

Noah's Ark Zoo Farm

Our Trustees

Chris Milner

Chris set up and ran the British Airways IT centre in Newcastle and integrated the airline's systems development with software houses in India, before founding his own venture, the Hextol Foundation, a charitable company with a set of small businesses providing work opportunities for people with a learning disability or poor mental health. Chris loves the open space that the Zoo enjoys and the sense of peace and calm that such space gives to visitors and residents alike.



Guy Walker

Gary is a Chartered Construction Manager who lives in Somerset and who first enjoyed the Zoo with his young family as Season Ticket holders shortly after it opened in the early 2000s. He has been a trustee of several charities and loves being involved with projects that can develop people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, as well as wanting to support the charity for the long term. His favourite things at the Zoo are the view over the site as you arrive, the lions, the native wildlife, the Play Barn and, of course, the amazing catering on site!



Nicola Tallett

Nicola is an experienced charity director working within a range of children's, humanitarian, and medical charities. She started in fundraising and is passionate about community engagement to make good things happen. Having been a trustee many times, this is the first time she has worked or volunteered for a zoo. She values the heritage of Noah's Ark Farm as a place of well-being and inclusion for staff, volunteers, members, and visitors. She also has a soft spot for Toby the Tapir!



Jacky Taylor

Jacky works as a barrister and has previously served as a trustee of a national charity and a school governor. She was particularly grateful to the zoo in 2020 for providing a perfect outdoor venue for her then young teen and pre-teen to meet up with cousins after lockdown and let off steam together on the inclusive play equipment. The two things she loves most about Noah's Ark Zoo Farm are the industry leading elephant enclosure with natural browsing for our male bachelor group of elephants and the amazing staff team who show a genuine commitment to excellence in both animal and visitor welfare.

Our Leadership Team

Larry Bush, Zoo Director, and CEO

Larry had a 25-year career in business leadership before joining Noah's Ark as Managing Director in 2019. He helped to launch Doritos in the UK when he worked for Walkers Snacks and later moved to work in the emerging Fair-Trade sector, using his business skills to promote ethical business to help people and planet. As a member of the Bush family who founded Noah's Ark, Larry led the transition of this family-owned business to become a registered charity in April 2023. His favourite things about Noah's Ark are the creative and enthusiastic zoo team, the Elephant Butt slide, and the White Rhinos, Rhumba and Rumbull, as he was on site to welcome them to the zoo in 2005.



Chris Wilkinson, Curator

Chris has been working at Noah's Ark Zoo Farm since it first started in the late 90's. He has played an influential role in the zoo's development since it began and enjoys the creative side of master planning. With strong practical skills and specialist knowledge he enjoys the challenge of managing the range of species held in the animal collection. Chris enjoys engaging with the wider zoo community and helping Noah's Ark to establish a top-class reputation within the zoo industry. Outside zoo hours he co-leads a local church, enjoys getting his kids out into nature and getting hands on in the workshop being creative!



Jon Jutsum, Site Manager

One of the originals, Jon started with us almost 20 years ago and has seen the business grow exponentially. Originally from a landscaping and arboriculture background, he began life at Noah's Ark as the Grounds Manager before moving into the role of Site Manager. He's regularly found around site measuring up for the next project whilst enjoying the rolling landscape and rural countryside that makes Noah's Ark the special place it is.



Jon particularly loves being involved in producing enormous pumpkins for our events and establishing woodlands to feed our animals.

David Bennett, Visitor Operations Manager

David came to Noah's Ark almost 15 years ago following redundancy from a furniture import business. His roles here have included Park Ranging, Head Ranging, Safety Officer, and Visitors Operations Manager.



He thrives on the variety and challenges that daily work life brings him. His pragmatic and proactive work ethic coupled with his diplomacy and tact make David a much sought after solutions man. He has a particular fondness for Lorna the ruffed Lemur and her grumpy, leave-me-alone demeanour.

David firmly believes that first and last impressions matter, therefore an inclusive welcome for all visitors is top of his working agenda.

Sophie Hook, Head of Sales, and Marketing

Sophie heads up the Marketing and Office team at Noah's Ark. Having joined in early 2023, she brought with her a wealth of marketing experience, earned in a broad range of industries including retail, e-commerce, and visitor attractions. Notably, Sophie was previously part of the marketing team to launch the Wild Place Project. Before coming to Noah's Ark, Sophie spent eight years in beauty retail, delivering the marketing strategy for the business and in more recent years, took on the role of CEO.



One of the first things Sophie noticed when joining Noah's Ark was how welcoming and passionate the whole staff are, and this remains one of her favourite things about the organisation.



Clare Greenslade, Finance Manager

Clare is a Certified Accountant who worked for a south west accountancy firm for 36 years before joining the Zoo in 2022.

She led her team to win Xero Large Firm of the Year in 2018 and helped lead their Education and Academy team. Clare's interest in these continues and she has converted the Zoo to Xero. She is also trustee of a Taunton-based Multi Academy Trust and treasurer of a small children's charity.

Her favourite things about the zoo are the fab people, all the animals, and the food (with the zebra cake and rum and raisin ice cream coming out top!).



Chris Brookes, Catering and Retail Manager

Chris worked in Mineral Exploration & Engineering & Archaeological Geophysics for 8 years. Chris settled back in Cheltenham with a change of career by buying a catering business. Over the following 14 years, he developed it into a multi facet business, event catering, coffee shops, sandwich vans, and contract catering for National Trust, English Heritage & Gloucester Police.

Chris sold the business in 2015, he then joined Noah's Ark in 2016 with the aim of bringing catering in-house and improving the overall offering. In the last 7 years he has led the growth of catering and retail and significantly enhanced the freshly prepared food and drinks offerings on the site. Chris loves the family feel of the zoo plus the team, together with a fantastic zoo environment which are great to work with.



Paula McMillan, Education Lead

Paula leads our Education team; she has been at NAZF for over 9 years. Previous to joining Paula worked at West Midlands Safari Park within their Education team. Paula brings a wealth of experience to her role, and this shows in everything she does.

Paula loves teaching and carrying out workshops to the many school children that we have visiting the zoo throughout the year, seeing their faces when you introduce them to Colin the Cockroach is one of Paula's favourite things. Paula loves working with the wider zoo team and loves the Meerkats, due to their fun and cheeky characters.

