

# **The Isle of Wight Reptilium Development Vision 2021 - 2041**

Reviewed April 2023

## **Introduction**

The Isle of Wight Reptilium & Terrapin sanctuary was created in 2017 with the aim of being a self-funding terrapin sanctuary to provide permanent homes for slider species of turtles. These had been recently placed onto the EU invasive species list and therefore any found that had been released in the wild or were no longer wanted as pets would face destruction. The Reptilium was created as a self-sustaining entity by charging entrance fees as we knew that was the only route to long term viability as we would not be able to rely on public donations as a source of funding. We were able to operate under the Section 14.1a dispensation scheme for zoo licensing until 2019, with the introduction of the Animal Activities licensing scheme.

## **Where will we be in 15 years?**

In twenty years we expect the number of terrapins requiring permanent sanctuary to have decreased significantly, although as they have long life span (some of our resident turtles have come to us in their sixties and some only a few years old), we do envisage there to still be a need to provide sanctuary for them. We expect this to still be self sustaining via entrance fees to the collection, and we anticipate the collection of animals we house to be a small number of sustainably bred animals that will typically be of low conservation value but serve as focal points to create engagement with the natural world and an understanding of habitats and spark interest in animals and the need to protect them and the wider environment. We anticipate working to a conservation plan for helping with habitat and species preservation locally and perhaps globally either through direct interventions or through financial assistance.

## **How do we see this happening?**

In the first four years we have seen ourselves settling into the role of a newly established zoo, our collection of animals has become more clearly defined through our animal collection plan, our conservation goals have started to make some meaningful progress and are being measured against our conservation plan. The conservation plan is continually reviewed to see how we can best provide meaningful actions. The onsite conservation messages and educational resources are fully developed and subject to constant review to look for new messaging opportunities. We have started to make meaningful connections with other collections and organisations.

Five to Ten years - Due to the physical constraints of our premises we won't be able to develop any onsite conservation breeding activities unless they are species that would fit into the constraints of our animal collection plan. If this was to become a possibility we would expect to be working with these by this time frame. We would by now expect to have well established fundraising and awareness campaigns to enhance any conservation activities.

Ten to 20 years - In this timeframe we would expect to have well established connections with other organisations, our conservation efforts will be well defined, we will have fundraising and awareness campaigns to fund or enhance conservation efforts, we will be actively involved in habitat preservation and creation either directly ourselves or via donations to organisations already involved in types of conservation that are inline with our conservation plan, or a mixture of the two.