

SLCF ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

1st February 2024 - 31st January 2025

Safina Lion Conservation Fund
Registered Charity in England and Wales 1172709



After the sad passing of our namesake Safina on the 31st March we were determined to make this a year to remember for plenty of positive reasons. Even though Safina is no longer with us, her legacy is still young. This is the start of the next phase of our charity as we continue to build on the conservation legacy for Safina and her family that we started nearly eight years ago. She will always remain our namesake and we are proud to carry her name into the future. You can read more about her life over the next pages.

We have had another very busy year which has seen the support of our zoo partners increase hugely to its largest ever amount. Together we received £4,114.20 directly from four

different zoos. I would personally like to say a huge thank you to the staff of the Cotswold Wildlife Park, Folly Farm Adventure Park & Zoo, Knowsley Safari and Noah's Ark Zoo Farm for their support. We have also had a brand new logo, designed by education advisor and friend of the charity Beth Peacock. Featuring our namesake Safina and her companion Zuri, we are delighted with the finished result. Please take the time to read our annual review here which details all of the work we have undertaken throughout 2024.

Thank you once again for all of your support and we look forward to seeing where next year will take us, with a trip planned to the Maasai Mara in February 2025!

About The Team

The Safina Lion Conservation Fund is made up of a group of five charity trustees. We are a small team of likeminded people each with our own differing skills to help achieve our objectives to our best ability. All of our trustees and advisors work completely voluntarily and no expenses have ever been taken, ensuring all of our income goes towards our mission to protect and monitor lion populations in the wild.

In order to help the trustees to achieve our charitable objectives a group of Conservation & Education Advisors with varying skills, knowledge and experience have been selected to offer advice on the best ways to help our lion conservation impact and education output.



James Welch



Matthew Lloyd



Sophie Cole



Sue Welch



Pete Johnson

Chairman Trustee

Trustee

Trustee

Trustee



In compliance with the Charity Commission we are obliged to write a Trustees Annual Report and Financial Accounts. As a small charity we have decided to stick to the Charity Commission templates which are simple but unsightly for the general reader. The purpose of this Annual Review is to include everything we have done this year in a more aesthetically attractive manner with photos and other relevant information.

Like any other charitable organisation we have a set of objectives that all of the work we carry out or support through another organisation, must fit under. Here at the Safina Lion Conservation Fund we go by the following:

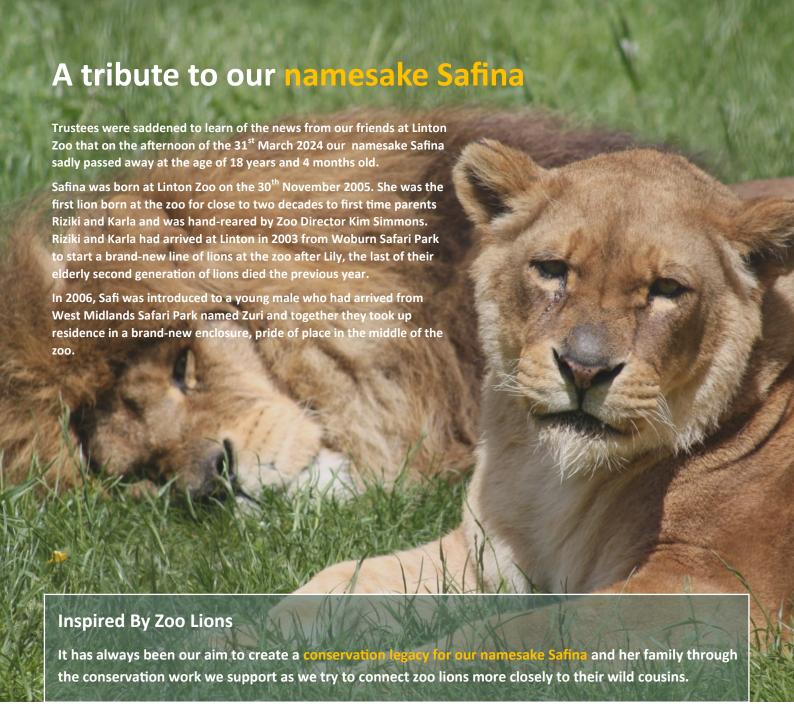
- 1) To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation and protection of lions by:
- A) Supporting conservation projects in such ways that are charitable
- B) Conserving and protecting the natural habitat of
- C) Supporting and publishing research into the conservation and husbandry of lions
- 2) To advance the education of the public in lion and wildlife conservation by such means as the trustees decide including through the support and publishing of research.

Trustees also have to ensure that all of our work has a public benefit and we have also written and maintain different procedures and protocols to make sure that the charity is run in the best possible way that we can.

Our commitment to conservation is personal, our charity is named after a lioness, Safina was born at Linton Zoo in Cambridgeshire in November 2005. The idea of our charity stemmed from fundraising for lion conservation carried out by our chairman while working at Linton Zoo alongside Safina and her family. We aim to work with zoos to help them with their conservation output and to include them as part of a conservation legacy for these zoo lions.

Lions Need Our Help

It is estimated that there are now no more than 23,000 lions left in the wild throughout the African continent and that the populations are still declining. Lions in Africa are listed by the IUCN as a Vulnerable species, with the populations in Western Africa listed as Critically Endangered. They were reassessed as Vulnerable in 2023 with a decline still recognised. The single but now stable subpopulation found in the Gir Forest in Northern India is listed as Endangered.



Zuri and Safina lived together at Linton Zoo for 16 years and had several litters of cubs who were sent to other zoos all over the UK and even in Uganda.

Their first cub Zara resides at the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre in Entebbe, educating the local people about the importance of lions and other wildlife in their national parks in a move organised by Paradise Wildlife Park in Hertfordshire where she was hand reared. Their last litter, a male Kali and a female Nabulaa, born in September 2015 stayed at the zoo and remained in an enclosure alongside their parents. Sadly, all good things have to come to an end and in 2023 Zuri, Karla and Riziki passed away all at a very advanced age, leaving Safina alongside her 8-year-old offspring Kali and Nabulaa. Safina enjoyed her last year under the loving care of Zoo Director Kim Simmons in a brand-new enclosure adjoining Kali and Nabulaa. Our founder James has kept in regular communication with the zoo over the years, continuing to

visit regularly to see and spend time with Safina, his last visit only a couple of weeks prior to her death. She was active and appeared well and content and as friendly as ever. It was after a very short decline in her health that she passed away peacefully with Kim by her side. We would like to pass on our condolences and sincere thanks to Kim Simmons and her team at Linton Zoo for the updates over this recent time. Safina represented the end of an era, one that we certainly won't forget.

Since our charity was founded in 2017, we have now sent over £28,000 to aid lion conservation efforts to protect and monitor lions in the wild. Even though Safina is longer with us, her legacy is still young. This is the start of the next phase of our charity as we continue to build on the conservation legacy for Safina and her family that we started eight years ago. She will always remain our namesake and we are proud to carry her name into the future. We are also particularly pleased that over our first few years we have worked with zoos home to the offspring and siblings of Safina.





We have also developed a brand new three year conservation strategy which pushes us to continue promoting coexistence, ensuring that local communities benefit from conservation work that we support. A new logo designed by friend of the charity Beth Peacock, has also given our charity a fresh new look. We have also established a new Education Advisory Committee to compliment are already running Conservation Advisory Committee. These three volunteers will work with trustees to evaluate our education output through our

website and events and joining in with fundraising activities.

Financial Review 2024

Our eighth year has seen our income increase hugely from last year and has seen support from our zoo partners increasing to a much larger percentage from last year.

This year online fundraising sites have once again proved very useful to our efforts through sponsored walks and activities run by many of our supporters. World Lion Day events have now continued to be a very important time of year for us with the bulk of our fundraising happening around this time, which also matches up with the UK school summer holidays. Total income from 1st February 2023 to 31st January 2024 amounts to £5,704.71 with the total expenditure amounting to £5,721.31 which went towards donations to all four of our conservation partners of which £64.20 of the expenditure going towards bank transfer fees.

Within our total income a total of £1,330.51 came from Just Giving through several different supporters. However, this year has seen our support from zoos rise to its highest level yet with a much larger percentage this year coming from our zoo supporters with a total of £4,114.20 coming from three different zoo partners. Overall direct zoo support was 72% of our annual income compared to 40% last year. This includes a donation of £1664.20 from the Cotswold Wildlife Park which our largest donation from a zoo supporter yet. We also received £260 from direct debit and cash donations. This is the highest level of income that we have had in any one financial year since our inception.

Our expenditure to our conservation partners is our third highest to date and is at a similar level to our last financial

year showing our continued commitment to increase our conservation output after Covid-19 complications. The payment to our conservation partners is as follows:

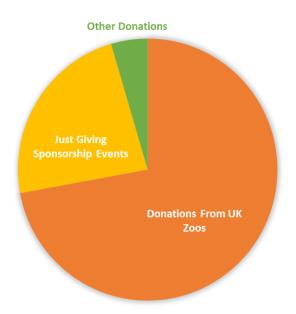
Lion Landscapes received donation of £500. **Mara Predator Conservation Programme** received a donation of £1,237.83 (\$1500).

Kope Lion received a donation of £2,675.62. **Lion Guardians** received a donation of £1243.66 (\$1500).

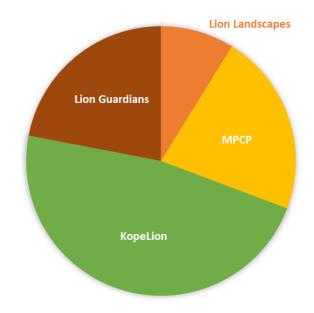
Trustees now only have a total of £57.11 in the bank account on the 31st January 2025 meaning that more fundraising support will be required before future donations can be made. The pie charts below show the proportions of our different fundraising streams as well as our expenditure to our four conservation partners throughout this financial year.

Trustees must keep financial records appropriate to the size and scale of the charity. These are filed and attached to our annual return which is viewable on our charity profile on the Charity Commission Search Register.

Total Income 2024



Donations To Conservation Partners



2024 saw the development of our brand new conservation strategy taking us to 2027

Coexistence becomes our overarching focus delivered across two new conservation goals where different objectives will apply to efforts working directly at homestead level and to promote a healthy wider lion population. We have also set two new education goals to work alongside.

Conservation Goal 1

To support local communities at homestead level to promote coexistence with the local lion population.

Education Goal 1

To support access to conservation education projects for local communities, particularly for children, to promote the importance of coexistence with wildlife and the importance of lions within their ecosystem.

Conservation Goal 2

To assist efforts to monitor and protect lions at a wider level to support a healthy lion population.

Education Goal 2

To work with zoological institutions and to assist them with educational efforts for their visitors, and to support them in increasing their in-situ conservation impact.

These two new interlinking conservation goals allow us to continue supporting our four existing conservation partners promoting coexistence in all that we do and expanding our remit to other relevant and important efforts.

Within this new conservation strategy we have been sure to underpin all of our planning using an in depth understanding of lion behaviour to ensure that we can support projects that can have a successful impact long term. Community involvement therefore is crucial to making this a reality.

Our previous three focus areas have now been replaced by two conservation goals that require coexistence and tolerance from local communities to link areas together to promote genetic health of lion populations and promote the benefits to local people of having lions living locally. These benefits are not only what good lions can bring to the ecosystem as a whole but also what their presence can bring to the communities themselves through employment opportunities and help and assistance and other benefits through the conservation organisations working alongside.

These goals will be met by several smaller objectives, some of these may be used for both goals but they may have very different applications. For example a lion collar can allow scientists to collect important data on lion movements particularly at dispersal age but it can also allow employees on the ground the ability to track the location of the lions and to stay proactive in keeping livestock monitored within their immediate vicinity, this is a great example of how one piece of equipment can have multiple conservation applications. Showing the flexibility in these new goals.

We will be continuing our Future Kings Project but we will now be open and able to collaring females in areas where they may be a problem for the community. Our support for boma building and strengthening is also a major part of this new strategy as it is an incredibly important way of supporting communities at homestead level and trying to prevent incidents to protect the local lion population. Our new education goals also give us an exciting opportunity to get involved with in-situ education which is something completely new to our work and an area that we will be working with our newly established Education Advisory Committee towards.

Coexistence is crucial to the success of lion conservation efforts and their long term effectiveness

Coexistence is a huge part of our new conservation strategy. The importance of coexistence is vital as population range decline around protected areas. Lions that live on the boundaries of these areas find themselves living closely to the local people. By mitigating conflict at homestead level and helping the local people, aiming to prevent incidents before they occur can help to reduce the number of retaliatory killings. Involving communities so they can lead in conservation efforts is crucial to ensure long term success.

Finding benefits to living with carnivores is crucial in order to secure successful opportunities for the communities and lions to thrive long term. Coexistence is important to lions both directly and at a wider level. In turn an increase in tolerance from the local people can help to create corridors between protected areas to improve genetic health of smaller wild populations. It is therefore the key to the success of both of our conservation goals.

Primarily as a grant funding organisation we aim to sponsor specific efforts. Our current projects and smaller objectives sponsored that will continue with this new strategy are listed below. By carefully selecting field support locations and objectives with multiple applications we can make an impact to lions and communities at homestead and at a wider population level.

Coexistence Example 1

Lion Landscapes Community Camera Trap Programme

Camera traps are an effective way of monitoring lion presence in an unintrusive way. The community scheme that we sponsor involves the local people in this effort by connecting them with conservation by showing benefits to having to live with these large predators in close proximity.

Coexistence Example 2

KopeLion Boma Strengthening

Bomas are used to safely secure cattle at night, traditionally made of thorns. A lack of prey species and a growing number of cattle have made these bomas more of a target for predator species. By sponsoring the strengthening of these bomas we can try and prevent incidents before they occur.

Coexistence Example 3

Lion Guardians Lion Guardian Salary

This model involves recruiting young, traditional pastoralist warriors to learn the skills needed to mitigate conflicts between people and wildlife, monitor lion populations and help their own communities live with lions. People who were once lion killers are transformed into lion protectors.



Coexistence Example 4

Mara Predator Conservation Programme GPS Collars

GPS collars are used to monitor lions and their movements, collecting important data. These collars can also be used as an early warning system to herders, by alerting them of the presence of lions in their areas, preventative measures can be made to reduce the likelihood of attacks on livestock.

Conservation Support Throughout 2024

This year we have successfully donated to all four of our established conservation partners, keeping links going throughout Kenya and Tanzania to help protect and monitor lion populations in the wild.









We have once again renewed our sponsorship of Lion Guardian Olubi Ole Lairumbe.

Founded in 2006, Lion Guardians' conservation model is adaptable to various cultures and wildlife species. Founded on local value systems, community participation and science, it is based on a decade of research and rigorous measures of success. Their approach involves recruiting young, traditional Maasai and other pastoralist warriors to learn the skills needed to effectively mitigate conflicts between people and wildlife, monitor lion populations, and help their own communities live with lions. Like many Maasai men, Olubi is a previous lion killer and became known by his lion name "Mitiaki" meaning the brave warrior. Mitiaki works across the Imbirikani Group Ranch just outside of the Amboseli National Park in Kenya, the Lion Guardians core area. His transformative journey from a lion killer to a lion protector reflects a unique shift in Maasai culture and he has influenced other young individuals to follow a conservationist path.

We are very pleased to sponsor Mitiaki. As in previous years \$1500 was sent in January to cover his salary and we will continue to renew it annually. Best of luck in your work this year Mitaiki Trustees are proud to be involved in these community based projects that focus on giving communities a tangible benefit to people living in such close proximity to lions and other wildlife.

We have continued our support for Lion Landscapes by sponsoring more camera traps.

Our main area of interest in Lion Landscapes is the Ruaha Carnivore Project (RCP) in Southern Tanzania which was established in 2009 by now joint Lion Landscapes CEO Dr. Amy Dickman. We have supported their Community Camera Trap programme by sponsoring two camera traps in 2022 which we have now repeated this year by a donation of £500 to cover two more camera traps.

Instead of their researchers setting out camera traps themselves on village land, Lion Landscapes have started to train and employ local communities to do it - and the images they collect translate into benefits for the community, with each animal captured on camera generating a certain number of points. Villages are organised into groups of four and compete against each other on a quarterly basis. The winning village in each quarter then receives the greatest share of community benefits (currently split equally between healthcare, veterinary medicines and education) followed by a lesser amount rolled down to the remaining villages.

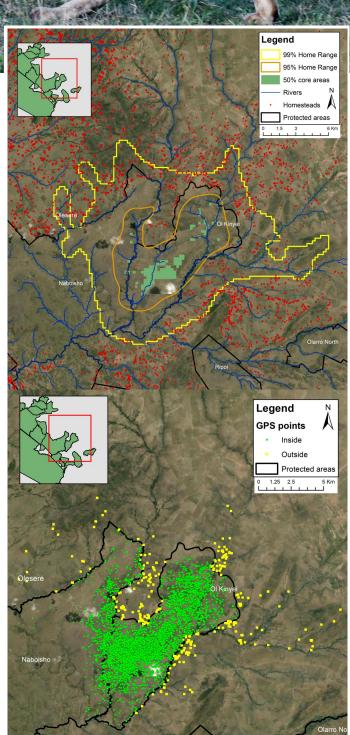
The programme has proved successful in creating behavioural change by engaging and training local people directly in wildlife monitoring on their land. It also demonstrates an extremely clear link between the presence of wildlife (especially carnivores) and the provision of local benefits.



In 2022 a four year old male lion 'Ole Cook' was collared by the Mara Predator Conservation Programme, his collar and veterinary fees being sponsored by the SLCF, after two years his collar was removed and now the data has been analysed by the Niels Mogensen, Senior Programme Scientist MPCP.

Ole Cook was part of a coalition of three trying to increase its territory and whose territory was mostly based around the Ol Kinyei Conservancy, in 2022 they ventured further and disappeared. When they returned one brother was missing. With no trace of the brother he is believed to be dead but it is unknown whether he was killed by other lions or people. This coalition were then considered viable candidates for collaring to track the movements of the two remaining males if they were to venture to the same area again. Ole Cook wore his collar for two years and over that time he used Ol Kinyei Conservancy as the core base of his territory, the collar was removed in February 2024.

Now with two years worth of data the MPCP team has been able to analyse his movements from this entire period and have compiled a very detailed and interesting report. The two maps included here show his core territory over % of time spent (right above) and the map (right below) shows his GPS points over the course of the two year collaring period. His core territory inside the conservancy can be seen with the intensity of the GPS points but as can be seen by the points in yellow he did travel quite far on his patrols at times.





The Future Kings Project, our flagship project launched in 2019 has seen us sponsor GPS collars for four young male lions, Lebutiama is the latest lion as part of this project.

We have a great relationship with the team at KopeLion having most notably sponsored two GPS collars since 2019 and strengthened 10 bomas with them last year. Having been in discussion last year with the KopeLion team about the best way to continue our support they stated that collars were becoming more of a priority so we began fundraising over the summer holidays and were able to donate £2,675 in October 2024 to cover the cost of one collar and the first year data transmission fee.

The candidate lion given to us for the sponsored collar was Lebutiama, a 4-year-old male lion who was born into the Lagunita pride in the Ngorongoro Crater. He was last observed in April 2024 and was thought to have dispersed. However, on the 26th September 2024 the KopeLion team received a call that a male lion was found in the middle of a maize field in Butiama, Mang'ola, many miles south of the crater, deep in community land. Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) rangers, NCA veterinarian Dr. Wambura, and KopeLion Ilchokuti in the nearby Olpiro village area were informed and all went to the site. It was decided to immobilize the lion and translocate it back to the NCA. The photo above right shows Lebutiama after immobsilation. The immobilisation, capture and translocation was a success and testament to all the organisations involved. He was released back into the bush



near Mokilal village and a collar was placed on him for continued monitoring as a tool to mitigate conflicts. It was hoped that he would move in a different direction toward the Serengeti National Park and other wildlife orientated areas rather than back into more densely populated community areas. We have received updates and photos from the KopeLion team and he continues to reside in the NCA and we look forward to sharing more with our supporters and followers as we receive them. We are very proud to support KopeLion and the Mara Predator Conservation Programme in such important work as they use collars to collect important data but also use them to mitigate conflicts with the communities who have to live alongside them.

After fundraising in 2023, 10 bomas have now been strengthened through KopeLion.

We have now received updates from our conservation partner KopeLion that they have been completing boma strengthening through the donation of £1800 made last year.

Trustees James and Pete had the brilliant opportunity to meet the KopeLion team in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area in 2023. We met members of their Ilchokuti team. "Ilchokuti" means guardian and KopeLion employs 30, they are all local Maasai living in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area working to do anything to prevent conflicts from happening this includes warning local herders within their area about the presence of lions and treating wounded livestock. We were shown bomas that had been reinforced by the team recently, a boma is a cattle enclosure created from wooden poles and thorns. However, in recent years as lion numbers have declined and the numbers of lions lost in conflict and retaliation have become even more valuable to the overall lion population, efforts have been made to try and decrease predation in the homestead from predators.

In 2023, following our visit, we started a new boma strengthening scheme in conjunction with KopeLion and we developed a funding model that had already been agreed with a past donor. We donated £1800 for 10 bomas, this covered 80% of the costs per boma (£180) while the boma owner paid the remaining 20%. We have had feedback from KopeLion throughout the year on these bomas and can report that all 10 bomas have now been strengthened. A great case study was sent to us showing Nataana, widowed 20 years ago whose cattle boma was built out of the materials she had after relocating closer to her cousins which was vulnerable to attacks from predators including lions. Recognising the need for a robust solution for Nataana and her family she was included by Kopel ion into the latest group to require boma strengthening



Fundraising 2024

Online fundraising sites such as Just Giving have once again proved useful to charity fundraising with a total of £1,330.51 raised through the platform.

First of all, we would like to recognise Harriet Campion, a student of Nottingham Trent University who took part in the City of Lincoln 10k on the 14th April and decided to raise sponsorship funds for our charity. All together she raised a very impressive £450 for our conservation projects.

Our Ilchokuti Challenge also proved popular this year with the 12.5km sponsored walk challenge being undertaken by two groups from the Cotswold Wildlife Park raising a total of £350. We would also like to add a special thank you to Colchester Zoo keeper Mark Winger and his mother Carol who took part in their own Ilchokuti Challenge on the 17th November. Despite Carol struggling with an old injury, both completed their 12.5km challenge and raised £355.60 for our boma project. Mark worked at Linton Zoo with Safina during her last year and we are very grateful for this show of passion to do something in her memory.

We would also like to mention 9-year-old Maya, probably one of our youngest supporters to date! Maya raised £90 for us while undertaking her charities badge at Brownies by completing a series of different tasks and challenges to raise sponsorship. Maya is local to Linton Zoo and our long-term friend Zoo Director Kim Simmons agreed to meet Maya and collect a letter from her for us, presenting her with some lion goodies as a thank you. It is this level of cooperation and encouragement that we are so proud to be involved with.







World Lion Day celebrations in 2024 were a great success and two zoos organised special events to raise money for our conservation projects.

Firstly, Cotswold Wildlife Park hosted a weekend event with a fundraising stall and following support from park management a total of £1,664.20 was donated to us at the end of August. This is our largest single donation from one of our zoo supporters and we are incredibly grateful to the support and enthusiasm shown to our charity from the park management.

Our wonderful friends at Folly Farm Zoo organised their own Lion Day event and invited us along to take part in a day of fundraising as well as a pre-booked talk by our chairman who spoke in more detail about our work. Huge thanks go to conservation officer Jack for his hard work, dedication and humour throughout the day! £450 was raised which was more than the total from the year before. Thank you also to our brand-new team of education advisors for their help this year in creating education resources and assisting in fundraising events. It has certainly had an impact on the quality of our content and educational reach this year. We also received a donation of £500 from Folly Farm at the end of the year from the profits of their adoption sales, of which 10% is split between their conservation partners. This makes a total of £950 from Folly Farm throughout the year.

Knowsley Safari also sent us £500 as part of a 3-year agreement signed last year to support our conservation projects, thank you very much to the team there for their continued support. After reinstating our relationship with the team at Noah's Ark Zoo Farm we were delighted to receive £1000 from them at Christmas to go towards our boma project. We look forward to continuing our relationship with the team there over the coming years. They are currently in the development stages of rebuilding their lion habitat and we are currently in talks about creating some really powerful conservation based interpretation, watch this space!



We would like to recognise those individuals and organisations who have supported us

Being a small charity we rely heavily on our supporters to help us in our fundraising and we would not be able to achieve anything without their support. Thank you for reading this years Annual Review and we look forward to updating you with our progress next year. For more up to date information please follow our Facebook Page and website. We would particularly like to acknowledge the following for their efforts to support our work this year:

Cotswold Wildlife Park, in particular to the support of General Manager Jamie Craig and Managing Director Reggie Heyworth and all staff that have helped raise funds for us.

Knowsley Safari for their continued support financially.

Folly Farm Adventure Park & Zoo, in particular Conservation Officer Jack Gradidge for his constant enthusiasm and drive to organise events and activities as well as of the zoo team who always get involved and show their support.

Sean Robinson for his ongoing donations and enthusiasm

Noah's Ark Zoo Farm who supported us during our first few years at organised fundraisers.

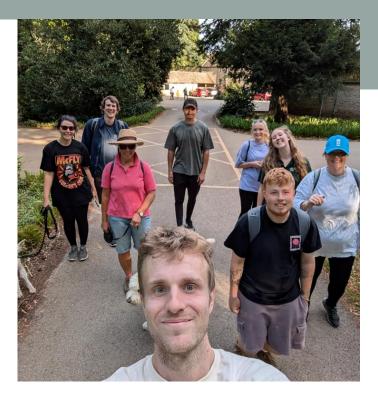
Everyone who has added resources to and become a part of the Lion Keepers Resource Group.

Harriet Campion, Maya Ellson and Mark and Carol Winger for their fundraising efforts

Beth Peacock for the design of our wonderful new logo.

To everyone who volunteers to help us in our work including all of our conservation and education advisors.

We would also like to thank our conservation partners for use of several photographs and maps that have been used throughout our annual review.



Thank you to everyone!

We are nothing without our supporters and we cannot achieve anything without their support. Being a small charity we rely heavily on one off donations and individually organised sponsorship events. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has donated and therefore allowed us to support such important conservation work over the last eight years.

If you are interested in our work in lion conservation please follow our website and social media page on Facebook: www.safinalionconservation.org or email us directly at info@safinalionconservation.org













With thanks to the support of the following zoo partners







