



**Safe Haven
for Donkeys**

Winter 2025

NEWSLETTER



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Find us on the internet:



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Royal Patron:

Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra
The Hon Lady Ogilvy KG GCVO

Patrons:

The Rt Hon the Earl of Stockton
The Rt Hon Ann Widdecombe DSG
Desmond Lynam OBE
Kay Burley
Peter Egan
Anthony Head
Jan Leeming



Dear Friends.

2025 is a very special year for Safe Haven. On 15th March, it will be exactly 25 years since our charity was first registered with the UK Charity Commission. Since then, we have gone on to help many thousands of donkeys, mules and horses in Israel, the West Bank, the El Saf brick kilns in Egypt and now Gaza. We couldn't have done any of this without you and we are so very grateful for all your love and generosity. Whether you have been with us for 25 years or have only just joined us, thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to our Royal Patron, HRH Princess Alexandra, and to our Patrons the Earl of Stockton, Desmond Lynam, Kay Burley, Peter Egan, Anthony Head, Jan Leeming and of course Ann Widdecombe, who was our very first Patron and has been with us for 23 years. Their support is invaluable.

We are looking at ways to celebrate our 25th anniversary year – there will be more on this in a future newsletter and in our social media so watch this space!

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy reading our updates in this newsletter. There is news from our sanctuary in Israel, smaller facility at Arrana in the West Bank, as well as our mobile clinics in the West Bank, Egypt and Gaza.

These continue to be very difficult times in the Middle East and everyone in the UK would like to pay tribute once again to our colleagues overseas. They work so hard and are so dedicated to the animals.

Warmest regards and a Happy New Year to you all,



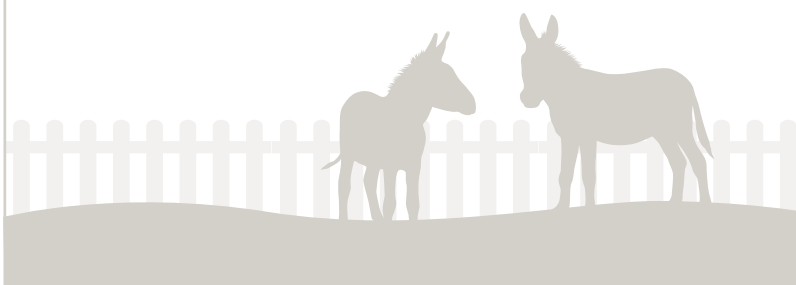
Melanie



Fiona



Wendy



News from Egypt



Dr Shaaban writes...

Thank you to everyone who donated in response to our appeal in November – due to your generosity, we have now been able to set up a second mobile clinic team in the EL Saf brick kilns of Egypt.

Having a second team not only means that we can cover more of the kilns; it also frees up the time of my team to attend emergency callouts.

The new team members are Dr Khaled Heikal, Mostafa Mohamed and Amr Mohamed Ali and we welcome them to the Safe Haven family.

At the end of October, the team, in collaboration with the EL Saf Veterinary Department and the Directorate of Veterinary Medicine in Giza, conducted a veterinary training campaign at the EL Kouz veterinary unit. This village serves as a central hub with a large donkey population, primarily used for various agricultural purposes. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of qualified service providers in the area. During the campaign, we treated 33 donkeys, many of which suffered from different forms of lameness, including hoof lameness, joint issues, and tendon problems, as well as dental disorders. It was an excellent opportunity to train two government veterinarians on physical examinations, hoof lameness, and dental issues in donkeys.

You may remember that in a previous newsletter, we mentioned that we are looking into ways of replacing donkeys in the brick kilns with machinery and we are still looking into this – we have found a kiln owner who is willing to trial the machinery and are considering options such as carts on rails or motorbikes towing carts. We will keep you updated.

We were also delighted recently to welcome our CEO Andy Foxcroft and Patron Peter Egan, along with film-maker Andrew Telling, back to Egypt to film a follow-up to their award-winning film “Broken”. Peter commented that the general condition of the donkeys that he saw was much improved from his previous visit – a testament to all that we are achieving with your support.



24 hours (nearly!) with the donkeys



Our volunteer veterinary advisor, Dr Anna Harrison, writes...

A lovely visit to our Israel sanctuary in Gan Yoshiya and I was determined to start my day at the same time as the donkeys.

4.30am

It's pitch black but I can just about see the donkeys quietly wandering down towards the small paddock. Then I hear a soft whistle – it's Moussa – the donkeys all troop through the gate, no shouting, no herding, just our wonderful donkeys doing what they know they need to do.

5.00am

Everybody in and the gate is closed in preparation for scraping the paddock and replenishing the straw in the troughs. The donkeys seem to know it takes a few hours – some have a dawn doze, many indulge in the pre-rolling ritual of sniffing and scraping the ground, circling before dropping to the ground in that somewhat inelegant way that donkeys do. And then there is the endlessly popular game of trying to remove a buddy's headcollar and a lot of mutual grooming goes on. Everywhere is still very quiet as the sun rises – no tractors allowed before 7am to keep the neighbours happy!

5.30am

Our group of special care donkeys are moved to their paddock so their barn can be cleaned. Again, the donkeys know what to do and, whilst there is less exuberant play there is a lot of donkey interaction as the day warms up – many donkeys resting their head on their buddy or lying down in pairs. And, of course, enjoying a morning roll.

8.00am

By this time the paddocks are cleaned, the feeders full, drinkers cleaned. Moussa and Ali wander through the donkeys cleaning eyes, picking feet and grooming. They quickly spot any donkey that needs treatment.

9.00am

The big let-out! This happens every day yet the donkeys still queue up at the gate in excitement and many break into a trot before remembering that they are donkeys and slow to a walk as they head to the far end of the paddock where breakfast is ready and waiting.



9.30am

Nothing to do with donkeys but the team stop for a well-earned breakfast – local pita bread, humous, tomatoes, olives – delicious and Andy and I are invited.

By now it's around 35 degrees but the team seem oblivious to the heat and spend time on any maintenance jobs – always plenty to do.

And so the day goes on. Andy and I get the chance to just sit and watch and we see that donkeys come down the paddock for a drink in groups and always use the same invisible (to us) path on one side but go back to the far end on a different path on the other side of the paddock. We watch several donkeys patiently waiting to roll in exactly the same spot. We cannot see what is so special about the place they have chosen as the whole paddock is just sand. No familiar muddy, grass-free rolling patch that we see at home.

5.00pm

Andy and I rummage in the nearby avocado plantations for discarded branches and, however, quietly we do this, the donkeys hear and gather at the fence in anticipation. Our strategy is to throw

branches over the fence along the length of the paddock and the donkeys have cottoned onto this plan and start to trot or even canter ahead of us, such is the excitement at the prospect of some satisfying branch gnawing.

7.00pm

And now it's early evening, pleasantly warm and time for a cold drink on the decking outside our cabins and within touching distance of our beautiful donkeys. Sooty has taken to inviting himself in by stepping up to our garden gate. His ears, as you can see, are beyond beautiful.

Earlier I prepared a giant ice cube containing slices of fruit and veg. What would they do? Typical donkeys – very cautious at first – staring with eyes and ears. The first donkey sniffed cautiously and pawed the ground. Another took the next big step – he licked it and liked it! By now a crowd had gathered and there was a great mix of licking ice-biting and snorting. And then the ice cube succumbed to warm sand and hot breath and broke apart revealing its treats. More excitement!

And darkness fell and we all drifted off to sleep. The end to a perfect donkey day!

Dr Rakan's Palestinian donkey stories



Dr Rakan, the vet in charge of our services in the West Bank, tells us about some of the animals whose lives have been changed thanks to your donations.

In spite of the current situation in the Middle East, my team with Wael and Nour and our other mobile clinics run by Dr Omran and Ali in the centre of the country and Dr Eyed and Ahmad in the Hebron area, are still on the road, covering huge distances to bring free veterinary care to hundreds of horses, mules and donkeys every week. Sometimes, we are not able to visit the town or village we were intending due to roadblocks but there are always other areas that need us and we can also stay in touch with owners by video call.

A lot of the settlements visited by Dr Omran and Ali are in very rural, mountainous areas and without our clinic, the owners simply would not be able to access veterinary care for their donkeys. They are always so very grateful for our support.

When we are out and about, we often come across other animals which need our help. Here, we are not only treating this "shepherd donkey" but also the sheep that he protects. Many predators are frightened of the



strange noises that donkeys make and having a donkey guardian is an excellent way of keeping sheep safe, as well as allowing the donkey to graze freely with his woolly friends.

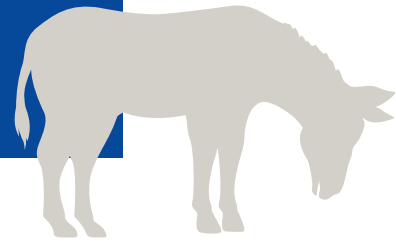
Of course, we still have our permanent clinic in the Palestinian city of Nablus and with the donkey market taking place next door on Thursdays, we are always kept busy treating animals brought to us. We also go out and visit the nearby “builder donkeys” who work so hard carrying building materials up and down stairs in Nablus.

Recently, we decided to extend the area in which the donkeys roam at our rescue centre in the village of Arrana. We put up additional fencing and now the donkeys have even more room to run and play. They are dewormed and vaccinated regularly, as well as having their hooves and teeth trimmed and it really is so wonderful to see them living such natural lives, with their very own carer Mahmoud on hand. If only all donkeys could be so lucky.



It is only thanks to your generous support that we are able to run our Arrana rescue centre, clinic in Nablus and three mobile clinics covering the whole of the West Bank. Thank you from all of us, including the donkeys of course!

Update from Gaza



Dr Saif writes...

With your help, my team and I are doing our best to help animals across the Gaza Strip.

Recently, we worked in Deir al-Balah Camp, a refugee camp in the Deir al-Balah Governorate of the southern Gaza Strip, located one kilometre northwest of the centre of Deir al-Balah city, of which it forms part. Originally, the camp housed 9,000 refugees in tents and then mud-brick structures, which were replaced with cement block structures in the early 1960s. The camp consists of concrete buildings and has eight schools, sewers, and other municipal services. This camp is currently housing hundreds of thousands of refugees who have escaped from different cities from the north and south alike. The vast majority of the refugees live in schools and tents on the Mediterranean coast with their animals.

A few weeks ago, the team was working in a Red Zone Area (Bani Suheila, a town in Eastern Khan Younis) that received a sudden warning to immediately evacuate. We received some calls from some donkeys' and horses' owners for help and decided to take the risk of staying to help whatever animals we could.

It's important to mention that our focus is on treating both donkeys and horses. But sometimes, we treat also other animals, especially pets and sheep. Owners of these animals come to us and ask for urgent help. We feel pity and just help as much as we can. Most owners genuinely do care about their animals; it's just that they have no money or cannot find a veterinarian to treat them so our clinics are desperately needed.

On behalf of the animals, thank you so much for caring – we hope that peace will soon return to Gaza.

Adopt a donkey

Adopt a donkey today and we will send you an adoption certificate, record card and photo of your chosen friend, complete with a small cuddly donkey* to remind you of your new friend .

Adoption is from just £36 a year (or £3 a month) and you can adopt for yourself or a friend – donkey adoptions make the ideal gift for birthdays, anniversaries or any other special occasion.

Your gift will help pay for the food and medical care of your chosen donkey, as well as support all the donkeys we help at the sanctuary, Nablus clinic and our mobile clinic. Below are just three of our donkeys – but you can choose from our wider donkey family by visiting our website at www.safehaven4donkeys.org/adopt.

We care for around 200 donkeys at our sanctuary in Israel and rescue centre in Arrana in the West Bank. We will update you with news about a selection of our donkeys in every newsletter but sadly we're not currently able to send individual updates.

Thank you for your support.

* Cuddly donkey can be sent to UK addresses only due to customs regulations

Adopt me!



Name: **Daffodil**
Age: **5 years**
Rescued: **September 2019**

Daffodil was only 5 months old when she was abandoned at our clinic in the city of Nablus. She has grown into a fine donkey and is living at our rescue centre in the village of Arrana with our other West Bank donkeys.

Adopt me!



Name: **Pen**
Age: **3.5 years**
Rescued: **August 2021**

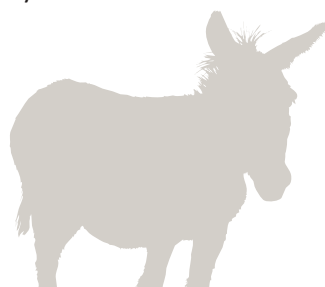
Little Pen was born at our clinic in the city of Nablus and named after Pen Farthing, the founder of the charity Nowzad.

Adopt me!



Name: **Yalon**
Age: **6 years**
Rescued: **October 2018**

Yalon was found as a stray wandering the streets of an Israeli town with his mother Gali. For a while, Yalon was a close companion of Hope but since she gave birth to Nader, she prefers to spend all her time with her foal. Nowadays, Yalon is friends with a wide range of donkeys and absolutely loves his carers, Moussa in particular.



Adopt a donkey today by visiting www.safehaven4donkeys.org/adopt or give us a call on 01444 470136 or 01444 470132 and give a donkey the love and care they deserve.

Ways you can help...

giftaid it

Gift Aid

The Gift Aid scheme allows charities to reclaim tax on donations received from supporters who have paid sufficient income or capital gains tax during the year to cover the amount we would be reclaiming from HMRC. If you are a taxpayer and have not already completed a Gift Aid declaration, please complete the form with this newsletter so we can reclaim even more to help the donkeys!

If you would like more information on the Gift Aid scheme before signing up, just call Wendy on 01444 470136.

Remember, if you are no longer a tax payer, please let Wendy know.



Standing orders/direct debits

We already have over 1,000 supporters who give to us regularly and these payments are vital in helping us to plan for the future of the charity. If you can spare a regular amount each month, quarter or even year, please visit www.safehaven4donkeys.org/fundraising/how-you-can-help/ or call 01444 470136. You can now also set up a regular gift via your credit/debit card or Paypal by visiting the donate page on our website.



Recycle

Donate your used postage stamps, stamp collections, postcards, first day covers, old or foreign coins/bank notes, pre 1940s maps, watches, medals or badges. Simply send direct to Stamps N All, Dept SHADH, 32 Eastbury Avenue, Plymouth, PL5 2NB (please do not send donations or items for the donkeys to this address and please note that the company is unable to acknowledge receipt of packages due to volume of work).



Easy Fundraising

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations with Easy Fundraising? Simply go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk to sign up, choose us as your favourite cause and get shopping!



Ebay

Sell an item via popular online bidding site Ebay and you can donate the profit (or a percentage) towards our work.



Home Collection Boxes

Ask us for one of our home collection boxes. Collect up all your loose change for the donkeys! Just call Melanie on 01444 470132 or e-mail melanie@safehaven4donkeys.org



Thinking of making your Will?

Gifts in Wills are vital in helping to secure the future of the donkeys at our sanctuary. If you are thinking of leaving Safe Haven a legacy after you have taken care of your loved ones, why not ask us for a copy of our will writing worksheet to help you plan what to include before visiting your solicitor.

Just call Wendy on **01444 470136**
or e-mail wendy@safehaven4donkeys.org

Free Will

If you are having difficulty getting out to see a solicitor, we are now partnered with Bequeathed, who offer free Wills and valuable advice. Their simple and convenient service allows you to make the right Will for you in the way that best suits you – online, face to face or over the phone. You will be asked if you would like to leave a legacy to Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land but there is absolutely no obligation to do so.

To find out more:
visit www.bequeathed.org/p/safehaven4donkeys
or call **020 8191 0587**.

DATA PROTECTION & PRIVACY

In carrying out our day to day activities Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land processes and stores personal information relating to our supporters and we are therefore required to adhere to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and other relevant Acts and Regulations. We take our responsibilities very seriously and we ensure the personal information we obtain is held, used, transferred and otherwise processed in accordance with that Regulation and all other applicable data protection laws and regulations including, but not limited to, the Privacy and Electronic Communication Regulations.

Personal information we might collect includes your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date of birth, whether you are a tax payer (for Gift Aid purposes), bank account details if you set up a regular payment, donations you have made or events in which you have participated. On occasion, we may need to look up your telephone number in the phone book to contact you regarding a donation you have made – we would then store this data in our database in case it is needed for the same purpose in the future.

We collect this data for purposes including the processing of any donation made by you, to provide you with any products or information you have requested or for internal record keeping/accounting/administration. Having supported us, under the “legitimate interest” condition for processing data we believe that you would like to receive our quarterly newsletter and occasional additional appeals or updates on our work and so we will also use your details for this purpose.

If you use your credit or debit card to donate to us, buy something or pay online or over the phone, we will ensure that this is done securely and in accordance with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard. All card details and validation codes are securely destroyed once the payment or donation has been processed. Other information will be held as long as is reasonably necessary to allow us to continue to communicate with you or to comply with relevant legislation. For example, the HMRC require Gift Aid declarations to be retained indefinitely.

We will not sell, share or swap your information with any third parties unless required to do so for legal reasons (for example to the police). We do send the names and addresses of our supporters to the printers who produce our quarterly newsletter. They also comply with the General Data Protection Regulation and use your details solely for the purpose of mailing the newsletter. They do not retain the data or use it for any other purpose.

It is your choice on the type of communications and information you receive about our charity and the ways in which you can get involved. You can change your mind at any time by contacting us by post, e-mail or phone using the contact details on page two of this newsletter. If you have a complaint about how your data is processed, please contact us in the first instance. If we cannot resolve the situation, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office. You also have the right to request copies of any data held about you and to request rectification of any inaccuracies.

Thank you

We are grateful to each and every one of you for your support as without you there would be no Safe Haven and we would not have been able to help thousands of donkeys over the last 25 years and counting. We would especially like to thank:



George Russell for raising over £7,000 by doing a sponsored zip wire above Bournemouth pier to celebrate his 80th birthday

Sylvia Osborne and Dave and Myra Gunn for raising the sum of £1,127.20 at car boot sales for us in 2024

Janet Parsons and friends for raising £500 from Christmas stalls

Sarah Standing for raising £1,115 by hosting a fundraiser on GoFundMe

Trella Dudley-Wallis for raising £1,000 from stalls at craft fairs

Mick and Jean Izzard for raising the sum of £350 from the sale of plants and other produce

Pat Clark for raising £200 from a Christmas tabletop sale

Our Mid Sussex Volunteer Fundraising Group – Mary, Sarah, Honor, Fran, Justine and Peter – for standing outside in all weathers to raise funds at local fairs towards our work. The group has now been going for 19 years! If you live in Mid Sussex and would like to join, do give Wendy a call on 01444 470136

