Safe Haven for Donkeys

Autumn 2026

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NEWSLETTER

Thanks to you, we're continuing to help donkeys in Israel, Gaza, the West Bank and Egypt.

News from Israel

Our sanctuary in Israel continues to be a busy place, with plenty of positive news to share.

Our foal, Gervais, who was born in April and named after the wonderful Ricky Gervais, is thriving. She and her mother Deborah are being gradually introduced to the main herd, allowing them to settle in at a pace that keeps everyone calm and comfortable.

Looking after around 180 donkeys is no small undertaking, and one of the team's recent achievements was completing hoof trimming for the entire herd. Regular hoof care is essential for keeping donkeys healthy, comfortable and mobile, making this a significant but very worthwhile task.

The team has also recently weighed every donkey. Routine weigh-ins are an important part of our preventative healthcare programme, helping us identify donkeys that may be gaining too much weight so their diet can be adjusted, while also highlighting any unexpected weight loss that could indicate an underlying health problem requiring further investigation.

By the time you read this newsletter, our CEO, Andy Foxcroft, and our volunteer veterinary adviser, Dr Anna Harrison, will have visited the sanctuary to spend time with the team and check on the health and wellbeing of the herd. Their visit is an important opportunity to review the donkeys' care, offer support and ensure our sanctuary continues to provide the highest standards of welfare for every donkey in its care.

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Every donkey at our sanctuary depends on the kindness of supporters like you. Thank you for helping us provide the care, compassion and security they deserve.

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Update from Gaza

Many of you will be sorry to hear that Dr Saif has recently left Gaza to begin a new chapter overseas. We are deeply grateful for everything he achieved – thanks to his dedication, thousands of donkeys, horses, mules and other animals received vital first aid during an extraordinarily difficult period.

I'm pleased to say that our programme is now being delivered by a veterinary surgeon, Dr Ahmed Thabet, who will continue to provide care to working animals in extremely challenging circumstances. We look forward to introducing you to Dr Thabet and sharing more about his work in a special mailing which you will receive later in the year.

In the meantime, Dr Thabet and his team have already been hard at work providing vital veterinary care to Gaza's working donkeys, mules and horses. Since taking over Safe Haven's work in the region, he has treated dozens of cases, including donkeys suffering from wounds, dehydration and painful hoof problems, as well as a range of other injuries and illnesses. His dedication and expertise are already making a real difference, ensuring that donkeys receive the treatment they need despite the extremely challenging conditions in which he is working.

Thank you for helping us to help donkeys in one of the most troubled parts of the globe.

News from Egypt

In July, the new team launched its first veterinary campaign in partnership with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the Veterinary Syndicate and the Veterinary Directorate in Aswan.

Dr Shaaban writes...

Alongside our two teams in the brick kilns, our new community team are making a huge difference to working donkeys and horses, bringing vital veterinary care to communities where support is often difficult to access.

In July, the new team launched its first veterinary campaign in partnership with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the Veterinary Syndicate and the Veterinary Directorate in Aswan. This is an exciting milestone that is helping strengthen veterinary care for working equids across the region.

During the campaign, the team treated 25 working animals, most of them donkeys. Many were suffering from serious welfare problems, including poor body condition, hoof disorders, eye diseases, wounds and a painful skin condition caused by fly larvae.

The team also travelled to Nagh El Arab village in the Daraw District, where they provided veterinary care to a further 70 working horses and donkeys. Once again, many of the animals were found to be struggling with wounds, lameness and in poor body condition.

Alongside treating the animals, the campaign helped inspire the next generation of equine vets. Students joined the team in the field, gaining valuable hands-on experience of the health and welfare challenges faced by working equids and learning directly from experienced clinicians.

Many of you have asked about our pilot project to replace donkeys with machinery in one of the brick kilns. Quarterre Studio have now designed a small machine which we hope will be able to cope with the conditions in the brick kilns. The next stage will be to produce a prototype which we hope will be done by the end of the year. We will bring you more information as soon as we can.

None of this would be possible without your generosity and belief in our mission. Thank you for helping us give these animals and their communities a brighter future.

Dr Rakan's Palestinian donkey stories

Life in the West Bank continues to be difficult. An increase in roadblocks and checkpoints has made reaching sick and injured working donkeys harder than ever before, while fuel and medicine shortages have driven prices up. Despite all that, our three dedicated teams in the West Bank, led by Dr Eyed, Dr Omran and myself have been continuing to make a difference to the lives of working donkeys, mules and horses.

I would therefore like to say a big thank you to everybody who donated towards our recent appeal to keep our mobile clinics on the road.

Your generosity has enabled us to buy fuel, medication and to keep providing life-saving care.

One of the donkeys we have helped thanks to your support was living in a cramped shelter with an uneven and rocky floor in a village about 50 miles from Nablus. The donkey was dehydrated, his muscles had become stiff and sore, and he was struggling to walk comfortably. We treated the donkey with fluids, pain relief and vitamins, and gave the owner advice on how to improve the shelter.

You may remember that in the last newsletter, I told you that I had taken my donkey namesake, Rakan, back to the Nablus clinic from the Arrana sanctuary as I was concerned that he was losing weight. Rakan, along with a couple of our other donkeys, Major and Pen, who were in the same situation, spent a few weeks with me in Nablus where it soon became obvious they were all healthy and had probably just been pushed away from the trough by others. They have now all gone back to Arrana, where the team makes sure they have the space and time to eat undisturbed.

Thank you for helping us to make donkeys' lives better in the West Bank.

Ways you can help...

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

We are very sorry to say that the owner of Stamps N All has now retired. Please do not send any more stamps or other items to the Stamps N All address in Plymouth. If we can find anyone else to take this over, we will let you know in a future issue.

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.

Giveacar

Turn your unwanted cars into cash – Giveacar will take them away free of charge and sell or scrap them with proceeds helping the donkeys.
Call Giveacar on 020 7736 4242 or visit www.giveacar.co.uk for more information.

News from the UK

Safe Haven for Donkeys is deeply saddened by the loss of our Patron since 2002, The Rt Hon Ann Widdecombe DSG. For more than two decades, Ann gave her unwavering support to our charity, helping to raise awareness of our work and secure vital funds for donkeys in need. Her generosity, dedication and friendship meant so much to everyone at Safe Haven, and her legacy will continue to inspire us.

Later this year, we will be welcoming Niall Duffy as our new Chief Executive Officer, joining the charity on 5 October. Niall will work closely alongside our outgoing CEO, Andy Foxcroft, to ensure a smooth transition before Andy retires at the end of 2026. Niall has extensive charity experience, having worked for the RSPCA and the Donkey Sanctuary and his appointment will put the charity in a strong position for the future. We will introduce Niall to you later in the year and in the meantime, you can read more at **www.safehaven4donkeys.org/a-new-chapter- for-safe- haven-for-donkeys/**

Thank you!

...to all who have been working hard to raise funds so far this year, including **Colin Vicars** who raised £423 from a garden party and **David Atkinson** who has raised over £300 from a series of stalls at events.

And a big thank you to each and every person who has donated, whether one-off or regularly – you are helping transform donkeys' lives!

Adopt a donkey

from just **£3** a month

Adopt a donkey today for yourself or for a friend and we will send you an adoption certificate, record card and photo (by post or e-mail), plus, if you are in the UK, a small cuddly donkey. Adoption costs from just £36 a year or £3 a month.

Adopt us!

Donkeys available for adoption include 17-year-old **Mistletoe**, rescued from a donkey market in the Palestinian Territories, 7-year-old **Miriam** who was only a foal when abandoned in a farmer's field and **Dusty**, another donkey who was abandoned as a foal but who is now 13 years old.

Mistletoe

Miriam

Dusty

Adopt a donkey today at www.safehaven4donkeys.org/adopt and help give them the life they deserve.

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**

Having an up-to-date Will is the best way to ensure the people and causes you care about are protected.

With **MyIntent**, you can start your Will online at a time that suits you. Complete the online interview and receive tailored legal advice based on your circumstances. If needed, you can book a free appointment to discuss your options before choosing a free basic Will or additional paid services.

Once your Will is complete, you'll receive it with clear signing instructions and a Letter of Advice explaining what it covers.

To find out more, visit **www.myintent.life/safehaven4donkeys**
or call **020 8191 0587.**

Please consider leaving a gift to Safe Haven for Donkeys in your Will. Your kindness will help us continue our vital work for years to come.

Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land
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For a copy of our Data Protection Policy, please see our website or call us on 01444 470136.

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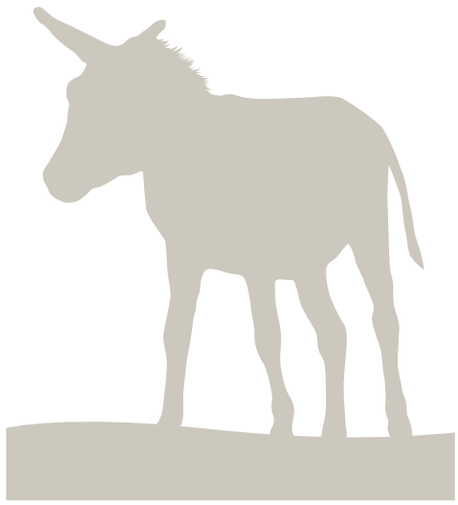

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WORKING ANIMAL ALLIANCE

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Safe Haven for Donkeys