

Free entry for over 60s at the Zoo

In a move to tackle loneliness among older people, Age Scotland and Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) have teamed up to allow free entry for over 60s between 11 and 18 October. A paying visitor to the zoo may take two over 60s with them.

The hope is that younger people will share the visit with older friends and relatives, inspiring everyone to spend more quality time together.

Age Scotland Chief Executive Brian Sloan said: "It's heartbreaking that hundreds of thousands of older people in Scotland go days or weeks without even a visit or friendly voice on the phone.

"More than 100,000 older people in Scotland say they feel lonely most or all of the time, with half of over-75s saying that their television or a pet is their main form of company.

"We are delighted to team up with RZSS to encourage people to spend quality time with an older person and enjoy a fun day out meeting the pandas at Edinburgh Zoo and chilling with the polar bears at the Highland Wildlife Park!

"Photos can be shared using the hashtag #ShareWhatYouLove. We are looking forward to seeing everyone's adventures.

"Age Scotland are on a mission to cut loneliness in Scotland in half by 2025. By teaming up with partner organisations and encouraging people of all ages to spend time with older people we can all do our bit to beat this public health crisis."

RZSS Chief Executive Barbara Smith said, "We are thrilled to be part of the Share What You Love campaign which is tackling

the issue of loneliness in elderly people.

“By encouraging our visitors to bring along a friend or family member over the age of 60 when they visit the zoo or park, we can help make a positive impact on the wellbeing of those in later life.”

Anyone who would like more information on Age Scotland's 'Share What You Love' campaign can visit sharewhatyou.love. Further details on visiting Edinburgh Zoo or the Highland Wildlife Park can be found at www.rzss.org.uk/agescotland.

