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BRISTOL ZOO DEVELOPS EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES WITH HSBC SUPPORT

Bristol Zoo is expanding its popular Conservation Education Centre to cater for a greater number of school children, university students and post-graduates.

Work has begun on adding new themed teaching rooms and lecture theatres at the centre, which was visited by nearly 40,000 school pupils last year, and is expected to be complete in time for the start of the new academic year in September. The new facility will cater for an extra 4,000 pupils per year on day visits, and around 400 higher education students on six full- and part-time courses.

Bristol Zoo has secured a £2.4 million funding package from HSBC's Bristol and Bath Commercial Centre to support the development, in a deal led by Senior Commercial Manager Lee Newman.

Bristol Zoo's Conservation Education Centre was opened in 1999 and delivers education sessions on 40 topics for pupils of all ages and abilities, from four-year olds to PhD students. The Zoo collaborates with a number of universities and other educational institutions, including Bristol University, ~~and~~ the University of the West of England, and South Gloucestershire and Stroud College to co-deliver degree courses for their students.

Simon Garrett, head of learning at Bristol Zoo, said: "We are excited to be expanding our facilities to deliver these sessions and courses in top quality, purpose-built accommodation. We are proud to be developing this provision with our long-established academic partners, to equip students not only to understand conservation science academically, but to be based in an active conservation organisation and be taught by practising conservation experts – experiencing conservation action at first hand."

HSBC's Bristol and Bath Area Commercial Director James Jordan added: "Bristol Zoo is an extremely popular tourist destination, but it is also held in high regard for its educational work and the research that is undertaken by the Zoo. This expanded facility will help a greater number of students from the South West and wider UK and we are delighted to have supported this project."

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