



SLCF **ANNUAL REVIEW 2025**

1st February 2025 - 31st January 2026

Safina Lion Conservation Fund

Registered Charity in England and Wales 1172709



2025 has been an exciting year, we visited the Maasai Mara and strengthened our support with our zoo partners, as our chairman James Welch writes below...

2025 has definitely been a year to remember! We started the year in the Maasai Mara where we had the opportunity to visit the HQ of our conservation partner the Mara Predator Conservation Programme. Three of our trustees were able to meet with Niels Mogensen of the MPCP, our long term contact and friend who is their senior programme scientist. We had the opportunity to visit the areas that they work, meet the local people that they work with and some amazing wildlife sightings which of course included many lions.

The support from our zoo partners has gone strength to strength with two zoos working on permanent displays that detail our collaboration. Folly Farm Adventure Park & Zoo and

Noah's Ark Zoo Farm have both included new signs and displays about lion conservation and the work that they support through our conservation projects.

Together we received **£5,323.16** directly from five different zoos, our largest yearly amount yet. I would personally like to say a huge thank you to the staff of all the zoos that have supported us. Please take the time to read our annual review here which details all of the work we have undertaken throughout 2025.

Thank you once again for all of your support and we look forward to seeing where next year will take us.

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 as part of two committees to offer advice on the best ways to help our lion conservation impact and education output.



James Welch

Chairman



Matthew Lloyd

Trustee



Sophie Cole

Trustee



Sue Welch

Trustee



Pete Johnson

Trustee

Working Together **For Lions**

Since 2017 we have worked to raise funds with our zoo partners and dedicated supporters to send to our conservation partners working across Kenya and Tanzania.

Our Vision

A future where viable lion populations thrive while coexisting with local communities in sustainable areas of habitat.

Our Mission

To work with others to protect and monitor lion populations in the wild.

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 lions

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.

Our Ninth Year at a Glance

Since 2017 we have worked to raise funds with our zoo partners and dedicated supporters to send to our conservation partners working across Kenya and Tanzania.



2025 has been a very exciting year for us. Two of our trustees visited one of our conservation partners for the first time and support from our zoo partners has continued to grow.

Just like last year our zoo support this year is now the largest that it has ever been and because of that and the generosity of our supporters we have now had the best fundraising success in one year that we have ever seen since 2017. Most importantly we have been able to support all four of our established conservation partners through a variety of different activities. This has included continuing our support for GPS collars, Boma Strengthening, continuing our sponsorship of a Lion Guardian.

We have been working hard to ensure that all of our work has been in line with our new conservation strategy with coexistence at the heart of it.

Trustees have continued to work our two advisory committees on our conservation, research and education work. This has seen us develop a brand new Research Grant system. Through this new system up to £1000 can be given to support in the field research activities after a careful scrutinization process by our trustees and conservation research committee. The first to receive this grant was Mr Montan Kalyahe of the Saadani Lion Project and you can read more about this on further pages.

£6,851.96 TOTAL RAISED

£6,554.80 SENT TO AID LION CONSERVATION EFFORTS

1 SPONSORSHIP EVENT

3 WORLD LION DAY EVENTS

1 FUNDRAISING EVENT

RESEARCH GRANT PROCESS ESTABLISHED



Visiting the **Maasai Mara Ecosystem**

In February 2025, three of our trustees James, Sophie and Sue along with other family members went to spend a week in Kenya to visit the Maasai Mara and to visit the team at one of our conservation partners, the Mara Predator Conservation Programme. While in the area they stayed in and visited the main national reserve and also the Naboisho Conservancy, both of these areas are part of the MPCP study area. Read more about our trip below!



Visiting the **Mara Predator Conservation Programme**

We last visited the area 5 years ago in 2020. Trustee James was joined by our friend David Southard from Wild Arena and Pete Johnson, carnivore keeper from Knowsley Safari and now a fellow trustee (as of 2023). They had the pleasure of meeting Niels Mogensen, Senior Programme Scientist for the MPCP along with research assistants Grace and Saitoti. We joined them on their monitoring sessions to find lions within their study areas and to try and get photographs to help identify younger cubs. We were excited to visit again and for two of our trustees this would be their first visit to the area.

The Greater Mara Ecosystem covers an area of more than 3,000km² in southwest Kenya and consists of the famous Maasai Mara National Reserve which includes the Mara Triangle now run as the Mara Conservancy, as well as several privately owned conservancies towards the north. In total there are currently 15 privately owned conservancies and 1 mixed-model conservation area.

These conservancies are owned by the local communities who benefit directly from tourism in those areas, they also allow controlled grazing for cattle and other livestock which is not allowed in the National Reserve. In the case of the mixed-model Pardamat Conservation Area, they still allow people to live amongst the wildlife but are encouraging people to take special measures such as removing fences from the landscape to allow free movement of wildlife across the area. The Greater Mara Ecosystem is connected to the Serengeti National Park and is as such one much larger entity spread

across two countries of over 30,000 km². Despite the wildness of the national reserve, when along the boundary, the infrastructure and buildings found in the settlements and towns were a constant reminder of how close these wildlife havens are to large communities and a rapidly growing and developing population and the challenges that the conservation organisations face working in these areas. There are many compromises that need to be made to find the best solutions that work for people and wildlife alike.

As part of our tour we visited and stayed in the main Maasai Mara National Reserve and the neighbouring Naboisho Conservancy. This gave us two very different experiences. We were blessed with several lion sightings, including some large prides with many small cubs present, this made for great photographic opportunities and a great chance to observe the group behaviour. Other animals seen include leopard, cheetah, hyena, elephant, giraffe, topi and ostrich among many others! One of the most unusual encounters were a huge mob of banded mongoose and an elusive bushbuck right by our tents! The landscape also changed greatly between huge vast plains, rolling hills and thick acacia scrub and bush.



What we learnt from our time in the Maasai Mara

Creating effective conservation measures means gaining an accurate understanding of the situation.

The work of the Mara Predator Conservation Programme is to provide evidence-based, practical management recommendations, solutions and ideas. This can only be done by intensive monitoring and studying of current species behaviour, population trends and study on human influences on the land. This is exactly what the team are doing, but it requires a lot of patience and time as there is no easy solution. There are also a huge number of variables and compromises to be made on all sides to create solutions that fit all of the stakeholders involved which include the animals, communities, economies and tourists.

Niels Mogensen, Senior Programme Scientist for the MPCP explained in his presentation to our trustees how they have embraced technology at a quick pace to help their protection efforts by using the Earth Ranger software, shown in the photo top right. MPCP staff, park wardens and other stakeholders all have access to these maps which show them the location of the GPS collared lions and cheetahs as well as the tagged cattle as part of a new pilot project. These cattle have been used as a trial in the herds that live close to the reserve and conservancy boundaries. Each reserve and conservancy has a marker line 1km out from the boundary, if the collared cats cross this boundary, alerts are sent to the phones of those with access who can start to put mitigation efforts in place. This technology allows the team to work in real time to try and prevent incidents before they occur, to try and save the lives of cats and cattle. His talk was extremely informative, and we are in complete admiration of the work carried out by him and his team. There is no doubt that



community work has become even more important to the work of the MPCP, and that it has allowed them to put measures into place to try and resolve the conflict at homestead level with the communities. These measures have included building stronger bomas and hosting community events, vaccinating domestic dogs against rabies, education classes and clubs for school children and much more are all part of the community work carried out by the MPCP team.

In January 2025 (in our previous financial year) we sent a donation of \$1500 to pay the costs for a brand new boma made out of recycled plastic poles and triple linked chain-link fencing, trustees were given the opportunity to visit one that was already built, see above. On the following page is a selection of photographs of species seen in the Maasai Mara.



Financial Review 2025

Our ninth year has seen our annual income and support from our zoo partners increase once again from last year.

This year online fundraising sites have once again proved very useful to our efforts through sponsored activities especially through Zookeeper Peter Bonser-Blake’s sponsored Spartan Beast Challenge. World Lion Day events have 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 2025 to 31st January 2026 amounts to £6,851.96 with the total expenditure amounting to £6,554.80** which went towards donations to all four of our conservation partners of which £107.20 of the expenditure going towards bank transfer fees.

Within our annual income a total of £1,258.80 came from Just Giving which was very similar to last year. However, this year has seen our support from zoos rise to its highest level yet with a total of £5,323.16 coming from five different zoo partners. Overall direct zoo support was 77% of our annual income compared to 72% last year and 40% last year. We also received £270 from direct debit and cash donations. This has now overtaken last year as the highest level of income that we have had in any one financial year since our inception by more than £1,140!

Our expenditure to our conservation partners is our second highest to date and is at a higher level than our last financial year showing our continued commitment to increase our conservation output and our zoo partner base. The payment



to our conservation partners also include our brand new research grant system and is as follows:

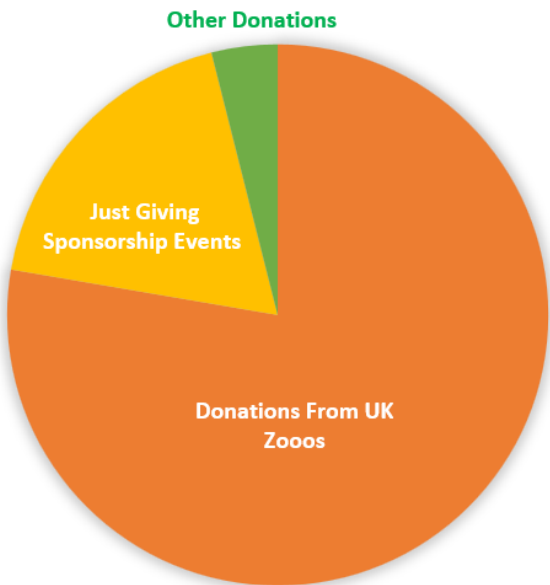
Kope Lion received a donation of £2,640
Lion Guardians received a donation of £2,807.60 (\$3200).
Saadani Lion Project (Research Grantee) received a donation of £1000.

Trustees now have a total of £354.27 in the bank account on the 31st January 2026 and a donation from Noah’s Ark Zoo Farm is expected early this year. The next donation is planned to go towards the Mara Predator Conservation Programme.

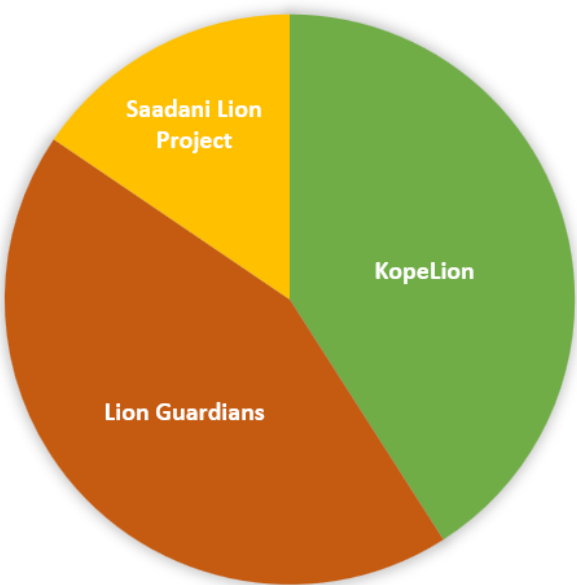
The pie charts below show the proportions of our different fundraising streams as well as our expenditure to our four conservation partners throughout this financial year.

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 2025



Donations To Conservation Partners



Working in line with our conservation strategy, supporting coexistence through our partners...

Last year we launched our new three year conservation strategy which made coexistence 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 alongside two new education goals.

Conservation Goal 1

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

Conservation Goal 2

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

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.

Throughout 2025 we have supported three conservation partners and established a new research grant process. This enables us to support smaller projects working to monitor and protect lion populations in the wild and to promote coexistence, which is at the heart of our conservation strategy.

In order to support our efforts to support local communities at homestead level (**Conservation Goal 1**) we have continued and expanded our support for boma strengthening with KopeLion with 10 more bomas strengthened and the completion of the boma sponsored via the Mara Predator Conservation Programme at the end of last year.

To assist efforts to monitor and protect lions at a wider level (**Conservation Goal 2**) we have supported data transmission fees for collaring as well as also providing a grant to support Monty Kalyahe and his new Saadani Lion Project as he carries out a monitoring survey in the area on a very unknown lion population. Community involvement of course is a very

important part of this and he has worked with local communities surveying their views and experiences. We have also sponsored two Lion Guardians who as part of the role work to mitigate conflicts between lions and their communities across at a wide range, their efforts helping both the local people in the homesteads but the dispersal of wild lions outside of Amboseli National Park.

Trustees have started to explore along with our Education Advisory Committee the possible options to support access to conservation education projects for local communities (**Education Goal 1**) and we look forward to planning this more thoroughly throughout 2026.

We have worked with zoos to create new educational areas and interpretation for their visitors, with permanent displays being made in several collections about lion conservation in general as well as materials made for bomas and information on how local communities coexist with lions and other large predators. (**Education Goal 2**)

The next set of pages will explain more in detail about our conservation support over the last year.

Conservation Support Throughout 2025



LION
GUARDIANS



The Lion Guardians 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.

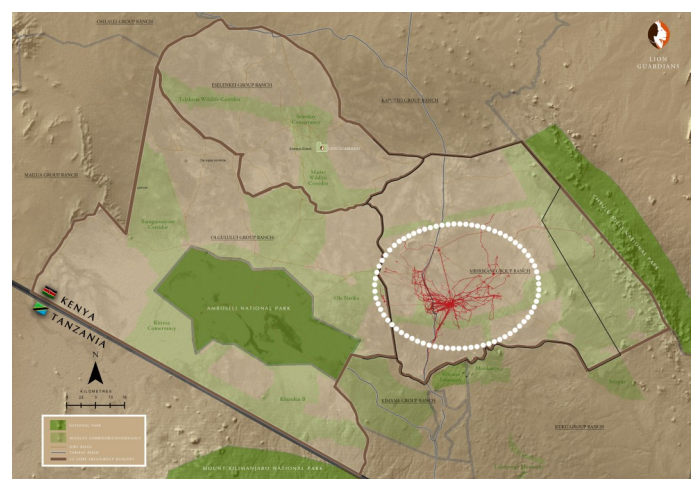
Like many Maasai men, our current sponsored guardian Olubi is a previous lion killer and became known by his lion name "Mitiaki" meaning the brave warrior. Mitiaki works across the Imbirikani Group Ranch just outside of the Amboseli National Park in Kenya, the Lion Guardians core area. His transformative 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 have however, continued our sponsorship of **Olubi Ole Lairumbe "Mitiaki"** for one more year. We have also received an update on Olubi with several photos. He was among one of Lion Guardians first recruits and they say that "Over the past two decades, he has become a symbol of courage, transformation, and dedication to conservation in Amboseli."

On the 30th November 2025 we were delighted to announce that Linton Zoo have officially agreed to collaborate with us to support our conservation partner Lion Guardians. Their pledge to support our work strengthens our commitment to conservation and will allow us to grow our support towards

important lion conservation efforts in the years to come. Thanks to the help of Linton Zoo, Knowsley Safari and our other zoo supporters a donation of \$3600 (Approx. £2800) was sent in November 2025 to sponsor the salaries of two Lion Guardians. Guardians like "Mitiaki" work incredibly hard to mitigate any conflict and issues between lions and communities while promoting coexistence between the two. The map attached here shows his patrols over a 90 day period. When you realise that the Amboseli National Park is 151 sq. miles you truly get an idea of the extent of his work!

2025 was also a very important year for Lion Guardians as they celebrated their 20th anniversary, Olubi in the celebrations can be seen above. We are delighted to be able to support such a pioneering organisation that has really set the groundwork for modern conservation when it comes to combining community support with lion conservation.



Growing our support for Lion Guardians



We have supported Lion Guardians since 2017, and we have continued to sponsor a Guardian every year since. Now with the help of our friends at Linton Zoo we have been able to grow our support to cover a second Lion Guardian.

It is with the help of Linton Zoo that we have now started the sponsorship of a second Lion Guardian, named **Kisimir Maasama!**

Kisimir joined Lion Guardians in 2010 having grown up in the Mbirikani Group Ranch next to the Amboseli National Park. Linton Zoo had previously sponsored Kisimir for several years prior to the pandemic and we are very grateful that they have decided to renew their sponsorship of him by supporting our charity. There is another link here too as Kisimir was one of the Lion Guardian's that our founder James fundraised for when he worked at Linton Zoo (2013-2015). It was this act of fundraising alongside lions Zuri and Safina at the zoo which inspired the very idea for our charity. We are therefore very proud to be officially linked to the zoo and its commitment to conservation in the wild, thanks again to Zoo Director Kim Simmons and her team at Linton for collaborating with us.

Kisimir, pictured above, joined as a Guardian in 2010 and maintained a consistent presence for many years. As time went on, he rose to Senior Guardian and more recently to Field Practitioner. Each step forward reflected his talent for finding lions, his ability to defuse tense community situations, and his capacity to stay focused under pressure. His eagerness to learn new skills, along with his deep commitment to peaceful coexistence, continues to define his work today.

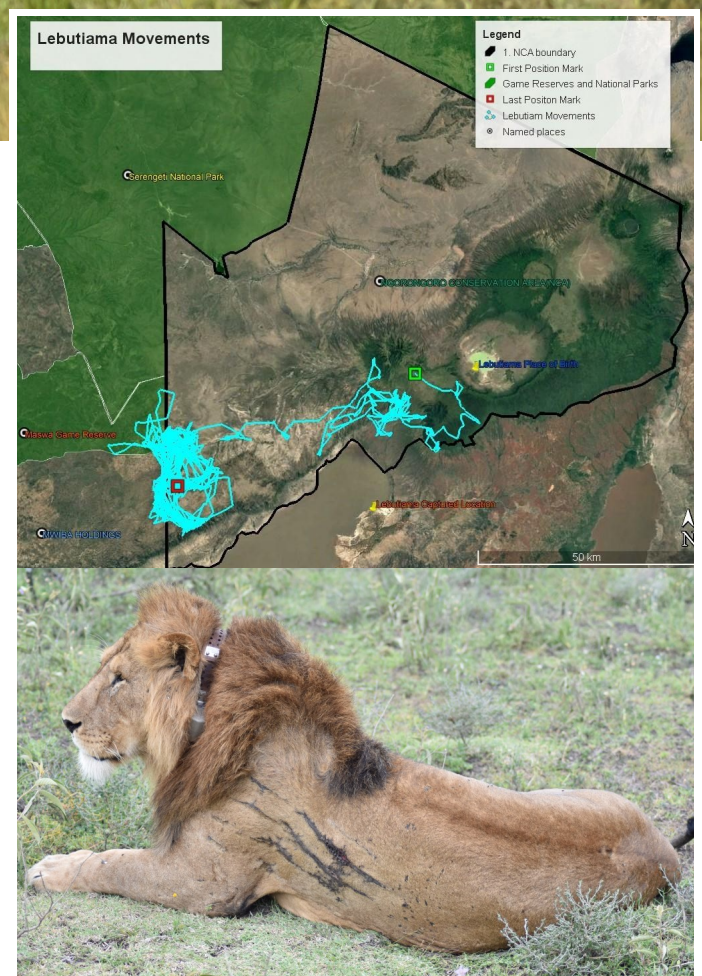


Sad news from KopeLion of sponsored collared lion Lebutiama

After his successful translocation back to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) in September 2024, we were saddened to hear of the death of Lebutiama in November 2025.

Lebutiama was born into the Lagunita Pride in the Ngorongoro Crater in October 2020. He was last observed in April 2024 and was thought to have been 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. NCA rangers, 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. 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 rather than back into more densely populated community areas.

Having sent a donation of £2,675 in October 2024 we were able to cover the cost of the collar and the first-year data transmission fee which we repeated in September 2025. Since his collaring his movements took him through the highland forests of Oldeani, Mokilal and Misigiyo villages before settling in the Kakesio area in February 2025, moving between Kakesio, Maswa and Mwiba. The information gained from his collar gave the KopeLion team a very valuable insight into how nomadic male lions use these connected landscapes. Lebutiama wore our fifth sponsored collar and we were proud to have contributed towards work that aims to keep him and the local communities safe.



Lebutiama was found dead on the Mwiba border and the cause of his death was undetermined. Lion Life in the wild is tough, especially for a male lion at his age. Our thoughts are with the wonderful team at KopeLion and their Ilchokuti on the ground who worked tirelessly to track and monitor Lebutiama as well as keeping the communities that live alongside him safe.

Although we currently have no lions actively wearing any of our sponsored collars it is our plan for 2026 to sponsor the refurbishment of at least one or two of these collars to continue our support of these important application.

Developing our **Better Bomas Project**

Support for the strengthening and building of bomas has become a huge priority for us over recent years, having visited and met many pastoralists when visiting our conservation partners. This year has seen our Better Bomas Project evolve with two conservation partners now seeing finished results.



This year we received the news that our sponsored boma through the Mara Predator Conservation Programme had been completed.

At the end of our last financial year trustees donated \$1500 to our conservation partner the Mara Predator Conservation Programme to build a brand new boma built out of recycled plastic poles and chain-link fencing.

The boma has been built next to the Naboisho Conservancy which has been visited by trustees several times, including this year! This area borders the Maasai Mara National Reserve and is known as a dispersal zone for many species. Over the years lions have been renewed in Naboisho since the conservancy was founded in 2010 and the area is particularly known as a good place to see the three African big cats. The photos of the previous boma are shown to the right, and it can be easily seen that although it would have kept cattle inside it would not have been much of a deterrent to lions, hyenas and other predators. Sadly though money for new and better bomas is not something that everyone can afford. We are so pleased to be able to support the MPCP in this initiative and look forward to supporting them further in the future.

Following the success of our Boma Strengthening Scheme with KopeLion we have continued our association.

Following a successful fundraising campaign, £2400 was sent to cover the cost of 10 bomas to continue our Better Bomas project to build 10 bomas in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area through KopeLion. Following a specific funding model, £240 will go towards 80% of the overall boma cost and the



remaining 20% will be paid by the boma owner. We look forward to hearing the progress of this project as the KopeLion team work to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these new bomas against predators as we try to make a difference at homestead level. **Ololotu Munka, Executive Director of KopeLion says:**

"As someone from this community, I know how important a safe boma is for families. This support helps us reduce conflict at home and keep lions safe in the wild. We are deeply grateful for making this possible."

We are thrilled to be able to continue our impact in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area by supporting another set of boma restorations and we look forward to updating our supporters as we hear on their development throughout 2026.



Supporting Research in Saadani National Park

During 2025 trustees have established a brand new research grant process. This enables us to support small start up projects with a donation of up to £1000. The first beneficiary of this grant was Montan “Monty” Kalyahe, Principle Investigator of the new Saadani Lion Project.

Monty is a Tanzanian born conservationist with over 18 years of experience working with many of Africa’s large carnivores. He has led efforts to collect and analyse data that inform science-based conservation strategies. His work combines practical field skills such as camera trapping, spoor tracking, call-in surveys, GIS mapping, and radio collaring with community engagement and conflict mitigation strategies to foster coexistence between people and predators. After discussion with our conservation research committee we all agreed that this was exactly the kind of project that we were looking to support.

The Saadani Lion Project is a field-based conservation and research initiative established in 2024, in response to the lack of documented research on lions in the Saadani-Wamimbiki landscape of coastal Tanzania, despite growing concerns over their declining population. Saadani National Park, located along Tanzania’s central coastline, represents a unique ecosystem where marine and terrestrial habitats meet. The national park features many different and unique habitats including savannahs, coastal forests and riverine habitats. While the park is known for its diverse wildlife, little is known about its large carnivore populations—especially lions.

To address this gap, the project was initiated in close collaboration with the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI), Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA), and

local stakeholders. Monty has also worked with Professor Stotra Chakrabarti from Macalester College on the formation of the Saadani Lion Project and its first year of operation.

The grant aims to support Monty in the purchasing and deployment of camera traps and other in-the-field related expenses and materials which can be used to monitor the lion population within the Saadani landscape without too much intrusion. This is a population that is currently understudied and an increase of knowledge in the population would be beneficial to creating long term conservation strategies. The Saadani Lion Project is working with local communities as well to ensure that all stakeholders who have to live with lions in the area are engaged within their conservation planning and to engage the local perception of lions currently within the area. We have now donated £1000 in the form of a research grant to cover the cost of camera traps and in-the-field related expenses and materials for monitoring the lion population during the lion population survey Sep-Dec 2025. During this time Monty will also assess the viability of long term prey populations as well as his work engaging with the local communities. We would also like to thank Honeyguide for assisting with the processing of the donation. We would like to wish Monty the best of luck and we look forward to updating you all on his progress.



Zoo Support Throughout 2025

This year we have seen our zoo support grow from strength to strength with many hosting fundraising events as well as building permanent displays showing their visitors how they work with us to support lion conservation efforts.



World Lion Day celebrations in 2025 were a great success with the most organised fundraising events taking place in our history.

We are always so pleased to see our zoo support growing because that means in turn, more money and awareness raised for our conservation partners. Our busiest time of year is always August as World Lion Day is on the 10th August and it coincides with the UK School Holidays.

The team at Cotswold Wildlife Park hosted their third lion weekend event. A stall selling lion related gifts and a raffle saw lots of interest from park visitors and following successful fundraising and support from park management a total of £1335 raised. Thank you to all of the keepers involved in this effort!

Noah's Ark Zoo Farm also organised their own fundraising events by organising a face painting stall, and for inviting one of our trustees and education volunteers to engage with the public through a stall and talks alongside their lion keepers. We were also invited to one of their summer evening events to give a talks on lion conservation to their visitors to celebrate the opening of their brand new lion enclosure. This was particularly great to be apart of as we have been in discussions with the team there about education and interpretation displays this year. You can read more about their new lion enclosure further on into this review.

We would also like to thank the team at Folly Farm who once again invited us to celebrate World Lion Day with them for the third year running. All of the keepers and volunteers

involved did a marvellous job and all together £200 was raised. This year as well as a raffle more educational interpretation was created which involved skulls, Maasai inspired colouring and a touch and play boma activity developed by volunteer Kandice. Since our last visit the team led by keeper Dan and Zoo Manager Alan have been busy redesigning their education area with their own boma recreation and added interpretation displays, it all looks brilliant! Thanks again to Conservation Officer Jack for his wonderful enthusiasm and organisation of the whole day!

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. We also received a donation from the Knowsley Safari Foundation for £850 to go towards our newly established Research Grant scheme which was awarded to the Saadani Lion Project. Many thanks to the Knowsley team for supporting us in getting this grant scheme off the ground.

Trustee James also headed to Linton Zoo to do a talk on lion conservation for their visitors in August, home to two offspring of our namesake Safina and in November they sent us a donation to cover the cost of a second Lion Guardian.

We were surprised and delighted to hear from small wildlife park All Things Wild that even though they don't have lions in their collection they wanted to build a boma within their goat paddock and to help us with our boma project. They raised £738 from a charity fundraising evening in September. Thank you so much to Conservation Officer Elijah for his work in building the boma and promoting us during the event!

A New Home for Lions at Noah's Ark Zoo Farm

Noah's Ark Zoo Farm were our first zoo supporters in 2017 and after a gap during the fallout of the Covid Pandemic our relationship with the zoo has grown once again. Keen to reinstate their support for conservation we have worked with the team to create new interpretation boards for their visitors as part of their new lion habitat to showcase lion conservation efforts for conservation partner KopeLion.



Working with Noah's Ark Zoo Farm on new conservation interpretation

As part of their new enclosure build the team had very exciting ideas for interpretation and engagement with their visitors about lions and conservation. We worked with the team to provide information and photos for their signage with a specific focus on KopeLion who provided us with some wonderful explainer videos. Phase 1 is now complete and we are working with the team on Phase 2 which will focus on their boma support.

Arusha and Tau, the lions at Noah's Ark mean a lot to us. Tau's father Masai was a son of our namesake Safina.

The new enclosure that has been built for them is part of their new Project Carnivora which will extend in 2026 and beyond into giving a home to rescue tiger 'Aqua' and other small carnivore species and vultures as time goes on. The large big cat house has been refitted and the outside lion space has been reimagined into two large paddocks, with one being private to the lions and the other featuring a large glass viewing area giving visitors a wonderful view to all the new features available to the lions. The lions (Arusha above and Tau below) appear to love their new area and according to keepers have settled in incredibly well.

Among the new interpretation features available to visitors include a sand pit with lion paws underneath, many signs about lions behaviour, anatomy and the importance of conservation and their protection.

This new area is also a great meeting point for public talks and trustee James was delighted to be invited to their summer evening fundraising event to give a talk on the work of our charity.

We would like to express our thanks to all at Noah's Ark Zoo Farm led by CEO Larry Bush for involving us in this effort. To be able to be apart of the creation of permanent education and interpretative displays at a UK Zoo is a huge milestone and we cannot wait to share more of the plans that we have been working on with the team there in 2026.





Zoo Support 2025

The Zoo Team at Folly Farm have been very busy building some wonderful new educational displays in their Lion Education Area.

As already mentioned the team at Folly Farm have been very busy refitting the public education area in their Lion House. Zookeeper Dan created a boma display, showing how different materials can be used to create different bomas of various strengths as well as a glass box safely showing what acacia thorns look like and how spikey plants can be used in these boma designs. A display board showing the pug marks of different species "Whose toes are those" has also been created by the keeping team. A brilliant sign has also been created to accompany these displays detailing how people live with lions.

Pictures of Dan with the boma and the sign can be seen to the left, with the acacia box and general layout of the room with the pugmark display can be seen above with conservation officer Jack, education advisory committee member and volunteer Maddie with trustee James.

The pictures below show Maddie with a replica lion skull at the fundraising event at Noah's Ark Zoo Farm (thanks to ZSL Whipsnade Zoo for use of the replica skull!!) and the team at Cotswold Wildlife Park at their Lion Weekend Fundraising Event.



A man wearing a black t-shirt with yellow accents, a black headband with 'SPARTAN 27815' on it, and sunglasses is running through a grassy field. The t-shirt has 'SAFINA LION CONSERVATION' and a QR code on it.

Running for Hugo Peter's Spartan Beast Challenge

Over the years we have been very fortunate to have had the help of some very dedicated zookeepers taking part in sponsored events. Peter Bonser-Blake's event however, was a much greater challenge than most!

Peter has worked at Folly Farm for many years and among his charges for a lot of this time was their pride of lions headed by impressive male lion Hugo. Hugo sadly passed away in May 2025 following a diagnosis of chronic kidney disease. Pete wanted to do something in his memory to raise funds for wild lions and not only did he choose us as the recipients his chosen challenge was the Spartan Beast. The Spartan Beast OCR Challenge is a 21km half marathon race featuring 30 obstacles along the way. These obstacles vary from heavy lifting activities to barbed wire fences to crawl under and muddy ravines!

Over the months that preceded Peter did many training activities and met with us at Folly Farm for World Lion Day, joining us on his day off to raise extra funds and to talk to visitors and local radio about Hugo and his challenge. All together Pete managed to raise a whopping £1208 plus £268 in Gift Aid through the Just Giving platform. This was a huge show in dedication from Pete and we are so grateful for him taking part in the challenge and all the money and awareness that he has raised. Thank you so much to Sarah Bonser-Blake for this wonderful photos of Peter's truly impressive effort for lions! We would also like to wish Pete the best of luck in starting his new role of Zoo Team Leader at Hobbledown.



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 Managing Director Jamie Craig and Chairman 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 for their support and involvement.

All Things Wild for supporting our Better Bomas Project

Linton Zoo for their support financially towards our Lion Guardians sponsorship.

Dr Brian Bertram who donated us a number of lion related books to offer to our supporters in return for a small donation towards our conservation projects.

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



SAFINA

LION CONSERVATION



Working Together For Lions

We are proud to work with the following conservation organisations



With thanks to the support of the following zoo partners

