



מרכז ישראלי לכלבי נחיה  
Israel Guide Dog Centre



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

*Transforming lives, one dog at a time*



[israelguidedog.org.uk](http://israelguidedog.org.uk)



# CONTENTS

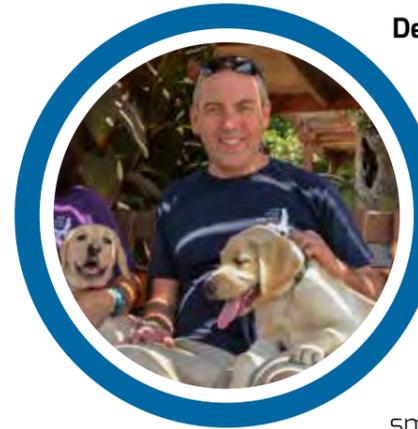
- 3 30 YEARS OF PROVIDING MORE THAN INDEPENDENCE
- 4 ABOUT THE CENTRE – OUR MISSION, HONOURS & ACHIEVEMENTS
- 6 GUIDE DOG PARTNERSHIPS: MONIRA & ISABEL
- 8 PTSD SERVICE DOGS PROGRAMME
- 9 THE GUR APP – NEW TECHNOLOGY TODAY
- 10 CLASSES OF 2021
- 12 GUIDE DOG PARTNERSHIPS: ITZIK & BOBBY
- 14 ELVIS & ME: A STORY FROM A PUPPY RAISER
- 16 THE PANDEMIC EFFECT: RESPONDING TO COVID
- 18 FINANCIAL REPORTS



**We acknowledge and give thanks to our staff and volunteers at the Centre. Despite the challenges that you faced during the pandemic, you continued to work with total commitment and dedication to our clients under extremely challenging circumstances.**



# 30 YEARS OF PROVIDING MORE THAN INDEPENDENCE



**Dear Friends,**

Looking back on the past 30 years, we're filled with an enormous sense of pride at what we have accomplished together. The

Centre went from a small, rented house in Netanya training one client

at a time, to the beautiful campus we call home in Beit Oved – partnering 75 dogs a year. None of this would be possible without the love and dedication of our clients, staff, puppy raisers, volunteers – and you!

**Thank you for the generous support that makes all we do possible!**

As of December 31st, 2021, we have trained 739 Guide Dog partnerships for people who cannot see, 17 PTSD Service dogs for soldiers who have seen too much, and 382 Emotional Support dogs for children on the spectrum as well as for other people with special needs. That's 1,138 lives that have been directly affected because of these amazing animals, but many others have also been touched – family members, coworkers and members of the community have all benefited as these partnerships navigate life together.

That's enough looking back – we need to look forward – and set our sights on helping

many more people in the future. Although it is always our goal to increase the number of partnerships we produce, Covid had a significant impact on the number of dogs accepted into training this year. We are taking proactive steps to address these outcomes while we work to get through these unprecedented times.

We feel a strong and moral obligation to our dogs to never force them to do anything and to feel happy and loved. We also feel obliged to our clients to provide them with the highest calibre dog possible and to exceed their expectations.

And finally, we are committed to you – our supporters. We promise to use your gifts in the most efficient and effective way possible to transform our clients' lives. We have built our reputation over these past 30 years, and we treat this as a sacred trust.

So, **thank you** for being a huge part of our success. We look forward to sharing our journey with you for many years to come!

Gratefully,

**Martin Segal UK Executive Director**

**Jon Benjamin Chair of Trustees**

**Life President** Anthony Kraiss **Trustees** Jon Benjamin (Chair), Gail Seal, Adam Blake, Tina Son, Patricia Ward, Mike Stoller (Treasurer)



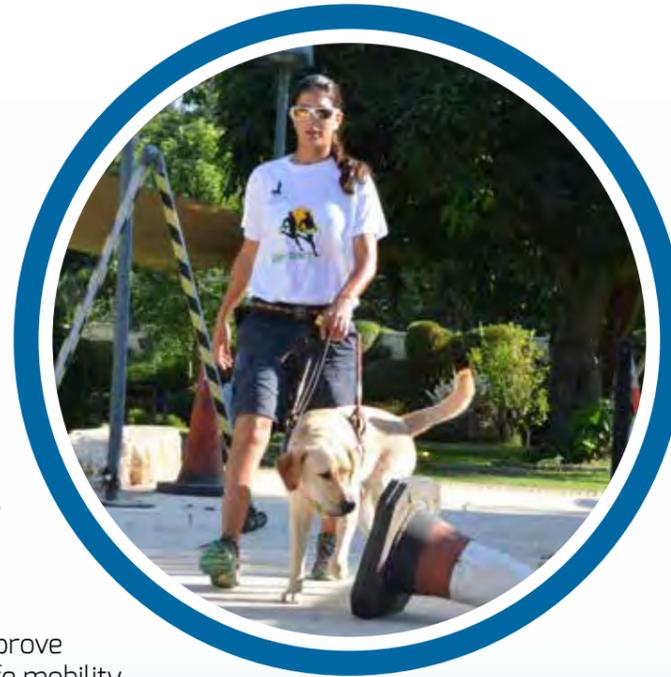
# ABOUT THE CENTRE

## 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 placed 75 dogs, either as Guide Dogs, PTSD Service Dogs or Emotional Support Dogs.
-  During the lockdowns we employed our campus for training our dogs to be partnered with clients. As the restrictions eased we were able to return to training in the surrounding suburbs and towns.
-  Our PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) Service Dog programme has exceeded expectations, and we have been asked by the IDF to expand this crucial programme providing specially-trained service dogs to soldiers suffering from the debilitating effects of emotional trauma.
-  Increased levels of support from two separate family trust funds allowed us to continue our work with IDF veterans suffering from PTSD and medical care and treatment for our guide dogs during the first two years of their working lives.
-  We raised the qualifying standards for our guide dogs, ensuring that only the highest-performing animals are provided to our blind clients.
-  We continue to receive significant recognition of our work as a result of receiving Israel's prestigious Midot Award.





# GUIDE DOG PARTNERSHIPS MONIRA & ISABEL



**“Isabel has been a true gift of independence to me.”**



**Monira is in her late twenties, from the Druze village of Peki'in. She has two university degrees and works as a Coordinator for the Druze Scouts Movement. There are many challenges that Monira faces daily in her community regarding the understanding and acceptance of having a guide dog. The Israel Guide Dog Centre is attempting to address these issues with Monira's help.**

Monira has led educational projects in the Scouts movement to increase understanding of disability in the Druze community. The winding and narrow roads and tight alleyways with cars parked on the pavements are all part of life in Peki'in and prove to be challenging for a guide dog partnership.

She remembers when she first started to realise the need for assistance about seven years ago when she experienced a significant deterioration in her sight. It was then that she applied to the Centre and was matched with her first guide dog, Sophie.

When asked about Sophie, Monira says:

*“She was a little beauty who turned my life around. Together with Sophie I was able to travel by myself to all sorts of places and initiate wonderful projects such as setting up a centre for the visually impaired in the Druze youth movement. I met lots of people, appeared on TV programmes, graduated with two degrees and visited various sites around the country. I travelled by public transport and overcame many challenges.*”

*“Today, Sophie will be adopted by a family for retired guide dogs. They are going to shower her with love and joy. My new guide dog, Isabel has been a true gift of independence to me.”*





# THE GUR APP NEW TECHNOLOGY TODAY

The word 'Gur' means Puppy in Hebrew

Our team has developed a groundbreaking method for gathering data, responding to questions, and providing immediate assistance to our puppy raisers: a mobile app, especially designed for two-way communication between our puppy raisers and our puppy managers. *We are the first guide dog school in the world making full use of this hand-held communication system.*

We developed the Gur App with the help of students and staff from the Sami Shamoon College of Engineering and the Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Beersheva. This system is intended to automatically provide age-specific tasks and instructions to the puppy raisers. Our puppy raisers will also enter milestone data for us to track, and each puppy will have an updated record in our system.

More importantly, puppy raisers can ask questions and receive almost immediate feedback from our puppy managers through the app. We also hope to add video, so we can see if there is a physical or behavioural problem – in real time.

Ultimately, our goal is to use the information as a tool to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our training procedures. By tracking certain milestones, we hope to see patterns develop and identify marker traits to determine the best career path for the puppies sooner, either as Guide Dogs, PTSD Service Dogs, or Emotional Support Dogs.

The Israel Guide Dog Centre wishes to extend our deep appreciation to the Taubman Foundation, for their support in developing the Gur App.



## PTSD SERVICE DOGS PROGRAMME

**In April 2021, Itzik Saidyan, an IDF veteran suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, set himself on fire in protest over how he felt the Ministry of Defence was not addressing the needs of IDF veterans with service-related trauma.**

This desperate act brought a rarely talked about issue into the public arena. PTSD is commonly referred to as the 'invisible injury', but people are now looking to the government to do something to help these young soldiers cope.

Our PTSD clients have told us it was very difficult to admit their suffering. In a country where almost everyone serves in the military, soldiers are expected to be tough and not express their emotions. It is estimated that tens of thousands of IDF veterans suffer in silence.

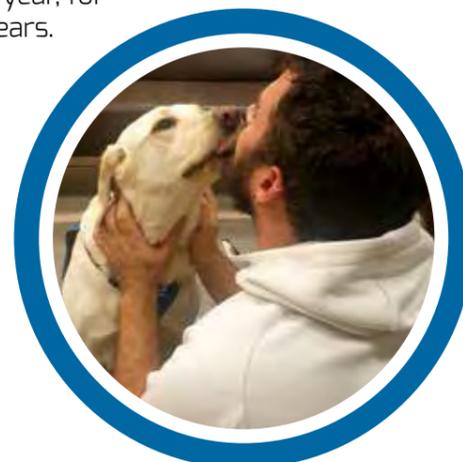
The Israel Guide Dog Centre recently completed a pilot programme to help veterans with specially trained PTSD Service dogs.

The results have been remarkable. Not only do the dogs wake someone from a nightmare or calm them during a panic

attack, but they help them establish a healthy routine in caring for and walking them. The dogs' skills provide a primary coping mechanism that gives these young heroes a reason to get back to living a full and productive life.

The Israel Guide Dog Centre, now working with the Ministry of Defence has committed to producing 10 new PTSD service dog partnerships a year, for the next two years.

We are proud to be at the forefront of this effort to ease the suffering of so many IDF veterans.



# CLASSES OF 2021



MAY 2021

***"Oslo is both my eyes and my therapist."***  
TATYANA



OCTOBER 2021



NOVEMBER 2021

***"Bingo is one of the most positive things that has happened to me."***  
GALIT

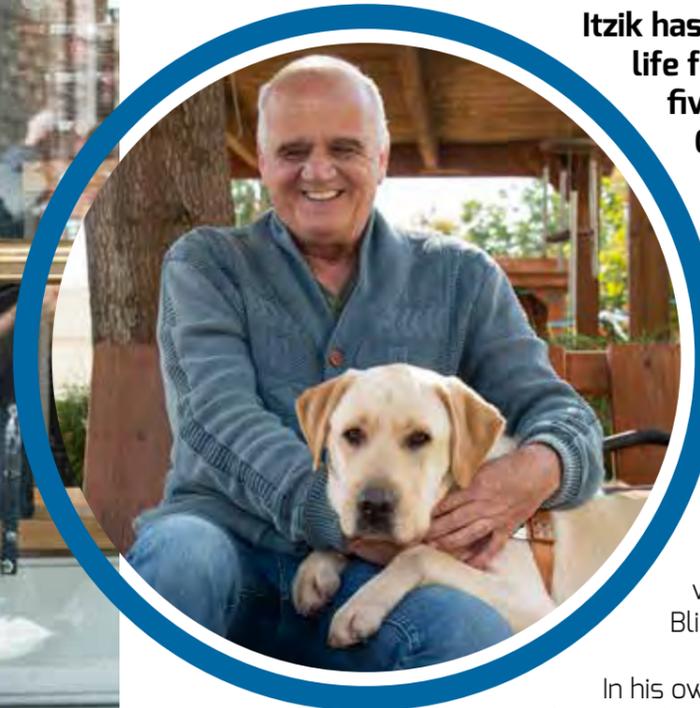


DECEMBER 2021



**“My guide dogs enabled me to go anywhere and do anything.”**

## EMOTIONAL SUPPORT DOGS ITZIK & BOBBY



**Itzik has been enabled to live an independent and fulfilling life for nearly 30 years thanks to his partnership with five specially trained guide dogs from the Israel Guide Dog Centre: John, Sam, Jimmy, Luke and Bingo; and he is now starting a new partnership with Bobby as Bingo lives out his retirement in a loving home.**

Each partnership has enabled Itzik to maintain his independence; taking public transport and taxis all over Israel as part of his work with both not-for-profits and commercial enterprises. This has included working with Tel HaShomer Hospital to make it the first accessible hospital for the blind in Israel and installing automatic talking devices on driverless buses for the benefit of blind users. During his long career he has worked for the Israel Guide Dog Centre, The Center for the Blind, Access Israel and Hi-Tech ventures.

In his own words Itzik explains what his guide dogs have meant to him *“I’ve been totally blind for the past 45 years, I started losing my vision as a child and by the age of 19 I was totally blind. In 1994 I received my first guide dog, John, from the Centre. In the early days of my guide dog partnerships I travelled all over Israel and abroad to raise awareness for the Centre. I was married and had small children and my guide dogs allowed me to take my kids to school and after school activities. My guide dogs enabled me to go anywhere and do anything.”*

Itzik’s three children include twins who are also vision impaired. However, just like their father they do not allow this to stop them living life to the full and are both on national goalball teams, thoroughly enjoying this competitive sport for the vision impaired.

Itzik is delighted that his son, who is studying Physical Education at the Wingate Institute, is benefitting from the freedom that can only come from a partnership with a guide dog. And he looks forward to the day when his daughter, who competes internationally in the Paralympic Games including Tokyo in 2021, is also enabled to live the life she chooses in the same way.

Itzik and Bobby were the last partnership to graduate in 2021, and became our 739th partnership.



# ELVIS & ME A STORY FROM A PUPPY RAISER – NETA SEGEV

**Our story begins at an open house at Ben Gurion University. As I wandered around the booths, I saw a young woman walking with a Labrador puppy wearing a little blue vest that said, 'Guide Dog in Training'. I asked her how I could get a puppy like that, and she referred me to the Israel Guide Dog Centre. I called, filled out an online form, and waited.**

Now I'll fast forward to the next summer during my semester break between my first and second years of study at the university. I received a telephone call and was told that puppies had been born and that my turn had come to receive one. He arrived – a six-week old fluffy puppy who loved to chew.

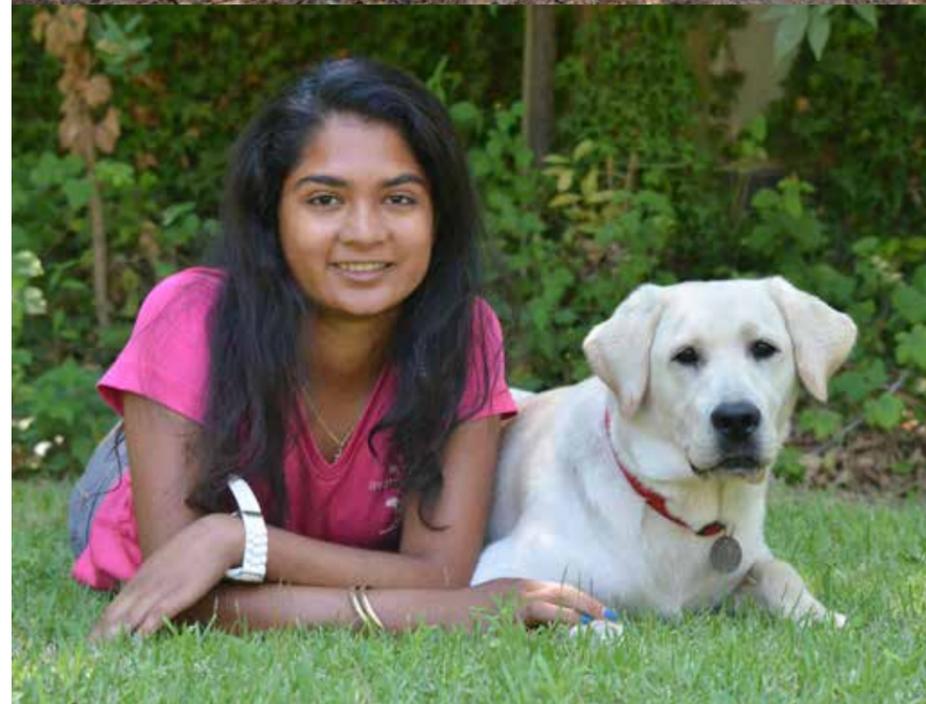
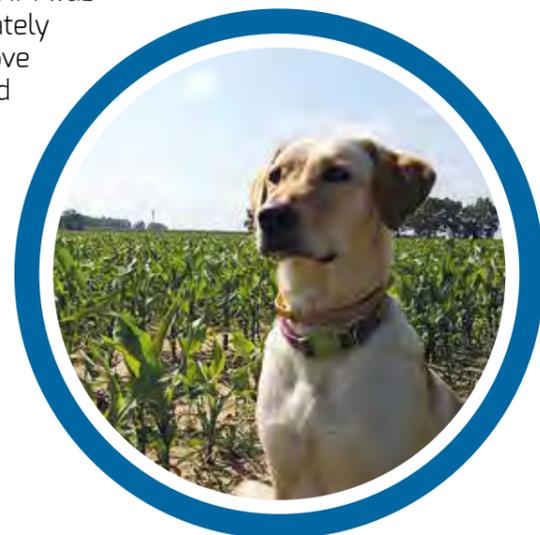
My job was to educate and train him for the day when he would be ready to leave me and move on. He went everywhere with me: to class, exams, on buses, to the mall, and to the beach. One year later, I tearfully parted with him but sensed he was going to do something good for someone who needed him.

Years went by. The puppy now named Elvis lived with Shmulik and helped him in his everyday life. I continued with my life. I met my husband, Shay. We travelled abroad, adopted our dog Maya, moved to northern Israel, and had two children.

Last year I suddenly got a phone call from Shmulik who told me that Elvis was 10 years old and the time had come for him to retire. He asked me if I was interested in taking Elvis back. I asked Shay, who immediately agreed. After I had not seen Elvis for many years, we drove to Beit Oved to take him back. I was calm until we entered the campus of the Guide Dog Centre, where I burst into tears. I was reminded of a time many years ago and felt I had completed a marvellous circle.

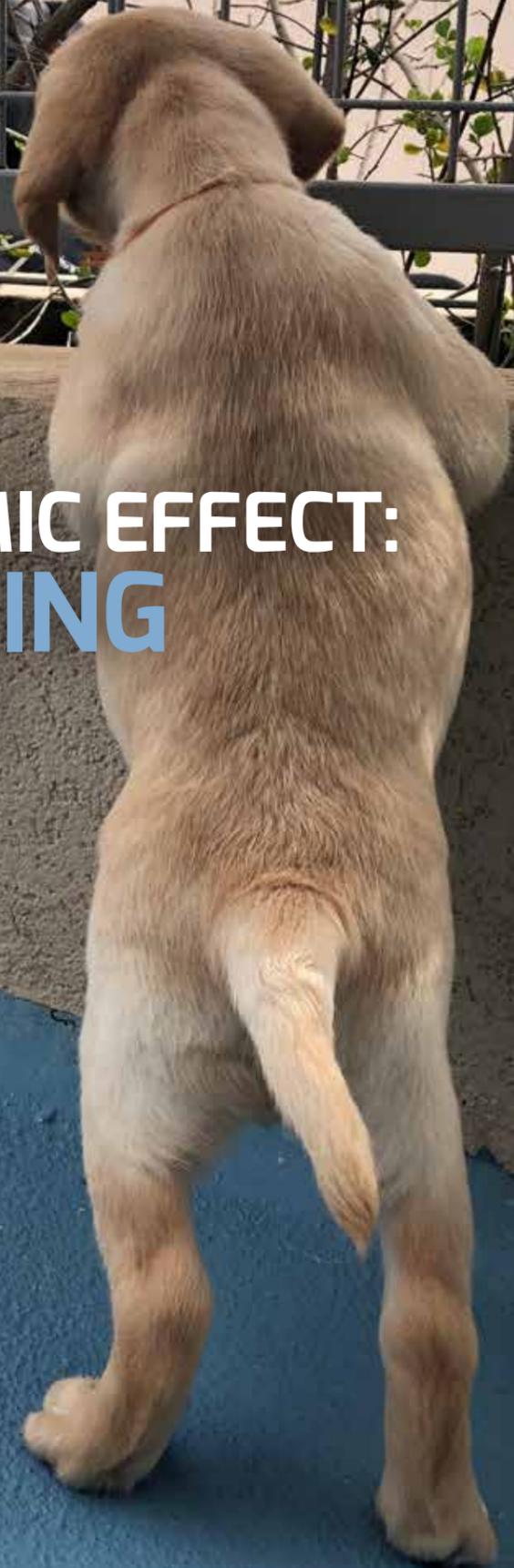
Elvis, you've worked hard and now it's time for you to relax and enjoy hiking in the Galilee.

Welcome back!





# THE PANDEMIC EFFECT: RESPONDING TO COVID



**For 30 years we have measured our 'success rate' as the ratio between the number of puppies born and the number of successful guide dog partnerships created. Keeping in mind that it is nearly a two-year process from birth until graduation, we must follow each litter to really have an accurate measure.**

This year we experienced a significant drop in the number of dogs that were evaluated and accepted into guide dog training. This was very upsetting to our breeding department and trainers, as we have a long waiting list and want to provide as many guide dogs as possible. After considerable soul-searching, and research, we found that guide dog schools around the world were reporting similar results.

*We have determined that the lockdowns had a significant impact on the ability to train and socialise our puppies.*

Every puppy born spends the first two months with us and attends puppy kindergarten. We expose them to lights, sounds, different materials, even cats! After they are weaned from their mothers, they spend the next year with puppy raising families all over Israel. These amazing volunteers expose the puppies to as many experiences as possible – all while teaching them lessons of obedience and self-control. They take them to classes, the library, the supermarket, a café, public transportation, parties, etc.

Our goal is to reduce stress. The more experiences the puppy has, the less stress they will have as working dogs when they encounter the same situations in the future.

When Israel went into a strict lockdown, the ability to expose the puppies to these various experiences disappeared. Most only went out to relieve themselves, and then back indoors. The lack of exposure to all the normal activities of daily life had a devastating effect.

During the evaluations, many of the dogs were much more timid and less confident. So, while these dogs could still be used

to help people with emotional support issues, they did not have the required skills to become our top dogs – guide dogs for people who are blind.

In addition, we believe people wearing masks also had an effect. If the puppies cannot see facial expressions, they cannot pick up on social cues. While there is some debate on how much the mask issue impacted the evaluations, there is no question that it is a factor.

## OUR PLAN MOVING FORWARD

We have decided to increase the number of puppies being born from our current 120 per year with the hopes that greater numbers will translate to a greater number of dogs entering guide dog training. To do this, we had to take a few female dogs out of the guide dog training track and move them into the breeding department. So, we expect some short-term pain (reduced number of dogs being trained as guides this coming year) with an eye to an increased number in the future.

While we have started to see signs that the world is adjusting to the new normal – and finding ways to live with the virus – we feel that it is important to be transparent with our supporters and explain to them how our dogs and clients have been adversely impacted by the Corona pandemic.



# FINANCIAL REPORT

This is our most recent internal Financial Report and Budget for 2022.

REPORT AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2021	2022 BUDGET		2021 ACTUAL	
	£ GBP	₪ NIS	£ GBP	₪ NIS
<b>INCOME – OVERSEAS</b>				
Transfers from US Friends	£1,580,796	₪ 6,750,000	£1,304,466.51	₪ 5,570,072
Direct Donations from US Donors	£152,225	₪ 650,000	£140,336.77	₪ 599,238
<b>Transfers from British Friends</b>	<b>£281,030</b>	<b>₪ 1,200,000</b>	<b>£636,154.57</b>	<b>₪ 2,716,380</b>
<b>Direct Donations from British Donors</b>	<b>£11,710</b>	<b>₪ 50,000</b>	<b>£21,863.93</b>	<b>₪ 93,359</b>
Transfers from Canadian Friends	£234,192	₪ 1,000,000	£175,213.11	₪ 748,160
Direct Donations from Canadian Donors	£2,342	₪ 10,000	£0	₪ 0
Donations from - Other Countries	£56,206	₪ 240,000	£72,593.21	₪ 309,973
<b>TOTAL INCOME – OVERSEAS</b>	<b>£2,318,501</b>	<b>₪ 9,900,000</b>	<b>£2,350,628.10</b>	<b>₪ 10,037,182</b>
<b>INCOME FROM ISRAEL</b>				
Donations from Israel	£535,831	₪ 2,288,000	£510,578.69	₪ 2,180,171
Donations Israel - Ministries	£354,801	₪ 1,515,000	£182,323.65	₪ 778,522
CanVelo Donations	£30,445	₪ 130,000	£69,491.10	₪ 296,727
CanVelo Income	£30,445	₪ 130,000	£28,219.20	₪ 120,496
In-Kind Donations	£186,534	₪ 796,500	£182,646.37	₪ 779,900
<b>TOTAL INCOME – ISRAEL</b>	<b>£1,138,056</b>	<b>₪ 4,859,500</b>	<b>£973,259.02</b>	<b>₪ 4,155,816</b>
<b>TOTAL ALL INCOME</b>	<b>£3,456,557</b>	<b>₪ 14,759,500</b>	<b>£3,323,887.12</b>	<b>₪ 14,192,998</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>				
Dog Training Expenses	£1,112,933	₪ 4,752,222	£960,633.96	₪ 4,101,907
Kennel Expenses (New for 2021)	£533,612	₪ 2,278,524	£401,469.32	₪ 1,714,274
Puppy Raising Expenses (New for 2021)	£222,836	₪ 951,508	£196,188.06	₪ 837,723
Maintenance	£274,473	₪ 1,172,000	£239,228.57	₪ 1,021,506
Marketing and Fundraising	£395,259	₪ 1,687,755	£380,783.84	₪ 1,625,947
Administrative Expenses	£444,433	₪ 1,897,730	£415,476.11	₪ 1,774,083
CanVelo Expenses	£60,890	₪ 260,000	£65,391.10	₪ 279,220
Financing Expenses	£10,539	₪ 45,000	£7,625.06	₪ 32,559
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>£3,054,974</b>	<b>₪ 13,044,739</b>	<b>£2,666,796.02</b>	<b>₪ 11,387,219</b>
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Fixed Assets - New Building Construction	£144,145	₪ 615,500	£137,048.24	₪ 585,196
Depreciation	£234,192	₪ 1,000,000	£222,482.44	₪ 950,000
<b>TOTAL FIXED ASSETS</b>	<b>£378,337</b>	<b>₪ 1,615,500</b>	<b>£359,530.68</b>	<b>₪ 1,535,196</b>
<b>TOTAL ALL EXPENSES</b>	<b>£3,433,311</b>	<b>₪ 14,660,239</b>	<b>£3,026,326.70</b>	<b>₪ 12,922,415</b>
<b>SURPLUS/-DEFICIT</b>	<b>£23,246</b>	<b>₪ 99,261</b>	<b>£297,560.42</b>	<b>₪ 1,270,583</b>

This is our most recent internal Financial Report and Budget for 2022.

The fixed assets expenses are subject to a designated donation. The audited financial reports for 2021 will be ready in June 2022. The large increase in transfers from the UK in 2021 was due to a legacy received that year. The legacy is also why the UK gifts by donor type is more than the transfers to Israel.

Please remember that we provide all of our services at no cost to our clients.

## UK GIFTS BY DONOR TYPE

	# GIFTS	AMOUNT
Legacies	2	£692,062.00
Trusts & Foundations	7	£73,000.00
Individuals	1674	£209,628.00
Events	208	£51,100.00
Family simchas	52	£16,440.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1943</b>	<b>£1,042,230.00</b>

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

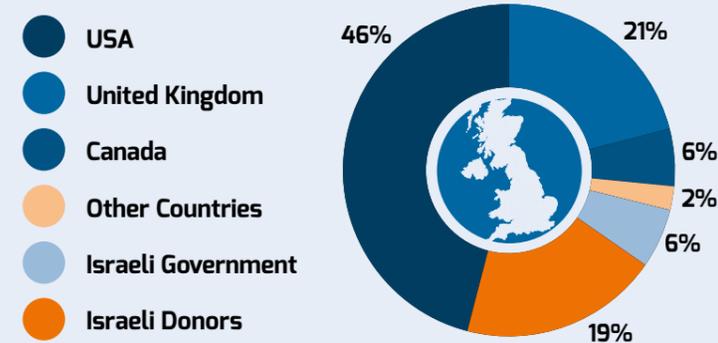
## BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED ISRAELIS



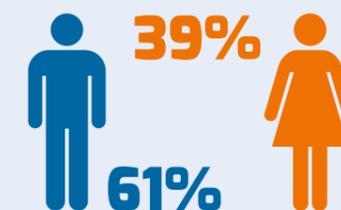
## COMBAT VETERANS WITH PTSD



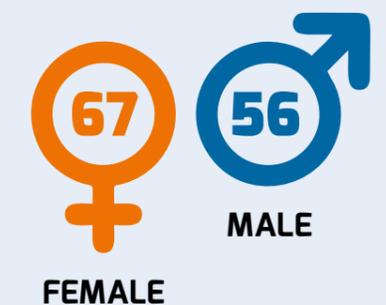
## DONATIONS BY COUNTRY



## CURRENT GUIDE DOG USERS



## OUR 2021 PUPPIES



## FIRST-TIME GUIDE DOG USER: AVERAGE WAIT TIME



[2020 wait time: 13 months]

**123**  
Future heroes!



**UNITED KINGDOM**

**Israel Guide Dog Centre UK**  
 PO Box 756, Borehamwood  
 Hertfordshire WD6 9JE

020 8090 3455  
 info@israelguidedog.org.uk

**ISRAEL**

**Israel Guide Dog Centre for the Blind**  
 Ha'Sadot 6, Beit Oved  
 Israel 7680000

00972-8-940-8213  
 info@igdcb.org

**israelguidedog.org.uk**

