

Chair's Update no 26.

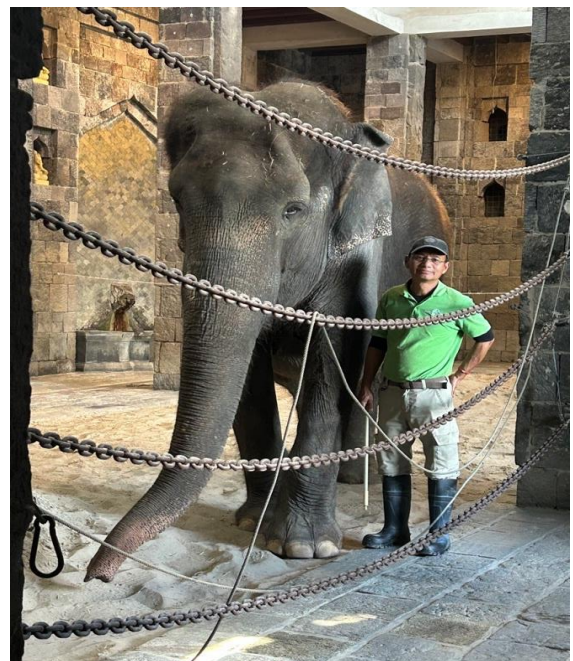
30th October 2025

Since I last wrote to you all, the team at STEF have had a very busy summer! July was a particularly busy month as we welcomed our Founding Trustee, Jake, to the UK for both Strategy and Board meetings. During Jake's visit he and I were able to pay a flying visit to Pairi Daiza in Belgium, to meet with one of our Consultants and zoo expert Lee Sambrook, and to see first-hand the behind-the-scenes workings of the Asian area of this fascinating wildlife park.

I was impressed to hear how the Thai staff caring for the elephants strive to make the day of the elephant herd varied, with time spent across seven zones of the zoo, including a daily walk to the lake to swim, and quiet time spent in the sand floored cool of the huge buildings away from any tourists. Much can be learned from such visits and many of the simple management tools employed are applicable for use in elephant camps in Thailand, such as provision of deep sand beds, and feeding balls.



The STEF Board of Trustees met for a Strategy and Board meeting at the Kennel Club HQ in London. From left to right: Andrew, Mike, Lainy, Merry, Jake, Lisa, Ros and Roger

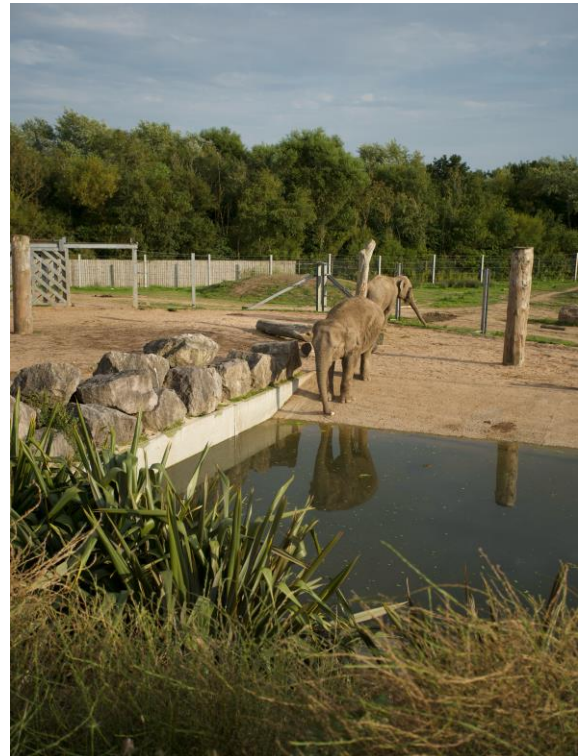


Thai staff look after the Asian elephants at Pairi Daiza, Belgium

On 12th August on World Elephant Day, we were delighted to be able to hold our first “in person” event thanks to the generosity of the staff at Blackpool Zoo, who volunteered their time to help STEF to host 250 VIP visitors to the zoo after closing time. Visitors learnt about enrichment activities carried out with the resident elephant herd at elephant base camp and experienced the peace and quiet of the elephant areas out of hours. STEF volunteers were able to share with visitors the work of STEF, and forty guests participated in a quiz, hosted by STEF Trustee Lainy Miller, answering questions such as “How does the tip of the trunk of an Asian elephant differ from that of the African elephant?”



During the evening, Research and Conservation Officer Kristian Bold presented a cheque to STEF for £5000! All in all, with proceeds from merchandise sales and a silent auction the evening raised over £8000.



The after hours event at the zoo allowed a select group of VIP visitors to observe the tranquility of elephant base camp in the evening sun



The Quiz participants deep in thought during our WED event



Visitors placing bids on a wide range of prizes on offer at the silent auction table

Over in Thailand, the STEF veterinary centre team looked after 15 hospital patients and made 64 mobile clinic visits during the last quarter.

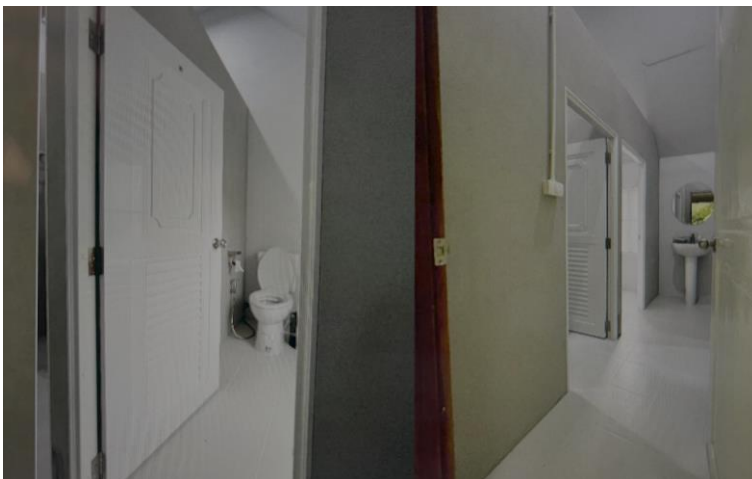


Many of the elephants hospitalised this year are suffering from impaction colic (abdominal pain), with very fibrous dung eventually being passed.



Educating about dietary management is a key mission for STEF, especially during the changes in season, when food availability can vary.

Since my last update in July, I am delighted to report that thanks to the very generous support from the **Anthony V Martin Charitable Foundation**, we have been able to renovate our volunteers' accommodation, providing a sparkling clean and private new bathroom and a new kitchen dining room, which is close to completion also, once some stainless steel kitchen work tops and appliances have been fitted.



The new bathroom and kitchen facilities have been generously funded by the Anthony V Martin Charitable Trust

**We'd like you to consider kindly marking in your diaries our
Big Give Campaign 2nd – 9th December 2025!**

Over the next 6 weeks we will be focusing on our annual Christmas campaign, the Big Give.



The Big Give campaign is a wonderful way to allow for your donations to go further – **in fact to be doubled** during a focused week of fundraising!

This year STEF are fundraising for much needed medical supplies, including antiviral medication to treat young elephants suffering from EEHV, fluid therapies and antiparasitic medications

Can you help us reach our target of £12,000?

We would like to thank **the staff at Blackpool Zoo**, for their tremendous help and enthusiasm in planning and executing our first face to face event at the zoo, on World Elephant Day, 12th August 2025!

Our small team's efforts must continue to raise urgently needed funds to ensure that we can sustain our valuable services and plan for the future. We are always interested to develop even more collaborations and relationships with new funders, donors and businesses, so do reach out if you can help!

As ever, our **enormous** thanks are extended to Vernon and Shirley Hill, The Two R's Charitable Trust, The Anthony V Martin Charitable Foundation, The Jean Sainsbury Animal Welfare Trust, The Hawthorne Trust, The Marjorie Coote Animal Charity Trust, The Marchig Animal Welfare Trust, The Beryl Evetts and Robert Luff Animal Welfare Trust, The Graham Kirkham Foundation, The Alborada Trust, The Castanea Trust, The Ofenheim Trust, The Animal Defence Trust, The Martin Wills Wildlife Maintenance Trust, The Calypso Browning Trust, The Robert Clutterbuck Charitable Trust, The Michael and Shirley Hunt Charitable Trust, The Alice Noakes Memorial Trust, The Edith Murpy Trust and other Trusts and individuals.

In the meantime, on behalf of us all, enjoy the last weeks of Autumn, and thank you once again, for your continued interest and support of our hard-working charity.

Dr Merry Smith MRCVS
Chair of Trustees



For and on behalf of The Trustees of Southern Thailand Elephant Foundation

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