

Appendix 1.

Script used to conduct focus groups

Elephant Welfare Focus Group Guide

Aim: To gather stakeholder opinion on welfare measures and resources of importance to elephants.

Ask bold questions as the bare minimum.

Good *morning/afternoon* and thank you for taking the time to join our discussion of elephant welfare. My name is Carly Chadwick and I'm a researcher working with the Elephant Welfare Group Behaviour Sub-group.

We are attempting to gain information about measures of elephant welfare and we have invited people who work with elephants to share their perceptions and ideas on this topic.

You were invited to participate because you have experience and knowledge of the care and management of captive elephants. We are relying on you to help us understand more about this topic because of your experiences.

Today we will be discussing current behavioural measures of elephant welfare, and resources that are important to elephants. There are no right or wrong answers. Please feel free to share your opinion, even if it differs from what others have said. Our discussion will last about an hour.

To explain the format of our discussion a little more, we are using a semi-structured interview method and working according to a specific script, so that the questions we ask are consistent across all of the discussion groups. So we would encourage you to have a dialogue with one another, but we ourselves are trying to only prompt you for further clarification on the information you're providing. For this reason, there may be times during the discussion when you don't hear from us, unless we would like to ask you to elaborate on an answer.

Before we start, I'd like to share a few ground rules that will help our discussion. Please speak clearly, and we ask that only one person should talk at a time. We are making an audio recording of the session because we don't want to miss any of your comments. If several people are talking at the same time, it will be difficult for us to hear you and we'll miss your comments. It's important for us to hear everyone's ideas and opinions and we would like everyone to participate.

We will be on a first name basis today, and in our later reports there will not be any names attached to comments. You may be assured of complete confidentiality.

First I'd like to ask each of you to tell me your name and your role at (*name of zoo*).

1. How would you visually assess elephant welfare?

Prompt questions if one or both not covered by the above:

2. *What behaviours do you think you might see if an elephant was experiencing good welfare?*
3. *What behaviours do you think you might see if an elephant was experiencing poor welfare?*
4. Prompt Question [ONLY IF NEEDED TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION]:
What behaviour would you use to tell if elephant welfare was positively or negatively affected by changes to their environment? For example, if:
 - a new elephant was introduced to the group
 - an existing group member left the group
 - the enclosure was modified
 - their feeding routine changed
 - a new training method or contact routine was adopted
 - keepers joined/left the team

If they request examples of welfare indicators we say for example stereotypes, sleep?

5. What aspects of social group and composition are important for welfare?

6. What would you say is an ideal social group and composition?

IF they request examples of social resources say number of animals, relatedness of group members?

7. What features of the environment are important to elephants?

8. Imagine you were given unlimited resources and funding and were asked to build an elephant enclosure. What would the enclosure look like? What would it contain?

Possible prompts here: enrichment, flooring, methods of food supply, how much indoor and outdoor space, social group.

Then if there's time:

9. If you could provide one resource for captive elephants that they don't currently have access to, what would it be?

IF they request examples of resources say sand, wading pool?

10. What kinds of environmental enrichment are beneficial to elephants?

Finally, is there anything else you would like to add, or anything you feel we have missed?

Once again, thank you very much for participating in this discussion. We're conducting a number of teleconferences with people from different zoos. Once these are complete, our next steps will be to summarise our findings and produce a report; this will be sent your email address, if you provided one on the participant consent form.