

## Living in the Arctic Family Day Welfare Statement

**October 2018**

The 'Living in the Arctic' Family Day is an educational event intended to share the ways of life of the indigenous people and animals of the Arctic regions. This is a wonderful opportunity for the public to see an Arctic animal up close and learn about their habitats and the Sami way of life herding reindeer.

The welfare of the reindeer is extremely important to us and as such, the reindeer are engaged with the public for a limited period of time. The two reindeer on the day are British, domesticated reindeer and are very happy, healthy and relaxed around humans and in many different environments. All human/reindeer interaction is determined by the reindeer themselves, who have the freedom and sufficient space to move away from the public if they wish. Whilst on display, the reindeer eat, drink and lie down (and sometimes sleep) as they wish. At all times the reindeer will be under the care of a fully trained and experienced handler. They are transported in purpose built trailers or lorries with thick straw beds as the reindeer travel loose and lie down to rest as soon as they start moving.

We are very fortunate to be able to work with Real Reindeer, an experienced company at the forefront of Reindeer husbandry and welfare in the UK who are members of the World Reindeer Federation and have founded the British Reindeer Herders Association. Real Reindeer are the company which worked with the Veterinary Laboratories Agency to help compile the research which was aimed at ill-informed prospective owners of reindeer and to get proper official licencing for the ownership of reindeer. They advised on the report with the government department as reindeer were being sold to people who had no expertise in caring for them, a subject of immense frustration to Real Reindeer who are constantly striving to improve the husbandry of reindeer in this country. The relationship between Real Reindeer and the Arctic Sami people means knowledge is shared back to the Sami's regarding health and welfare issues and there is continuing work between them.

We are very comfortable with the welfare commitment of Real Reindeer, and look forward to them sharing their expertise and knowledge regarding reindeers with visitors to our Family Day.

