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TIME AND MONEY RUNNING OUT FOR ZOOS

Social distancing markers have been added at Chester Zoo for when visitors return

ZOOS across the country have been devastated by news that they will have to remain closed 'indefinitely'.

Many zoos, including Twycross, Dudley, Paradise and Chester, are seriously worried for their future. If they can't raise money soon they will not be able to afford to feed the animals and may have to close forever. As charities, many zoos rely on donations as well as ticket prices to keep them going. It costs £465,000 a month to care for and feed the 35,000 animals at Chester Zoo and 97% of the zoo's money comes from the two million people that visit each year.

At the end of May, many zoos were hoping to re-open within days, along with many other non-essential businesses. Bosses of the zoos felt that with so much open space they were safer than many beauty spots, as they can manage social distancing and ensure visitor safety. But on

31 May, zoos and aquariums were put on a list that made it illegal for them to remain open.

With the possibility of no money coming their way in the near future, zoos are appealing to the Government to think again. A debate has been organised in Parliament for Thursday 11 June and zoos are hoping that the law will be overturned. Several zoos have launched campaigns to raise money so that they can keep going until then.

"We understand the challenges faced by zoos and aquariums during these unprecedented [never seen before] times, but it's vital that we do not move too quickly in reopening, to ensure public health is protected," the Government said.