



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Transforming lives, one dog at a time

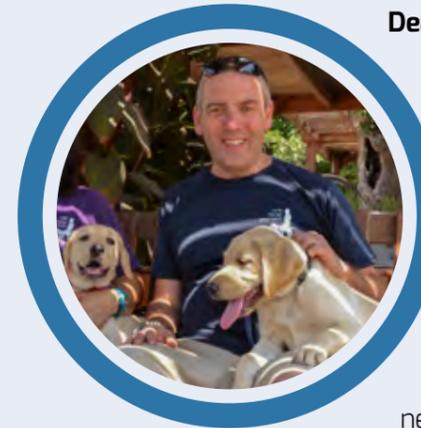


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2020 A CHALLENGING YEAR!



Dear Friends,

2020 is a year none of us will ever forget – although we would all like to! Our lives were fundamentally changed as we all struggled to find a new normal. In Israel, our team faced stringent restrictions and several national lockdowns that severely impacted the way we delivered our services.

The lockdowns were extremely difficult for our clients; approximately 50% of them live alone with their guide dogs. As the first lockdown approached in early March, the Centre produced a contingency plan to ensure that the health and wellbeing of our clients and their dogs were addressed.

Every client was contacted, and a *'Personal Action Plan'* was developed, which ensured that we understood exactly what the client's needs were to support them in providing essentials such as food and medicine for both them and their dog.

Our new Puppy Training and Development campus, built three years ago, turned out to be a vital resource. Although it was never intended for guide dog training (we prefer to take the dogs out into the 'real world') we had modern facilities – with our new obstacle courses, training intersection, and other simulations – to continue to train the dogs. This allowed us to have dogs ready to partner with clients when the circumstances permitted.

The staff at the Centre worked long and additional hours in two 'safety bubbles' that we established at the beginning of the lockdown (morning bubble/afternoon bubble) to ensure maximum protection for all. Creative 'workaround' were identified to ensure that with the added safety measures in place, training could still continue.

We continued our mission with minimal disruption, but longer working days and even managed to surpass the previous year's number of dogs trained and partnered with clients.

88 clients with either vision loss, PTSD or autism received a trained dog from the Centre!

While not being allowed to run regular campus courses for clients, we moved to 'one-on-one' home training courses which were a big success. These did have an increased cost due to time and resources. Whatever the issue, we looked at it and wherever possible, we found a 'workaround' for it.

Thank you for standing with us and supporting us to help so many disadvantaged Israelis last year.

To see how you can support our work, go to www.israelguidedog.org.uk

With gratitude,

Martin Segal MCIOF
UK Executive Director



ABOUT THE CENTRE

OUR MISSION

The Israel Guide Dog Centre operates the only internationally accredited guide dog breeding and training programme serving the country's 24,000 blind and visually impaired people and is the only one of its kind in the entire Middle East.

Operations began 30 years ago in 1991 with a mission to improve the quality of life of blind Israelis by providing them with safe mobility, independence and self-confidence. This is achieved by breeding and training guide dogs that are matched to each 'client' in a bespoke way, to satisfy that person's specific needs.

Since then, we have expanded our programmes to meet the needs of people with other disabilities, including children with autism and soldiers with PTSD. However, we will never stray from our primary mission: To provide expertly trained guide dogs for people with visual disability.



HONOURS & ACHIEVEMENTS

-  Despite severe Covid restrictions, our staff found creative ways to safely work around the limitations, and we partnered 88 dogs, either as Guide Dogs, PTSD Service dogs or Emotional Support Dogs – surpassing our pre-Covid goals!
-  We further adapted to Covid restrictions by utilising our new Puppy Development campus for training dogs and keeping their skills sharp, while we waited to place them with clients. Normally, we train our dogs in real-life situations in local towns.
-  Due to the increased support from a specific Trust Fund we were able to provide medical care and treatment for our guide dogs during the first two years of their working lives.
-  Our PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) Service Dog programme successfully passed the pilot phase, thanks to a generous 3-year commitment from a family Trust Fund. We are now seeking to expand this crucial programme providing specially trained service dogs to former soldiers suffering from the debilitating effects of trauma.
-  We raised standards to qualify our guide dogs, thus ensuring even further that only the highest-performing animals are provided to our clients who are blind.
-  We continue to enjoy significant recognition of our work as a result of receiving Israel's prestigious Midot Seal of Effectiveness award.





GUIDE DOG PARTNERSHIPS AVI & NIKE

Shaded Sitting Area
In Loving Memory of
Seth H Feinstein
by his Family
Barrington, IL, USA

“Nike and I will do very well together. He will help make my dreams come true.”



Avi made Aliyah from Ethiopia aged eight. He was diagnosed with glaucoma at 12 and lost his eyesight completely at 19. Today, at 37, he is married with six children, and as well as the two tour guide jobs he holds, he also lectures and talks to various groups all over Israel about blindness and disability and the acceptance of disabled people into society. His motivation for what he does is inspired by his unwavering Jewish faith, his fellow humans and himself.

Avi is also a talented 'elite' runner. He has taken part in many competitions both in and outside of Israel, culminating in the 2019 London Marathon which he completed in 3.07 hours. *“I've never been to London before, and I know that it is the capital of sport and it's a dream come true to be travelling there.”* His goal is to return to the UK to compete in the London Marathon and beat his previous time.

Avi has previously had two guide dogs from the Centre, but during his partnership with his second guide dog, his wife developed a severe allergy to the dog, and he had to give it up. During the time between his second dog and his third and current guide dog, his wife received treatment which allowed her to successfully recover from her allergy and allowed Avi to request another dog.

Avi was one of the first clients to train at the Centre after the Coronavirus lockdown was lifted. *“I'm very happy and relieved to be here to partner with Nike since for my work I have to travel all over Israel by public transport. When the Coronavirus pandemic started, I had to stop travelling and continued my lecturing via Zoom.”*

“Having Nike now, allows me to travel all over Israel to work and lecture. Nike will also be able to accompany me when I participate in marathons around the world. He will also be coming with me when I attend class to improve my English and help me to gain future employment opportunities. Nike is a young but calm dog. I think that we will do very well together.”



PTSD SERVICE DOGS PROGRAMME



Itamar is 37 years old and lives with his wife and two children on a kibbutz. He is currently unemployed. His PTSD is a result of trauma he sustained during his army service in Operation Protective Edge in Gaza in 2014. His symptoms include insomnia, sensitivity to loud noises and agoraphobia (fear of being overwhelmed or unable to escape from crowded or enclosed spaces).

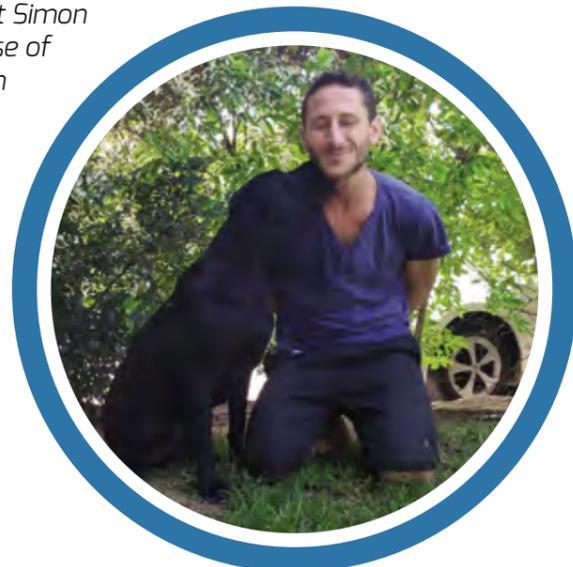
In 2019 he underwent specialist training at the Israel Guide Dog Centre and was partnered with Simon, a PTSD Service Dog. Yariv Melamed, our PTSD Service Dog Manager, visited Itamar soon after his course at home and said the following:

"I watched them in the kibbutz dining hall where there is a lot of noise and many people. Itamar was able, with the help of Simon, to withstand 40 minutes in this environment, without having a panic attack. He was able to get his food, sit and eat a meal, and converse with those curious about Simon. The dog, as part of his training, settled quietly under Itamar's chair. It all went smoothly."

With Simon's help, Itamar's confidence has grown daily around the kibbutz. Simon was chosen for his sweet and passive nature and reacts calmly to new experiences.

Itamar said: *"There is no doubt that Simon has helped ease the isolation I felt. We have a feeling of mutual concern. I care about Simon and he cares about me. Simon provides me with a sense of security and helps me keep a schedule and get through the day with a marked reduction in my panic attacks."*

Whenever Itamar has an attack, Simon quickly recognises it and doesn't leave his side until it has passed. One of things he has been trained to do is lick Itamar continuously until he calms down. As Itamar told us: *"My feelings of anxiety and panic are reduced, and Simon helps me to be a more effective parent to my children and a better husband to my wife."*



EMOTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The Israel Guide Dog Centre received a letter from a family from Holon, Israel. They requested their personal details were not shared. They have four children, three of whom were diagnosed with high-functioning autism. In 2020 the Centre provided them with Sally, a specially trained emotional support dog.

We sensed Sally's impact on our lives no more than two or three weeks after she arrived. The things we have observed may seem trivial to others, but for us they are monumental!

Our oldest son lacked self-confidence and would speak so quietly that we always had to ask him to repeat everything he said. Now we have to tell him to speak a bit more quietly! He also hated any physical contact with other people, but now he does not hesitate to hug Sally and to embrace other family members.

Our second son was not able to show his feelings for anything or anyone. He adores Sally and is extremely attached to her and does not hesitate to display his endless love for her.

Our third son was always anxious and frightened of everything. He would continuously shout and attempt to hug people too tightly. Thanks to Sally he now understands more about people's personal space. He is far more comfortable and relaxed.

All three boys love caring for Sally: making sure she has water, feeding her, and taking her for walks. Sally has quickly become part of the family. All of us love playing and just having her around.

We were hesitant to adopt a dog at first because we imagined that having a dog would be like having another child in the house, but we now realize that what Sally gives us is far greater than what she demands. It's wonderful to see the children with her.

CLASSES OF 2020



“Apollo and I are learning to love each other like a married couple.”

MOSHE



“My world has been enriched and changed for the better since Lawrence came into my life.”

SHAUL

“Bardot and I are currently training together and I feel our bond growing each and every day!”

BRACHA





“I take my dog for walks at five in the morning.”

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT DOGS ELAD & MIRVIS



Elad is always interested in learning new techniques to work effectively with Mirvis, his second guide dog. His previous guide dog, Casey was retired after serving Elad faithfully for nine years. Casey is now living happily as a much-loved pet, with the couple who were his Adoptive Puppy Raisers.

Elad works from home on the computer as a sound engineer and technician for the Library for the Blind.

He enjoys creating and recording sound montages and listening to many types of music in his free time. He has been living in an apartment on his own for the past decade and socialises with friends and family on the weekends.

“During the coronavirus lockdowns I take my dog for walks at five in the morning and have a wonderful neighbour who walks him in the evening. We stayed inside most of the time during the 2020 lockdowns. My parents who live nearby, drop groceries off at my front door. We survived, but

I am very glad that things have loosened up a bit with regard to freedom of movement.”

Elad continues, “I travelled abroad previously to New York with my first guide dog and I hope that when international travel is resumed Mirvis and I will be able to travel abroad again and maybe to London. In my free time during the training course on campus, I worked on sharpening my communication skills with Mirvis. In the building hallways and dormitory, we focused on encouraging Mirvis to keep close to my leg. I’ve also been working with my Instructor on targeting behaviours, (finding empty chairs and the door of my room) by using treats and praise to encourage this skill acquisition and retention.”



A LETTER FROM OUR PUPPY RAISERS

ONE OF OUR VOLUNTEER PUPPY RAISERS TALKS ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE WITH ALEC THE PUPPY



A little over a year ago, my Alec, came into my life. A beautiful and noble Labrador puppy, brown colour. You were the smallest puppy of your siblings, confused and tired. I put you in the car and since that moment you were with me almost every hour of the day, everywhere I went until today.

At first, I was scared and checked you every moment, even when you slept most of the day. Then you had to learn how to walk with a leash, how to go down the stairs even though you're only a step tall, learn how to lift your foot if you get stuck on the leash.

You learned to be quiet in lectures and exercises and not cry even when you're bored because you don't understand the material. I had to explain to the lecturers that it's okay that you signed up for semester courses without the prerequisites of the previous semester.

Everywhere I hang out with you I took a snack pouch with me tucked in my belt. And in my backpack: snacks, bowl of water, bags of food, games for when you are bored and more until there's no room for all my other stuff. I held your leash in my left hand and taught you to always walk on the left. Since the day we met, I never was lonely - because you were always there with me.

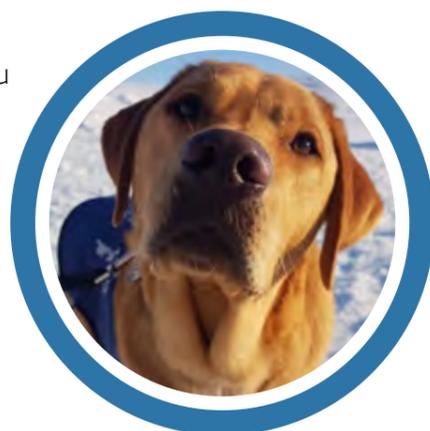
Alec, you are the best four-legged friend anyone could ask for. I have no doubt you are the greatest gift I could imagine, a happy puppy that gives endless love. Your main hobbies are to eat, play and sleep, so no wonder we get along so well.

I wish you a lot of success in your training. I believe you will succeed in being an exemplary guide dog, and wherever you go, I know you will have a family who will love you and learn to give you the belly-rubs you love so much. I'm sure they will also spoil you with delicious snacks.

Keep me in your heart, there we can be together forever. I love you the most in the world. I will always miss you. And I don't regret not even for a moment loving you and having to give you up so you can help lead someone who needs you.

Yours forever.

Tamir





WORKING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

2020 was one of the most challenging years ever that the staff and volunteers at the Israel Guide Dog Centre experienced. Yet despite numerous pandemic restrictions, we still met – and even exceeded – our goals for the year: **126** puppies were born, **88** partnerships were created, including **38** new guide dog partnerships, **5** PTSD service dogs, and **45** emotional support dogs adopted by families with special needs.

We asked a number of our staff at the Centre to tell us a bit about their experiences during the 2020 lockdowns:

ELI BEN BOHER
Puppy Raisers
Group Manager



"The lockdowns significantly affected the quality of our puppies' learning abilities. They spent less time outdoors and on public transport. People were afraid to leave home, and so the puppies were less exposed to the different environments that they would usually be exposed to. I needed to offer our puppy raisers suggestions for occupying the puppies indoors, including obedience lessons and games. Zoom meetings replaced face-to-face interviews for screening potential puppy raisers and instructing them before they received their puppies. A blind client's Zoom lecture provided inspiration for puppy raisers and reminded them of the reason for their hard work."

DENNIS ALLON
Fundraising Director

"This past year has forced us to adapt our operations. Throughout the lockdowns we have continued our work as the Centre is designated an essential workplace, because we work with blind and disabled people. Our main priority has been to maintain the wellbeing of our dogs and ensure the welfare of our clients, who are particularly vulnerable and isolated and who often have additional health issues. Most of our partnership courses were delivered at our clients' homes, on a one-to-one basis. Our dog training has been restricted to the Centre's campus. Luckily, we now have our new training facility with its simulation areas. These have allowed us to continue our operations on a reduced schedule. We are especially grateful for the loyalty of our friends from around the world. You have stood by us during this period and helped us to continue our life-changing work."



NETANEL ELBAZ
Guide Dog
Mobility Instructor

"Luckily most of our training takes place outdoors. Government regulations classify our work as "essential," but often we were stopped and questioned by police or Municipal Inspectors about what we were doing outside. Because streets, shopping malls, and busses were relatively empty, we were unable to train guide dogs in crowds or in congested areas."

AMI TOREN
Training Director



"My greatest challenge during the lockdown was planning the training courses for our clients being matched with a guide dog. One of the main variables in arranging the daily classes was that regulations changed on an almost daily basis, linked to the numbers of new Covid cases. Clients' daily routines were severely disrupted. We usually teach clients the routes that they take to their workplace or other regular places that they visit. However, many people suddenly found themselves unemployed or working from home, so the routes we taught them were no longer relevant."

FINANCIAL REPORT

This is our most recent internal Financial Report and Budget for 2021.

REPORT AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020	2021		2020		2019	
	BUDGET		ACTUAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL	BUDGET
INCOME – OVERSEAS	£ GBP	₪ NIS				
Transfers from US Friends	£1,666,667	₪ 7,500,000	₪ 4,208,930	₪ 7,500,000	₪ 5,331,672	₪ 6,900,000
Direct Donations from US Donors	£144,444	₪ 650,000	₪ 680,722	₪ 650,000	₪ 1,722,912	₪ 500,000
Transfers from British Friends	£266,667	₪ 1,200,000	₪ 1,090,791	₪ 950,000	₪ 886,800	₪ 740,000
Direct Donations from British Donors	£11,111	₪ 50,000	₪ 108,741	₪ 10,000	₪ 91,000	₪ 10,000
Transfers from Canadian Friends	£222,222	₪ 1,000,000	₪ 889,060	₪ 1,000,000	₪ 940,010	₪ 900,000
Direct Donations from Canadian Donors	£2,222	₪ 10,000	₪ 457	₪ 20,000	₪ 0	₪ 40,000
Donations from - Other Countries	£44,444	₪ 200,000	₪ 193,295	₪ 180,000	₪ 302,885	₪ 80,000
TOTAL INCOME – OVERSEAS	£2,357,778	₪ 10,610,000	₪ 7,171,996	₪ 10,310,000	₪ 9,275,279	₪ 9,170,000
INCOME FROM ISRAEL						
Donations from Israel	£290,667	₪ 1,308,000	₪ 1,499,713	₪ 1,258,000	₪ 1,323,548	₪ 1,070,000
Donations Israel - Ministries	£159,333	₪ 717,000	₪ 995,636	₪ 514,000	₪ 583,392	₪ 731,000
CanVelo Donations	£22,222	₪ 100,000	₪ 67,394	₪ 200,000	₪ 232,100	₪ 135,000
CanVelo Income	£22,222	₪ 100,000	₪ 41,315	₪ 100,000	₪ 190,742	₪ 50,000
Graduate Participation in Medical Exp.	£0	₪ 0	₪ 0	₪ 0	₪ 0	₪ 1,500
In-Kind Donations	£163,444	₪ 735,500	₪ 761,313	₪ 551,500	₪ 473,294	₪ 356,500
TOTAL INCOME – ISRAEL	£657,889	₪ 2,960,500	₪ 3,365,371	₪ 2,623,500	₪ 2,803,076	₪ 2,344,000
TOTAL ALL INCOME	£3,015,667	₪ 13,570,500	₪ 10,537,367	₪ 12,933,500	₪ 12,078,355	₪ 11,514,000
OPERATING EXPENSES						
Dog Training Expenses	£918,022	₪ 4,131,100	₪ 6,530,222	₪ 7,307,280	₪ 6,043,240	₪ 6,356,416
Kennel Expenses (New for 2021)	£472,333	₪ 2,125,500				
Puppy Raising Expenses (New for 2021)	£196,222	₪ 883,000				
Maintenance	£257,889	₪ 1,160,500	₪ 1,014,305	₪ 1,202,243	₪ 1,010,683	₪ 1,103,727
Marketing and Fundraising	£360,144	₪ 1,620,650	₪ 1,568,204	₪ 2,147,181	₪ 1,995,501	₪ 2,018,566
Administrative Expenses	£382,222	₪ 1,720,000	₪ 1,599,609	₪ 1,951,308	₪ 1,326,526	₪ 1,499,929
CanVelo Expenses	£44,444	₪ 200,000	₪ 127,460			
Financing Expenses	£9,333	₪ 42,000	₪ 29,386	₪ 48,000	₪ 46,318	₪ 35,000
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	£2,640,611	₪ 11,882,750	₪ 10,869,186	₪ 12,656,012	₪ 10,422,268	₪ 11,013,638
FIXED ASSETS						
Fixed Assets - New Building Construction	£110,111	₪ 495,500	₪ 96,068	₪ 463,500	₪ 764,639	₪ 758,600
Depreciation	£272,168	₪ 1,224,754				
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	£382,279	₪ 1,720,254	₪ 96,068	₪ 463,500	₪ 764,639	₪ 758,600
TOTAL ALL EXPENSES	£3,022,890	₪ 13,603,004	₪ 10,965,254	₪ 13,119,512	₪ 11,186,907	₪ 11,772,238
SURPLUS/-DEFICIT	-£7,223	-₪ 32,504	-₪ 427,887	-₪ 186,012	₪ 891,448	-₪ 258,238

The column to the left is the 2021 Budget in EGBP. The rest of the report uses the currency in Israel (NIS - New Israel Shekel). The fixed assets expenses are subject to a designated donation. Please remember that we provide all of our services at no cost to our clients.

UK GIFTS BY DONOR TYPE

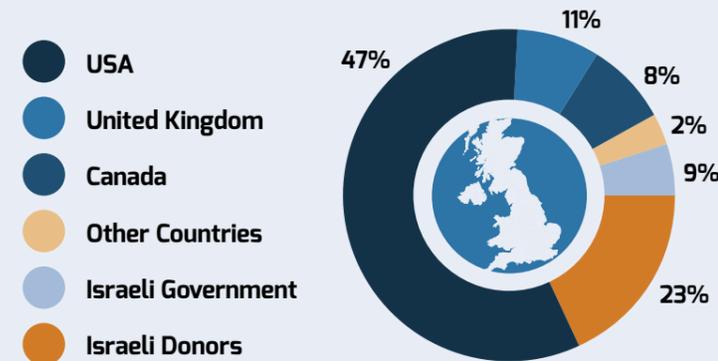
	# GIFTS	AMOUNT
Legacies	15	£61,687.00
Trusts & Foundations	10	£135,500.00
Individuals	1185	£112,017.00
Events	46	£35,245.00
Family simchas	29	£2,295.00
TOTAL	1285	£346,744.00

We rely on individuals, trusts & foundations, synagogues and schools to meet our funding needs.

BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED ISRAELIS



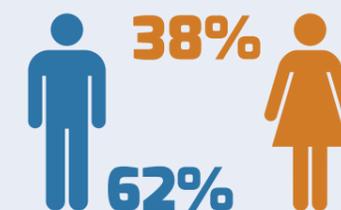
DONATIONS BY COUNTRY



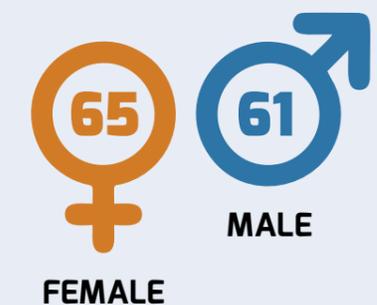
ISRAELIS WITH AUTISM



CURRENT GUIDE DOG USERS



OUR 2020 PUPPIES



FIRST-TIME GUIDE DOG USER: AVERAGE WAIT TIME



[2017 wait time: 20 months]

126
Future heroes!



"I can rely on myself – and Roxi – to do what I want."

RUTH & ROXI

UNITED KINGDOM

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