne Zoo and had the reputation for being one of the worst zoos in the country. Despite it never being Peter and his family's aim to own a zoo they felt very passionate about turning the site around and making sure the animals were well looked after.

Since 1984 there have been many developments to the site making it not only suitable regarding animal welfare but also ensuring it gives visitors a fun and educational day out.

The Sampson family also own and operate the Big Cat Sanctuary which is based in Kent. BCS is not open to the public except for on guided tours and open days. BCS keeps only cat species and houses many rescued and retired animals along with many as part of breeding programmes.

PWP currently houses a vast range of different species of mammal, bird, reptile and invertebrate. We pride ourselves on giving our animals the highest level of care possible. PWP contributes towards conservation by educating its visitors, fundraising, taking part in research and breeding programmes. We have been very successful in contributing to several vital international breeding programmes in recent years including red pandas, Brazilian tapir, cotton-top tamarins, snow leopards, African penguins, jaguars and red-ruffed lemurs. We also have plans in place for other species in the future. In 2017 we became a registered charity under the name of Zoological Society of Hertfordshire. Over the years we have financially supported many wildlife and conservation organisations all over the world including the World Land Trust, Red Panda Network, Tapir Specialist Group, SANCCOB, 21st Century Tiger and Wildlife Vets International.

1.1 Your work placement

Thank you for being interested in conducting your work placement with us. We are glad you are interested in spending time with us and learning about how the zoo operates and how we care for the animals. This Work Placement Handbook will set out the basic information you will need to know to get started and you can refer to it throughout the duration of your placement. It is our aim through our work experience program, to show students exactly what it is like to work in a zoo. It is not a glamorous job, it is very fast paced, physically demanding, often repetitive with unsocial hours and animal contact is often much more minimal than expected or desired. Despite this, it is incredibly rewarding.

Some members of our keeper team also act as our work experience coordinators and they are there for you to go to, with questions regarding work placement protocols and if any problems arise. These keepers are currently Jenny, Amy, Rob, Claire, Shirley and Lucy and can all be contacted at workexperience@pwpark.com. Please note none of us are office based and we are unable to check emails every day. If you need to talk to us during your placement, please ask to speak to us in person rather than email.

If you need to undertake any research or animal observations as part of your work experience this must be approved by our research officer **prior** to your start date and

the data collection and will not normally be facilitated within your hours of work experience. To apply, please email research@pwpark.com.

Please read this handbook carefully to understand what we can offer you and what is expected from you in return.

1.1.1 Paperwork

Please ensure any paperwork you are required to have filled in for your placement is either sent over via email **before** your start date, or is handed to the person carrying out your induction **on your first day**, this ensures we cover everything you may require and makes sure the paperwork is done on time, we also ask for you to tick the yes box on our induction saying you have paperwork required for us to fill in.

If you require a reference for your placement, you must let us know on your first day in the induction, tick the yes box on the induction sheet and a reference will be sent to you at the end of your placement. References requested after this time will not be able to be provided. References will be sent as an email attachment.

1.1.2 After your trial day

Your first day is considered your trial day. Although rare, we may have to end your placement after your trial day if we feel you are not able to complete the rest of the placement for any reason, for example if we have had to talk to you about your behaviour or conduct or if there has been a serious incident. Unless we specifically ask to speak to you at the end of the day about any issues, you can assume your trial day was successful and you can return on your next scheduled day.

If the placement you have applied for is long-term, we may book you in for a trial day in advance of the placement due to start. In this case we will contact you via email the outcome of the trial day no later than a week after. This is for as much our benefit as your own.

1.1.3 What to expect

You will be assisting us with:

- General animal husbandry: cleaning enclosures (usually without animals present), giving fresh water, changing beds, disinfecting enclosures and objects in them, preparing feeds and sometimes assisting with feeding and enrichment, helping with food deliveries.
- General maintenance of enclosures: weeding, washing windows and railings, raking etc.
- General site maintenance: litter picking, sweeping paths, painting, emptying, and washing bins and cleaning and tidying staff areas.

You will be accompanied by keepers, volunteers and other work experience students as well as being set duties to complete yourself. The keepers have many events (shows, talks, tours etc.) as well as other responsibilities (e.g., training, paperwork, veterinary care) so they will have to leave you unattended at times. Make sure you understand what you have been asked to do and if you do not know then please make sure you ask.

The sections that our students are able to work on are Birds, Paddocks and Farm, Primate and Small Mammals and LVI (Lower Vertebrates and Invertebrates). You are not permitted to help with the Large Carnivore section. The sections you may help on depend on the length of your placement, if you are here for 1 week you will do 1 section, 2 weeks you will do 2 sections etc. Please note we do not take requests and you will be stationed where you are most needed. You will report to the keeper in charge of that section for the day. Our keepers are very knowledgeable, and you can use the opportunity to ask questions about the animals, even ones that you may not be working directly with. The more questions you ask, the more you will learn.

1.1.4 Future volunteering and employment opportunities

As well as accepting work placements we also have a volunteer program. After your placement ends you are welcome to apply to join the volunteer team, however you must be over 18 years old. We cannot guarantee that by undertaking a work placement will mean we could offer you a volunteer position.

Paid employment or unpaid internship vacancies are advertised on the BIAZA website and/or internally by being put on display in the staff room. If you feel you are suitable for one of these positions, you are welcome to apply. You are welcome to use the opportunity to talk to the keepers you are working with about how to become a keeper and what is required.

2.0 Work Placements at Paradise Wildlife Park

2.1 Dress code

All students must comply with our dress code at all times.

You must dress according to the weather and must have a waterproof coat. All clothing must be plain (no patterns, pictures, slogans, or large logos). All clothing must be clean and presentable. You must consider cross-contamination between other animal collections (colleges/other work experience/volunteering positions) so your clothes and footwear must be cleaned before and after every shift at PWP.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we also now ask to ensure you bring a face mask with you for your placement and will be instructed on your first day if they are required for the section/s you are assisting with. Many of our animal species are classed as susceptible to COVID (as will as other human respiratory infections) therefore around these animals and their food we wear face coverings at all times with no exemptions.

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| Top | T-shirts, jumpers and jackets must be dark green, black or navy in colour. T-shirts must cover the shoulders and be high cut to the neck. |
| Bottom | Trousers and/or shorts must be dark green, black or navy in colour. |

| | |
|-------------|---|
| | Shorts must cover the knee. Only very dark jeans are allowed and strictly no leggings. |
| Footwear | Only hiking/walking style or wellington boots are permitted. No trainers are allowed. Footwear must be waterproof and comfortable. PLEASE ENSURE TO BRING YOUR WORKBOOTS WITH YOU AND A CHANGE OF FOOTWEAR TO TRAVEL BACK AND FORTH WITH, IF POSSIBLE, YOU ARE WELCOME TO LEAVE YOUR BOOTS ONSITE WHILST YOU CARRY OUT YOUR PLACEMENT, THIS HELPS STOP CROSS CONTAMINATION. |
| Name badges | Your name badge will be given to you at your induction. You must make sure it is visible at all times. If you forget or lose your name badge you must get a new one from the Discovery Centre straight away. Please ask for a new name badge if it becomes water damaged. |
| Hair | Long hair must be tied back at all times. Hair that has been dyed non-natural hair colours must be covered with a suitable hat (see below) at all times. |
| Accessories | Only small stud earrings and a watch are allowed, no other jewellery is permitted for health and safety reasons. Any facial piercings must be removed or covered with a plaster. Scarves, hats and gloves must be plain and dark in colour. |

2.2 Hours / Reporting absence

The regular hours for a work placement are 8am-4pm from Monday-Friday (although we may have agreed something different with you), **please be aware on your first day due to your induction you will be starting from 8:30am and will be collected from the Discovery centre.** Between March and October, the zoo staff work until 5pm and between November and February they work until 4.30pm. You are welcome to stay until this time if you choose. If any bank holidays fall during your placement, you will be expected to work unless we have specifically agreed, it with you in advance. This includes over the Christmas period.

If there are any days, you cannot attend that you are aware of you must let us know as early as possible. If we are expecting you and you cannot attend for any reason you must call us on 01992 470490 at 8am to let us know, you must also advise your school/college/university. You should also email us the information as well to ensure we have it on file; we do not check our emails until the afternoon most days so until that time we will consider it as an unauthorised absence.

You will receive two, half hour breaks, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. These breaks are not at set times and you will be told when you are able to have your break. During this time, you are welcome to use the staff room (you can bring your own lunch), use the restaurants or use the time to look around the zoo. Please note that the tea, coffee, milk etc. in the staff room belongs to individual keepers so you will need to bring these with you if you require them. You are not permitted to leave the site during placement hours.

2.3 Transport

If you are parking your car here it must be left in our staff car park. The location of the staff car park differs between peak and off-peak times.

| | | |
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| Peak times (school and bank holidays and weekends) | Car park 3 | Situated across the main road at the turning for the site. If the gates are open, parking is to be in this car park. Please be careful crossing the main road. If the gates are closed you are to park in car park 2. |
| Off-peak times (weekdays outside of school holidays and occasional winter weekends) | Car park 2 | Situated on the far left of the main car park |

2.4 Arriving and leaving the site

On your first day you will report to the Discovery Centre for your induction, which will start at 8:30am (all other days start from 8am), after this you can go straight to the staff room when you arrive.

If you arrive at the park before 7.45am you must wait in the Discovery Centre. You are not permitted to walk around the site or onto the zoo until that time. After 7.45am you can walk directly to the staff room via the main zoo gate. This gate must be kept closed at all times before 9.30am (when we open to visitors) so make sure you close it behind you. You must walk a direct route to our staff area (past the lemur enclosures). You are not allowed to leave the staff area (HQ building and back of the HQ) with the exception of the toilets, until you begin with a keeper at 8am. Do not go to any section areas (e.g., bird area or the farmyard) before being directed to by a keeper, you should meet your designated keeping section staff in the feed room each morning.

As soon as you arrive in the staff room you must sign in by writing your name and the time you arrived in the signing in book, as well as the section you are on that day. You must sign out by writing the time you left as you leave. Once you sign out you must leave the staff area immediately. Once you sign out you are no longer our responsibility with regards to any emergency protocols that may occur.

2.5 Code of conduct

There are several rules which have to be followed by all work experience and volunteers. Our code of conduct is basic, but we take it very seriously and have previously had to end placements due to it not being followed.

- Ensure you leave work areas tidy and clean – out in the zoo, feed room, staff room etc. Tools and equipment must be cleaned, put away and the area must look presentable and ready for the next person to use it. Things must go back in their right place- if you don't know, then ask. Make sure you only use tools that belong to the section you are working on.
- Look around the zoo as you go- pick up litter if you see it, empty bins if they are full and tell someone if you notice a potential hazard. Look at the animals and let us know if you are worried that anyone is ill or injured.

- You must close gates behind you at all times – the black gates into the back of the HQ building and gates into enclosures. This is very important as it stops animals from escaping and visitors from being in unauthorised areas.
- You are not permitted to enter any animal enclosure (even if it appears empty) or cross any stand-off barrier unless a keeper asks you to do so.
- You are not allowed to touch any animals without asking first- many animals don't like it and will bite or become stressed. Please be aware of your body language around the animals and how the animals are reacting to you being near them or in their space.
- You are not permitted to use power tools at any time. You may be asked to use knives to prepare animal food, you must use knives responsibly. If knives are taken out of the feed room they must be returned.
- It is our responsibility to make sure you are safe whilst you are here, therefore we must always know your location in case there is an emergency. If you need to leave an area where you are working to get equipment, use the toilets etc. you must notify a keeper beforehand. You are not to 'wander off' during the day for this reason.
- The animal park is a non-smoking/vaping site for visitors and staff. There is one smoking area for staff and volunteers and this is the only place that smoking is allowed. You are only allowed to smoke/vape in break times and no one under the age of 18 is allowed to smoke/vape on site.
- We do not use mobile phones anywhere on show to visitors- we ask you to keep them in the staff room with your belongings. If you need to make an urgent phone call outside of break times, please ensure it is in a staff area and that the keeper responsible for you knows where you are. You are not permitted to listen to music whilst working, whether it is via headphones or through speakers.
- Any action or behaviour that causes or leads to the stress or injury of any of our animals is absolutely not tolerated. We will not tolerate any abuse, bad language, or negative attitude towards any of our staff, visitors, other work experience or volunteers. Breaking this will lead to the immediate ending of your placement and further action if necessary.

Any breach of the code of conduct will result in a warning. Any further breach will result in you being dismissed and your time with us ending. Cases of gross misconduct will result in you being told to leave without a warning.

2.6 Dealing with visitors

Visitors will probably ask you questions. Whilst you are not expected to know all of the answers to questions you may be asked you can still be helpful and friendly at all times. An ideal response to a question you personally cannot answer is 'I'm sorry I can't answer that myself but please bear with me and I will get someone to help you'.

Always make sure you get their question answered and do not give out incorrect information. We advise you knowing the locations of our display maps so that you can direct people.

You need to act professionally at all times- think about how you talk and your body language. Even in staff areas visitors can see and hear us so language and conversation must be appropriate. You are an ambassador for PWP while you are here.

If you see any visitors behaving inappropriately or doing anything they should not be doing (feeding animals, trying to touch unauthorised animals, climbing barriers etc), please advise a member of staff urgently.

2.7 Photography policy

You must have permission from a senior keeper before taking any photos of staff areas or interaction with animals. If you have permission to take a photo of this kind, you must also ensure you have permission before sharing it on social media. You are welcome to take photos of animals in their enclosures if you are walking around on your break. You must never take photos of any visitors, other work experience students, volunteers, or staff members.

2.8 Confidentiality

Any of your personal information that we hold (application form/ passport copies etc.) will be kept in a secure file for the duration of your time with us. When your work placement ends this information will be shredded and disposed of securely.

Any sensitive information such as new arrivals, pregnancies, births, illnesses, departures, escapes, deaths, and future plans are strictly confidential and must not be shared outside of PWP, including on any social media sites. Photos of staff areas, animal interactions or staff members, work experience students and other volunteers are not permitted.

2.9 Termination

We have the right to end your work placement with us at any time and for any reason. We will try to give notice where possible.

If you need to cancel your placement prior to it starting you must let us know via email as soon as possible. We are only allowed to accept a low number of students each week and will have declined many students due to not having availability. With enough notice we can offer your placement to somebody else, and it is very inconvenient to have it cancelled at short notice.

If you are booking accommodation for your placement, we must have confirmation of your arrangements at least one month prior to your start date. If this is not received, we have the right to cancel your placement. This is to avoid last minute cancellations due to not finding accommodation.

2.10 Paperwork

Once we have confirmed your placement via email you can send us any paperwork that you need us to complete in advance if you so wish. It is easier and quicker for us to receive paperwork electronically so please email us your documents if possible. We can either send this back to you or direct to your school/college/university via email. If you have any feedback paperwork that needs completing during your placement it must be given to us at the beginning of your placement. Anything given to us on your last day, or if we are short on time, we may need to keep and email a copy back to you.

3.0 Emergency and Safety Protocols

Always ensure you are following our emergency and safety protocols that are in place. They are there to ensure the safety of you, our staff, animals, and visitors. If you do not understand or have any further questions about these ensure that you ask us and make sure you have a thorough understanding. We have 3 different colour coded alerts which will be broadcast over the radio in the case of an emergency. Please be reassured that our staff have undertaken rigorous training to deal with these circumstances. These events are very unlikely to take place however we all must know how to react to the situations,

3.1 Animal escapes

Although it is unlikely that an animal will escape, an escape procedure must be in place under the terms of a zoo license. We have organised all our species into categories according to the actions that staff must take if they were to escape. None of our animal escape procedures require our work experience students to help move the animal or visitors to safety. We frequently run practice drills of animal escapes for staff training, we must all treat practice drills as if they were genuinely taking place. The categories of animals are on display in our staff room and their escape procedures are as follows:

3.1.1 Dangerous animal escape (Red Alert)

A call will go out stating '**Red alert, red alert, (species name) to (current location)**'. In the event of a Category A escape (big cats, wolves, and gibbons) the procedure is as follows: all visitors, work experience students and volunteers must urgently go to a 'safe place' which is any permanent building in which you can close the doors. Wait to be either given the all clear over the radio or a member of staff releases you from your 'safe place'.

3.1.2 Animal escape Category B-G

A call will go out stating '**Urgent, Category B-G (species name) to (current location)**'. If a Category B-G species has escaped, you can help by taking a step back and taking instructions from the keepers who will be handling the situation. We would not ask you to pick up, move or restrain the animal as even small animals can be very dangerous. If you are not in the immediate area you can continue working as normal. If you let an animal out of an enclosure, make sure you tell a keeper immediately before trying to secure it.

3.2 Fire procedure

A call will go out stating **'Blue alert, blue alert, FIRE at (location)'**.

Follow the direction of our fire marshals toward the fire assembly points. Our fire marshals will be visible in high visibility vests. Do not attempt to collect any belongings. If you see a fire, alert a member of staff immediately.

3.3 Bombs, Firearms and Terror Attacks

A call will go out stating **'Grey alert, grey alert, (nature of event) at (location)'**.

Follow the instruction of the staff members supervising you.

3.4 First aid

3.4.1 For yourself

We have trained first aiders on site at all times and several first aid points. The closest first aid point to you will most likely be the staff room. If you have any incident, no matter how small, you need to tell a keeper right away and they will ensure a first aider deals with it and reports it. You are not permitted to take anything from the first aid kit without permission. We have a fully equipped first aid room on site that is located in the Welcome Centre.

3.4.2 For others

If you need to call a first aider for someone else (e.g., a visitor/other volunteer or work experience student), get the person who requires attention to wait where they are whilst you find a member of staff immediately who can call for a first aid trained staff member. Under no circumstances are you allowed to administer even basic first aid, even if you have undertaken first aid training in the past.

3.5 Child safety

If you find a lost child, keep the child in sight and talk to them calmly whilst alerting a member of staff who can radio for assistance. Ensure you do not make physical contact with the child at any time or take them to a non-public area (including staff areas). PWP has the duty to protect young people in our care and therefore work experience are not permitted to engage in any form, when not on the premises, with someone under the age of 18 that they have met through their placement at PWP. Our Safeguarding Officer is Chris Eley (Education and Sustainability Officer).

3.6 Working safely

We work in a potentially hazardous environment as any animal can inflict injury and it is a physically demanding role. We will never instruct you to be in an enclosure with or have contact with an animal known to be aggressive or dangerous, but any animal can potentially be unpredictable. We are often around different allergens such as hay, dust, food items, animal fur and pollen. Please advise us if you suffer from any allergies and make sure you tell us if any issues arise. You are required to have a relatively good level of fitness as we are on our feet all day. Again, if any issues arise, please make sure you let us know.

If at any time you have questions regarding information in this handbook, please speak to one of our work experience coordinators in person or by email.

Please find below our Employers and Public Liability Certificate, you may be asked for the insurance policy numbers by your school/college.

Lycetts

14a High Street, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2PE
Tel: 01483 489 291
Email: surrey@lycetts.co.uk www.lycetts.co.uk

SE/PARK04

To Whom It May Concern

susan.elliott@lycetts.co.uk

4 January, 2022

Dear Sirs

Our Clients : Parkside Leisure Ltd and/or Paradise Wildlife Park Ltd and/or The Big Cat Sanctuary Ltd and/or Zoological Society of Hertfordshire, Paradise Wildlife Park, White Stubbs Lane, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire, EN10 7QA

We can confirm details of insurances arranged by ourselves on behalf of our above named clients as follows:-

Employers Liability

Insurer: XL Catlin
Policy No: 1970889/0
Period of Insurance: 31st December 2021 to 30th December 2022
Limit of Indemnity: £10,000,000 each and every claim unlimited in the period

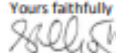
Public/Products Liability

Insurer: XL Catlin
Policy No: 1970889/0
Period of Insurance: 31st December 2021 to 30th December 2022
Limit of Indemnity: £5,000,000 each and every claim unlimited in the period/in the aggregate in respect of Products Liability

Excess Public/Products Liability

Insurer: Chubb
Policy No: UKCAS023056120
Period of Insurance: 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022
Limit of Indemnity: £5,000,000 each and every claim unlimited in the period/in the aggregate in respect of Products Liability

We trust the foregoing will suffice for your requirements but should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Writer at this Office.

Yours faithfully


Susan Elliott FCII
Chartered Insurance Broker



Find us in Benwick St Leonard, Edinburgh, Exeter, London, Marlborough, Newmarket, Newcastle, Norfolk, Oxford, Stroudshire, Surrey, Sussex and Yorkshire.

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