

John F. Robins, Secretary, Animal Concern Advice Line (ACAL), c/o Animal Concern,
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Animal Concern Advice Line (ACAL) is a recognised Scottish charity: No. SC030982.
Animal Concern Advice Line was established in 2001 to take on the charitable work of Animal
Concern which was founded as the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society in 1876.
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The First Minister,
The Scottish Government,
Holyrood,
Edinburgh

Dear First Minister,

I have just read an astonishing article in the Scottish Sun newspaper (see link below) which reveals that your Government has given a grant of £2,000,000 of public money to Edinburgh Zoo for the construction of a new enclosure for the two pandas being held there as part of a lucrative breeding programme run by the Chinese Government.

Has your Government forgotten that these animals are owned by China and the charity which owns Edinburgh Zoo pays US\$1,000,000 per year in leasing fees for the animals in Edinburgh? In addition Edinburgh Zoo pays large sums of money to feed the pandas and for the specialist veterinary interventions required each year during the potentially dangerous artificial insemination the female is subjected to.

The pandas at Edinburgh Zoo are also used to enhance and promote a rose-tinted image of China very much in contrast to the reality of the totalitarian, polluting and oppressive regime that rules that vast and wealthy country.

It was bad enough when your Government got involved in the wild animal act circus which marked the arrival of these two political prisoners at Edinburgh airport but to waste £2,000,000 of public funds to help perpetuate the panda pantomime is nothing short of a disgrace.

I would be grateful if you would note our protest over your decision to make this payment to Edinburgh Zoo and I request, under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and/or the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, copies of all communications both internal and external, including letters, e-mails, memos, meeting minutes and notes plus (should they exist) any transcripts or recordings of telephone calls, between the Scottish Government, Edinburgh Zoo/Zoological Society of Scotland, The Foreign Office and any other organisation or individual in regards to this £2,000,000 payment and any request for additional payment(s).

Yours sincerely,

John F. Robins,
Animal Concern Advice Line

<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/4271779/edinburgh-zoo-scottish-government-panda-enclosure-sunshine-sweetie/>