

CHRISTMAS NEWS 2024



Lucy's UK Donkey Foundation

Supporting the
Rescue & Care of
Donkeys in the Holy Land

Lucy's UK Donkey Foundation
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Dear Valued Supporters

As our thoughts turn to Christmas, we are reminded of Bethlehem, which is just 62 miles away from the sanctuary. How we wish it was possible to help the donkeys and horses there but sadly at the moment, it is still just too dangerous and difficult to be able to resume the outreach clinics anywhere in the West Bank. The whole situation seems at times to be beyond human solving.

We know that so many of you have been inspired over the years by the dedication of Lucy and Adi and so we have asked them to share a little of their personal situation on page 4. Often, we do not get the full picture, and it is only when somebody we know speaks out that we start to glimpse what is really going on.

All the donkeys and other animals are safe, and we are so grateful for your continued support but have to be honest that **our expenditure over the past 6 months has exceeded our income every month by over £200**, and that income has included £10k in Gift Aid. Sadly all the charities that we have approached are only inclined to give to projects rather than to sanctuaries and because of the war we have had to stop our outreach work. We have yet to pay for the flood defence work.

James and Erika are scheduled to meet in January to discuss

Enjoying their new feeders—see page 5 for more information

and plan a comprehensive upgrade of the charity's website. This meeting represents an opportunity to enhance our digital presence and improve user experience for potential donors.

The primary objectives of the website upgrade include significantly improving site aesthetics and loading speed. A modern, visually appealing design can create a more professional impression, and by optimising the site's technical performance, we aim to reduce page load times – which research shows can directly impact user retention and conversion rates.

We look forward to unveiling our new look in early 2025!

It should go without saying that we wish to extend heartfelt thanks to our incredible supporters who have stood by us through extremely challenging times. Your commitment and generosity have been the backbone of our mission – and that is no overstatement.

As we approach the festive season, we hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful, restful holiday period. Your continued support means the world to us, and, collectively, we strive to make an even greater impact together in the coming year.

James, John, Stan and Rhona

Trustees Lucy's UK Donkey Foundation





"Do not focus on the circumstances that are weighing you down. Instead, through eyes of faith, look ahead to brighter times, and praise Me for them. While you worship Me in the midst of darkness, I enable you to see the first gleam of dawn on the path before you..."

Taken from Jesus Today
by Sarah Young - Page 56

Hello again dearest Supporters...

It seems like a miracle; here we are writing another newsletter close to our very special Christmas time, almost at the end of what has been such a difficult year.

We can't choose when catastrophe strikes but we can choose to recognise and feel grateful for the blessings that come in the midst of it.

We can only hope, remain determined and try to keep going for as long as it will be possible for the sake of all our little animals who look to us for their safety and every need.

In this ongoing situation that we are facing, it can often feel as though the odds are against us and yet, here we are, still coping, still managing to survive. I feel in my heart sometimes that it can only be through divine intervention, because I'm not sure what other explanation there could be.

We are increasingly ever grateful to you, our supporters, because without any single one of you, simply - we would not still be here.

In addition to our cherished, regular donors, we are so immensely thankful for the fact that we have a few

tremendously kind and dedicated supporters who donate occasional one off, much larger donations. These incredible donations truthfully are what makes it possible to maintain our sanctuary from one month to the next.

Sadly, even with this great generosity, because we face inevitable price increases and the extra added costs now that winter is almost upon us, **our monthly expenditure is exceeding our routine monthly income.**

Whether you may be able to donate a regular amount monthly or an occasional smaller, or larger amount, every penny matters so much to us and we are deeply grateful. **If you are able also to spread the word, share our appeals far and wide, and encourage others to make a donation** to help our sanctuary survive, then please, please do it.

Our ability to be here and help these precious souls is entirely reliant upon the kindness and generosity of caring people. Without that essential help, it would tragically mean an eventual end for our sanctuary.

We have tried very hard to spread awareness and make attempts to reach a wider audience in an effort to increase our number of supporters,

but we have extremely limited success, if any really. Perhaps it's due in part to the war and instability in this region, but it sadly means that we are ever reliant on the same dear, wonderful people who so kindly donate what they can regularly or month after month. Also of course it means we are relying heavily on the amazing people who are able to so generously make the larger, intermittent donations.

As I said, the reality is that we would not manage without any of you so **please know how deeply we appreciate your kindness, your goodness, your love and the fact that you care the way you do about our donkeys and our work.**

So many of you tell us that we are in your prayers and we are so grateful for this... I've heard it said that praying for one another is the greatest gift we can give and so, please know that we pray fervently for you all too. And of course we pray constantly that our little sanctuary will continue to survive and that the worst case scenario will never happen.

Unfortunately despite our attempts to move forward with plans to team up with another local animal sanctuary in Israel, as yet we've not made



any real headway. It's an ongoing process and once we will have further news about it, we will of course let you know.

As yet, sadly, **our outreach work has still not been able to resume.** There are still almost daily clashes in the West Bank, **the situation remains tense and dangerous and our vet is not able to travel easily.** We are considering it all the time and as soon as we and our vet feel that he can safely resume working again, even if only in a small way, we will surely do it.

After such a long, intensely hot, humid summer, finally the temperatures here are cooling down and actually as I sit writing this, we are in the middle of a storm with quite heavy rain, the first heavy rainfall of this season.

As you may recall our sanctuary's location, though wonderful in so very many ways, is also unfortunately at the lowest point of the village.

In addition to that, to the east of our sanctuary, just a mere 20 metres or so away, is the Alexander River. During the worst and wettest winter months, for Israel that's December to February, the Alexander often bursts its banks and of course we are right in its firing line. Some years of course the rainfall is heavier than others, but it definitely seems to be getting more serious and for that reason we have had to take measures to try to do all we can to prevent the flooding.

Last year was awful as almost the whole of the donkeys' night time barn was under half a metre of water, as were the surrounding areas and parts of the field. There was literally nothing at all we could do except try to move the donkeys to small, drier areas and just wait... and wait and wait. It was unbearable knowing the donkeys barely had even enough, dry space to be able to lie down.

So, we are now nearly at the end of having some vital anti-flooding work done at the sanctuary and all we can do is pray it will be as effective as possible, and also pray for not too much of a wet winter and that the river will not overflow...

We have **dug trenches, opened nearby, old drainage tunnels** that were clogged after years of not being cleared. **Built underground walls,** had a total of 7 truckloads of materials delivered in order to **raise the ground level by 40 cm,** as well as **lift/weld our gates to align with the new ground level.** As you can probably imagine, there has been a number of different types of machinery working to per-

form the tasks, from diggers to huge rollers! There is still yet more work to be done and we are really hoping it should be completed before the end of November.

As always, this newsletter comes to you with much love and our heartfelt thanks...

We wish you all a happy, peaceful Christmas and of course may 2025 be a better, more settled year for us all.

God bless,

Lucy & 
The Donkeys





Life in Israel

by Lucy Fensom



So often I am asked what general, daily life here in Israel is like amid the ongoing war. People have mentioned the fact that the news they see and hear can be quite biased and one sided and doesn't usually give any view from Israel's perspective. Because of this, it was suggested that I give an account of what the experience of life here in Israel is really like. I would like to point out though that this is in no way a comparison of any sort, it is simply stating facts and describing my own experiences.

Since the beginning of the war on 7th October 2023, **over 26,000 rockets, missiles and drones have been launched at Israel from multiple locations, including Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Iran.** Over 13,000 have been from Gaza and over 12,600, from Lebanon. **Every single day the air raid sirens are sounding due to rockets being launched at Israel.** This is predominantly in the north, but they are periodically also aimed at central Israel as they seek to strike army and airforce bases, as well as civilian areas. I can honestly say it is a very unnerving experience being caught outside when the air raid sirens sound. The sound itself is considered to be quite eerie and there have been a few occasions that I've been outside when they sound.

While Israel's air defence systems manage to intercept many of the projectiles, they are

not always successful, and even if they are intercepted, there is still a risk of the **falling debris and shrapnel.**

When outside, all you can really do is get down on the ground, cover your head with your hands and arms, and pray. However, when you're also trying to hold two dogs on their leads and keep them calm, while somewhere up in the sky above you are the loudest, most massive booms you can imagine, it is not that easy.

Because of the constant threat of rockets and missiles, many homes in Israel must, by law, have what is called a *mamad* – a reinforced, protected room which is supposedly built to withstand anything apart from a direct hit.

On October 1st, this year, my son Robert was home from his army service for a weekend – this was the day when Iran suddenly launched 200 ballistic missiles at Israel and we had constant air raid sirens for a few hours. For the very first siren that evening, I was out walking the dogs and Robert was so concerned. I arrived home to find him in an anxious state. He was in the safe room (which incidentally is also his bedroom), his hands shaking, and just at that moment the sirens started blaring non stop, outside and on our phones, with one ear piercing, massive boom after another, many sounding as if they were literally above our heads.

I held Robert's hands and told him, 'Darling, you've been trained in the army, you've lived through these sirens since the start of the war, you shouldn't feel afraid. We have to try to almost feel grateful for the sirens as they are there to warn, and hence protect us.'

He looked at me with his worried face, suddenly looking older than his mere 20 years, and he told me this, 'I know, but Mum, all the sirens I've been through so far, I was with other soldiers and my army commanders. When I was down in the south near Gaza at the start of the war trying to help with the aftermath of the Hamas attack, there was no time or inclination to run for shelter as the incessant rockets were coming over. Also I saw things that I can't get out of my mind, burnt out cars, still with poor people inside who had been burnt alive, I can't forget their open jaws.

The air raid sirens always reinforce those images for me. And now here I am at home. Home is supposed to be my safe place, away from the army and all that it entails, there shouldn't be sirens at home, with my Mum being caught outside with no safe place to go.'

All I could do was listen, hug and reassure him, as only a Mum can.

Firefighters have battled more than 1,180 fires in the north of Israel, caused by falling rocket shrapnel and combat drone explosions. **Over 57,000 acres of land have been destroyed** as a result, crops, orchards, farms and people's homes. At least **74 people have been killed by the rocket attacks, as well as countless animals,** and over **640 people wounded.** Over **120,000 people were evacuated** from their homes in northern Israel since the start of the war and have not been able to return.

Today as I write, it's Day 408 of the war and so far **Israel has lost more than 800 of their young IDF soldiers.**

I have heard people say that the events unfolding now are foretold in the Bible; how the day will come when all nations will rise up against Israel, that the Hand of God will protect Israel and that it will soon lead to the coming of the Messiah.

I don't know of course but all I can say is that it certainly does feel as though Israel has some higher force protecting it. I do not know how else a tiny little country such as Israel could manage to consistently defend itself from so many, much bigger enemies who scheme together, have an endless supply of highly advanced weapons and whose sole intent is to see Israel and her people annihilated.



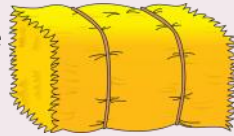
Red alerts like these are a daily occurrence



Running the Sanctuary

Ever wondered where your donations are going? Here is an estimate of the average running costs we face at our sanctuary **every month** — and **these are only the bare essentials, not including any outreach work, staff costs or other unexpected expenses.** The figures are also subject to exchange rate fluctuations.

For USD multiply by 1.27, for EUR by 1.2



Sawdust

~173 large bags
£660

Rent & Utilities

inc. water & electricity
£1,110

Hay

~34 half-ton bales
£3,270

Grain

~ 15 x 50 kg bags
£370

Farrier

Visit every 3 months,
averages out at
£295

Other/Misc.

inc. repairs, tools, feed bucket replacements, tractor maintenance, fuel, etc.
£615

Veterinarian

inc. medicines - worming, iron supplements, anti inflammatories, injections, etc.
£165

TOTAL
£6,485
per month

New poster with QR Code

We have designed a poster (including a QR code for easy donation) which can be printed out on A4 paper and laminated. Ideal for posting on local notice boards, in windows, on doors etc. to spread the word to a wider audience. Alternatively, we can print and laminate it for you.

Please contact us if you are interested! Details on page 8.

Can you please support

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Supporting the Rescue & Care of Donkeys in the Holy Land

Registered charity No. 1174959
www.lucysdonkeyfoundation.org.uk

Donate now
through Give as you Live:

Blind Zachariah – resident at the sanctuary

Birthday

I wonder what He thinks about Christmas?
It's supposed to be His birthday after all,
And on your birthday you get to choose,
What's for supper and who to invite to the party.
Has anybody ever stopped to ask
How He wants to celebrate?
I think He just might prefer the simplicity
Of a humble shepherd's worship
To the demanding
Where are all the presents?
I think He just might like to skip
The party altogether
And sit on a corner somewhere
Conversing quietly with a friend.
I wonder if anyone's ever
Bothered to ask Him. *Anon.*



New feeders Thank you to our truly wonderful friend in the USA, Chuck, who so generously donated the funds recently to enable us to purchase a couple of amazing new feeders! For ages we have been thinking how we can most cost effectively, produce some good feeders for the don-

keys in an effort to reduce hay wastage. The traditional livestock feeders are made of galvanised steel and cost a fortune to make and the people making them want to charge a fortune too. Adi came up with the genius idea of taking extra large, agricultural produce crates, cutting off the inner end of each crate

and then welding two together. So far, he has produced two incredible feeders from 4 crates and we will hopefully have time to do more soon. One feeder fits a large half ton bale of our hay so the donkeys can all gather round and eat together with very minimal wastage. Prior to this we just had to

place a bale on the ground, but inevitably some hay would fall; the donkeys would then tread it in into the ground as well as do their business on top of it. Needless to say, it wouldn't be eaten after that. With our new feeders, almost all of the loose hay falls back into the feeder, so there's far less wastage. We are really happy and so grateful to Chuck.





War Cats

Over the past few months in the midst of war in our region, we have been taking in a considerable number of little cats rescued from Gaza by Israeli soldiers. Our dear 'cat man' friend, Erez, is very generously helping with the transportation of the cats to our sanctuary, as well as helping to contribute towards the cost of neuters and spays, food and care. We have also now had a new larger, longer, walk in cage erected, with the costs being covered by Erez.

We haven't even given every little cat a name because there's quite a number of them and many look fairly similar. Not



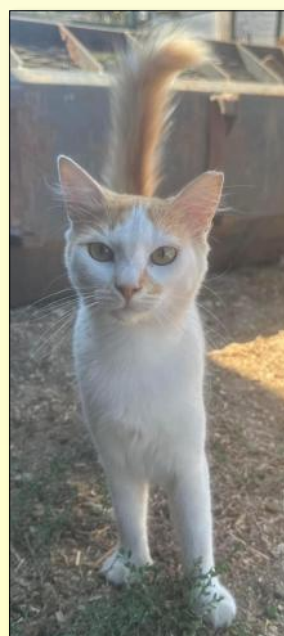
ideal we know, but the main thing is that they are all now safe, content and well fed. We can literally see in their little faces, the gratitude they feel to be with us.

We keep them safely enclosed for a period of time, then neuter/spay and release because our sanctuary surroundings are so safe for cats. We are nowhere near

any main roads and have plenty of fields and wooded areas around, which is ideal. We provide constant food and water at the sanctuary for the cats and most of our neighbours are generally cat friendly and feed them too. Some of our cats do go on to live next to various other nearby people, and only come back to visit us occasionally.



Small visitor enjoying quality time with our rescues





Tigger

Tiny little Tigger was found all alone in a dark and dangerous area, mewling pitifully, and though his mother was searched for, she was nowhere to be found.



Tiny Tigger

He was brought to our sanctuary and because he was so tiny and needed round the clock care and bottle feeding, we appealed for help. A loving, caring family close to our sanctuary responded to our appeal and looked after him, until the happy news that a lovely couple in the south of Israel, Ashkelon, wanted to adopt him! They already had another,

slightly bigger, ginger cat, called Gingy. They changed Tigger's name to Goofy, and for good reason—he just loves goofing around with his new big brother who is teaching him how to 'cat'! It fills our hearts with such joy seeing the pictures of him so happy in his new home with his big brother.

Tigger (Goofy) & Gingy

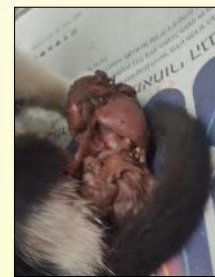


Ella

We took in this dear soul recently after she was heard mewling pitifully, crying for help. She was stuck inside the engine of a car, her poor little back leg completely mangled.

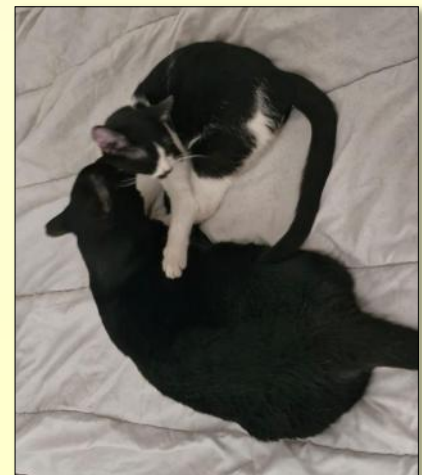
We named her Ella and sadly as soon as the vet checked her, he said there was no other option but to amputate the limb. Thankfully as she is only about 7 to 8 months old, she is adapting so well and we are so grateful as the same lovely family who took little Tigger in as a foster kitten before he found a new home, offered to take care of Ella while she recovered from the operation.

She has already moved to her new family who have renamed her Guanchalla. She is truly loving her new life and has gained a new best friend: gorgeous black panther Tuck. At first, Tuck didn't like her at all and hissed at her. But within 2 days he decided she wasn't that bad and took her under his wing. Now they're inseparable!



The mangled leg

After the amputation



BFFs Tuck and Ella aka Guanchalla





Adopt a donkey for Christmas! 🎄 🐫

Our adoption certificates include the backstory to the adopted donkey and are a perfect gift for a loved one or yourself.

UK post £22 email £20 RoW (email only) £20 / \$30 / €22

Name
 Address
 Post Code
 Chosen Donkey
 Name on Certificate
☐ Postal ☐ E-mail (E-mail address:)
 Payment by **Payment/contact details below**

Cut-off dates:

By post
(UK only):
8th December

By email:
22 December

Elsa



Rolo



Lily



Sergio



With these pictures of our gorgeous Gideon, Bilbo, Bella and Shanaya, and Lucy and Adi's adorable cat Simon we would like to wish all our wonderful supporters peaceful, blessed holidays and the richest of blessings for 2025.

Everybody at Lucy's UK Donkey Foundation 🎄



Payment & Contact

Lloyds Bank

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Lucy's UK Donkey Foundation

Acc. Number: 25432768

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shop@lucysdonkeyfoundation.org.uk

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Monthly payments can be made through

PayPal, Give as You Live, or UK bank transfer

The trustees reserve the right to use donations in the most effective way towards the charity's objectives.

Full details on www.lucysdonkeyfoundation.org.uk/donate

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This Newsletter is compiled free of charge by a volunteer and the printing costs are privately paid by volunteers and trustees.

We sincerely hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. However, if you no longer wish to receive it, you can let us know at any time by writing to our address (see above), emailing Erika at webgirl@lucysdonkeyfoundation.org.uk or – if you receive it by email – by clicking 'unsubscribe' in the footer of the email you received with this newsletter.



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