

PRESS RELEASE
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Raising Money the South Downs Way **Cyclist raises over £200 for Isle of Wight Zoo.**

When Tristan Beard decided to help out the Isle of Wight Zoo, he set himself an impressive challenge – to cycle the South Downs Way. Running from Winchester to Eastbourne, the route is a nationally famous bridleway covering 103 miles of chalk downland. Most dauntingly, the route contains 11,700 feet of ascending track – equivalent to cycling three times the height of Snowdon!

“When laying the 4 maps I needed out on the floor the ride looked quite daunting,” said Tristan, “but once you start you forget about what's ahead and just enjoy what's around you at the time.” Tristan passed some of the most beautiful scenery on the south coast during his journey, seeing iconic landmarks such as Beachy Head and Devil's Dyke. He managed to complete the trail in just three days of cycling, spread over a week. This was despite hot conditions that at one point reached 28°C – luckily a slight wind helped make conditions more comfortable.

“A few of the climbs really pushed my fitness to the point where I thought about getting off and pushing,” said Tristan. “But to keep me going I thought about the animals, and especially the big cats because they are the reason I was doing it. When I got to the top of a climb that was hard I got a real sense of satisfaction that I had completed it.” Tristan's hard work raised a fantastic £216.24 for the Isle of Wight Zoo, which specialises in the care of big cats and lemurs.

And next on the cards for Tristan? “After completing this year's challenge I am now planning on what to do for next year!”

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Notes to editors:

Isle of Wight Zoo aims to promote the survival of endangered species through first class educational and recreational experiences, exemplary animal management, conservation and research. The Zoo is best known for its work with exotic cats. As a centre for surplus or rescued big cats, all have come to the Zoo at different stages of their lives and from a variety of backgrounds. The Zoo strives to encourage the social development and natural behaviour of each cat in their care. Every species of big cat residing at the Zoo is currently under considerable threat in its natural habitat. Isle of Wight Zoo is currently home to 12 tigers, 3 lions and 2 jaguars

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