



**CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

## **Trustees' Annual Report for the Period**

**From: 01/01/2023    Period Start Date**

**To: 31/12/2023**

**Period End Date**

**Charity name: TRIRATNA BUDDHIST COMMUNITY (BRIXTON)**

**Charity registration number: 1084889**

## **Objectives and Activities**

The object of the Association is the advancement of the Buddhist religion, in particular by:

- Encouraging members and others to live in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha
- Supporting ordained members of the Triratna Buddhist Community and other duly ordained Buddhists at the discretion of the Council of the Association
- Maintaining close communication with and working under the guidance of the Triratna Buddhist Order, and cooperating with other groups that have the same objectives
- Using applications of the Buddha's teachings to promote the health and well-being of all

## **Our Community**

The Brixton Buddhist Community is a network of individuals united by the shared aim of developing spiritually and living in accordance with Buddhist principles of friendship, generosity, honest and kindly communication, and care for each other's spiritual welfare. A key part of this vision is to help others benefit from the teachings of the Buddha, such as meditation, mindfulness, ethics, and social engagement. The community is made up of practitioners at different levels of commitment to the Buddhist path: Order Members, Mitras, people who attend regularly, and people who drop in to our classes.

## **What is an Order Member?**

An Order Member is someone who has been ordained into the Triratna Buddhist Order.

Ordination is a significant and powerful ceremony in which an individual makes a lifelong commitment to following the Buddhist path, placing it at the centre of their life. Training for ordination is a process that takes many years of personal practice, Dharma study, and periods spent on retreat. During ordination, a practitioner commits to practising for the benefit of all beings, acting in accordance with the ten Buddhist ethical precepts, and living in harmony with others. At ordination, they are given a special meditation practice and a new Buddhist name to signify their commitment to the spiritual life. You can usually recognise an Order Member by the symbolic white scarf (kesa) they wear, embroidered with the Three Jewels.

## **What is a Mitra?**

Everyone who has contact with the Brixton Buddhist Community (such as attending a class) is considered a 'friend'. However, someone who feels a particular connection with our

community and has decided to follow the Buddhist path can ask to become a 'Mitra' (which simply means 'friend' in Sanskrit). Becoming a Mitra marks a deepening of commitment for the practitioner, and there are special activities, including retreats and study groups, open to Mitras to support them in this. People ask to become a Mitra when they:

- Consider themselves Buddhists
- Are trying to live in accordance with the five ethical precepts of Buddhism
- Feel that the Triratna Buddhist Community is the appropriate spiritual context for them

Once a person's request to become a Mitra has been accepted, they take part in a simple public ceremony on a festival day. This ceremony is recognised at all Triratna centres worldwide, and they will be regarded as a Mitra wherever they go. Later, some Mitras may also decide to request ordination and begin the process of training for ordination. However, this is not expected, and many people happily practise as Mitras within our community for the rest of their lives.

### **What is a Study Group?**

All Triratna Buddhist Centres offer a four-year programme of study covering the key aspects of the Buddha's teachings and Sangharakshita's approach to them. These study groups are mainly for Mitras, to help them deepen their commitment to the Buddhist path. However, at Brixton, we offer the first year of this programme to anyone who would like to deepen their understanding of Buddhism and Buddhist practice. If you are interested in joining a study group, please speak to an Order Member at one of our classes.

The main activities undertaken by the Brixton Buddhist Community are as follows:

- Weekly meditation classes for both beginners and experienced meditators
- Weekly Buddhist courses
- Several weekend and day retreats
- Men's and women's Mitra study groups (weekly meetings to study a four-year Buddhism course)
- Occasional study mornings led by visiting Order Members
- Buddhist event day celebrations, held four times per year
- One People of Colour event per year
- 'Through Buddhist Eyes' – four morning activities per year where regular visitors to our activities, the Sangha members, can share how their lives are influenced by their Buddhist practice
- A small team of part-time employees, offering an opportunity for people to share skills needed to run the charity in a Buddhist environment
- A small men's community where up to six men can live and practise together
- A men's Order chapter, where male Order Members regularly meet to discuss their practice

The Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set, and ensure they are consistent with the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

### **Structure, Governance and Management**

Triratna Buddhist Community (Brixton) is a registered UK charity. We are constituted as an unincorporated association and voluntarily linked to the network of Triratna Buddhist Community (formerly Friends of the Western Buddhist Order) charities. We are governed by a standard Triratna Buddhist Community constitution. Decisions about the community's vision, activities, finances, and public communications are made by a board of Trustees who meet bi-monthly. They are all volunteers, with the exception of Viryanaga and Prajñaghosa, each performing the role of Chair (in the first and second half of 2023 respectively). Because we are a spiritual community, the Trustees are all experienced Order Members able to guide

the spiritual direction of the community.

Trustees during 2023 re as follows:

Name	Legal Name	Other role
Viryanaga	Viryanaga Kitsune	Chair (Up to June)
Prajñaghosa	Guilhem Monin	Chair (From July)
Maitrinita	Jacqueline Clarke	N/A
Maitrinara	Sam Farquharson	Men's Mitra Convenor
Amaladana	Alan Worrell	Finance Officer
Amarapuspa	Mary Clark	Women's Mitra Convenor (up to November 2023)
Dharmasvara	Richard Bolley	(From December)
Suddhaka	Jonathan Clark	(Up until April)
Sagarasila	Joe Krohn	(Up until April)

Trustee changes in 2023: there was a Chair handover in the middle of 2023 from Viryanaga to Prajñaghosa and 2023 saw Amarapuspa, Suddhaka and Sagarasila stepping down as Trustees and the welcoming of Dharmasvara and Maitrinita as Trustees. Much appreciation was expressed for those stepping down whose dedication and skill have contributed greatly to the healthy growth of our Sangha.

### Voting members

Voting members are committed members of the Sangha who are invited to take part in voting on key decisions in the running of Brixton Buddhist Community such as the election of new Trustees. All decisions must be passed by majority vote and voting members are welcomed to give their opinions to any motion suggested. All voting members are either Order Members or people training for ordination and are selected based on the length of time they have been involved with the community and their level of commitment.

Dharmasvara (until December), Elena, Pam, Ian, Lizzy, Emma, Alex and Daisy-May are our voting members.

### Leadership roles

**Chair** – Viryanaga/Prajñaghosa. The role of the Chair is to oversee the direction of the community, support the team and all the volunteers, and make the many small day-to-day decisions involved with running a thriving Buddhist organisation. 2023 saw Viryanaga step away from this role after many years of excellent leadership, handing over to Prajñaghosa at the end of June 2023.

**President** – Paramabandhu. Paramabandhu is the President of Brixton Buddhist Community. A president offers spiritual counsel and friendship to a community, and can be a source of help when issues arise. Paramabandhu is a senior Order Member, who along with others holds responsibility for ordinations within the Triratna Buddhist Community. He is also an ex-Chair of the London Buddhist Centre in East London, where he lives and is a highly valued teacher. He visits us at least twice a year.

**Mitra Convenors** – Maitrinara (Men's Mitra Convenor) and Amarapuspa (Women's Mitra Convenor up until November 2023): We have two Mitra Convenors, both of whom are volunteers. Amarapuspa looks after the women's Sangha, and Maitrinara takes care of the men's Sangha. A Mitra Convenor takes special responsibility for supporting Mitras within our community, both through running events and meeting with people individually. They also meet with men and women who are becoming more involved with our community, to help them find appropriate study groups or events to support their practice. They help to guide people in the process of becoming Mitras and are also often a point of contact for Mitras who want to ask for ordination. They are always happy to hear from people interested in becoming more involved in our community.

### **The Centre Team**

The centre team is the organisational hub of Brixton Buddhist Community. Together they are responsible for coordinating all the events, as well as managing our online content. Lizzy and Steph work two days a week, Alex and Elena work one day a week each and Jo works half a day.

Viryanaga / Prajñaghosa	– Chair (handover during year)
Ian / Steph	– Events Coordinator (handover during year)
Elena	– Online Media Coordinator
Lizzy	– Team Champion and Programmes Coordinator
Jo	– Supporter Care Manager
Alex	– Graphic Design

### **Reference and Administrative details**

Registered Charity Name: TRIRATNA BUDDHIST COMMUNITY (BRIXTON)

Registered Charity Number: 1084889

Address: Brixton Buddhist Community, 45 Abbotswood Road, London, SW16 1AJ

## Financial Review

	Charity Name		No (if any)		CC16a
	TRIRATNA BUDDHIST COMMUNITY (BRIXTON)				
	<b>Receipts and payments accounts</b>				
	For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date	
		01/01/2023		31/12/2023	

  

Section A Receipts and payments					
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Fundraising (unrestricted)	32,650	-	-	32,650	26,928
Retreat	20,716	-	-	20,716	14,104
Course	10,708	-	-	10,708	9,777
Gift aid	9,407	-	-	9,407	9,714
Class	14,925	-	-	14,925	8,729
Fundraising (restricted)	-	360	-	360	3,380
Interest	976	-	-	976	235
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>89,382</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>89,742</b>	<b>72,867</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>89,382</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>89,742</b>	<b>72,867</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Payroll	43,710	-	-	43,710	35,848
Rent	26,800	-	-	26,800	11,700
Retreat	14,981	-	-	14,981	9,474
Donation	2,037	-	-	2,037	6,770
Administration & expenses	6,830	-	-	6,830	5,468
Fundraising (restricted)	-	2,754	-	2,754	2,975
Course	960	-	-	960	1,396
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>95,318</b>	<b>2,754</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>98,072</b>	<b>73,631</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>95,318</b>	<b>2,754</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>98,072</b>	<b>73,631</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>- 5,936</b>	<b>- 2,394</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>- 8,330</b>	<b>- 764</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>53,734</b>	<b>2,550</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>56,284</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>47,798</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>47,954</b>	<b>764</b>

  

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period				
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Current account	8,949	270	-
	Deposit account	38,849	114	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>47,798</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK

## **Achievements and Performance**

### **Racial Diversity**

In 2023, we worked with other London Buddhist Centres to support London-wide People of Colour (POC) activities for our Sangha members. This involved monthly online POC events, two weekend retreats, and a Brixton-hosted POC day. Brixton also contributes some of its funds towards the European Chair's Assembly Diversity Group, part of whose remit is to employ a racial diversity coordinator. We hope that these initiatives will offer more pathways into our community for people of all ethnic groups, as well as offer specific support for People of Colour to deepen their Buddhist practice within our community.

Although our community is becoming increasingly diverse, especially at our classes, there is still room for growth. We now have POC representation on the Trustee board, and our hope is that, within a few years, our diversity efforts will result in more members of our Sangha from Black, Asian, and other ethnic groups stepping into leadership roles.

### **Gender Diversity**

Historically and culturally, the Buddhist tradition has maintained a strict divide between men and women practitioners. The Triratna Buddhist Community is unique in the Buddhist world as it recognises equal ordination for both women and men, who both join a single Sangha. However, it also acknowledges the benefits of sharing our lives with those whose experiences are more likely to align with our own. In Triratna, this has led to the practice of women being trained and ordained by other women, and men by men. For this reason, alongside our many mixed events, our study groups and residential communities are often established as women's or men's groups.

We are aware, however, that this structure does not suit everyone. In response to the growing awareness of gender diversity, Triratna is currently in the process of creating more supportive contexts for people who are gender diverse, so that they have the necessary conditions to deepen their practice, become Mitras, and train for ordination. These needs vary widely among individuals. Examples include connecting people with the broader Triratna Gender Diverse Sangha, establishing gender-diverse study groups and ordination training programmes or, in the case of people transitioning, supporting them to move between the existing men's or women's wings of the Order and movement.

### **2023 in Numbers**

Number of new Mitras in 2023: **6**

Total number of Mitras at end of 2023: **53**

Number of ordination requests in 2023: **6**

Total Mitras training for ordination at end of 2023: **25**

Total people in or having completed training courses in the Buddha's teaching, the Dharma, in 2023: **60**

Total number of course attendees: **197**

## Chair's Report

In July 2023, I was pleased to become the new Chair of the Brixton Buddhist Community, taking over from Viryanaga. I want to express my heartfelt thanks to him and to the entire community for welcoming me so warmly into this new role. While I'm uncertain whether I'm the perfect fit for this position, I know that since my ordination, something within me has been activated. I feel a deep desire to find a place where I can continue to live out my ordination and serve Bhante Sangharakshita's vision of Buddhism. The Brixton Buddhist Community is where I want to fulfil that purpose.

I am incredibly grateful to be part of a project where people practise at all levels, allowing us to embrace the full depth and breadth of Buddhist teachings. I want to extend my gratitude to all the Order Members and individuals who have contributed so much to this project. Without their generosity and effort, none of this would be possible. I also want to acknowledge our media team, who work diligently to spread the Dharma and make our courses and classes easily accessible.

The entire project has thrived this year, with our community growing from strength to strength. Our classes are well attended, and we've cultivated a warm and welcoming atmosphere. It's inspiring to see so many people joining our activities, with some now on the verge of ordination. Not only has our community grown, but it has also deepened, as we've created pathways for individuals to advance in their practice and take the next steps. I am deeply grateful to Bhante Sangharakshita for his visionary understanding of growth and human potential. Under his guidance we've witnessed people flourishing and growing at all levels, which is immensely rewarding.

What motivates me to serve this community even more is how we embody the ideal of friendship. Some people have been practising here for over two decades, while others, like myself, are relatively new. Our community also exemplifies openness to the wider world, welcoming people from all walks of life. We bridge the gap between the rich cultural diversity of Brixton and our spiritual community, and we are committed to being fully inclusive, ensuring that everyone feels welcome.

2023 has been a year of significant growth for our project and one of my focuses has been to encourage teachers from outside the Brixton context to visit, teach, and perhaps play a fuller role within our community. This initiative aims to build a larger teaching community to support future growth. I am also pleased to say that we launched a new series of summer events celebrating art and beauty. The first year has been a tremendous success, allowing various artistic expressions to be enjoyed by our Sangha within the context of spiritual growth.

With such enthusiasm from the Sangha, the Trustees and I have been working closely on reaching out to more people and making the Dharma more available in South London. We, therefore, cherish the idea of one day having our own premises—it is our direction of travel, who knows!

I must say that I feel delighted to serve Bhante Sangharakshita's vision of the Dharma within the Brixton Buddhist Community, which I believe has something invaluable to share with the world. I look forward to 2024 and many more years to come.

Prajñaghosa  
Chair  
August 2024

## **Programme Coordinator Report**

We kicked off the year with a three-week 'meditation challenge' during which participants were invited to see if they could meditate every day, coming to classes twice a week to support them in doing so. This attracted more people to classes, between 50-70 per session (our usual average being around 30). We managed to get three well-known teachers to lead three of these sessions which I think helped to boost attendance. Many of these people went on to attend further classes and courses throughout the year.

In 2023 we ran five courses, the ones in January and September being the most well attended in accordance with the trend of previous years. Using data, both quantitative and anecdotal, on 2023's course attendance and participant satisfaction we have been able to incorporate learnings about which courses work best at which time of year and which leaders work well together to improve the attendance and quality of our courses in 2024.

We ran two open retreats at Vajrasana Retreat Centre in 2023 which were well attended although just shy of being fully booked as they had been in previous years. We ran a longer meditation intensive retreat for regulars at Alfoxton Park retreat centre which was very positive for those who attended but also didn't attract as many participants as we had hoped (around 8 retreatants as opposed to a desired number of about 16). We have reflected that the camping element of the retreat isn't attractive to many people and in future plan to find an alternative venue with indoor accommodation. We also ran a smaller retreat at Rivendell Retreat Centre for regulars which was fully booked and provided an opportunity for people to deepen their connections with others in the community and to practise together within the framework of myth and ritual.

A great success of 2023 was the introduction of the 'Summer of Love' festival; a series of six events taking place on Wednesday evenings throughout the summer, comprising music performances, rituals, yoga and 'gong baths'. Normally our summer events are poorly attended but the introduction of this festival saw a huge increase in numbers; the launch event at which the well known musician Joel Culpepper performed, saw our largest attendance ever at around 90 people. We have our new Chair, Prajñaghosa, to thank for this idea and a lot of the organisation that went into it. I think it's been an extremely positive introduction into the yearly calendar and we will continue to develop this in future.

As usual we hosted four festival days throughout the year with some Mitra ceremonies. These are an important part of our yearly calendar as they provide the opportunity for regulars to come together and practice as well as for newer Sangha members to come and experience Buddhist ritual. We continued to try and attract well-known teachers to give key-note talks which have been a draw for people to come.

We also hosted a monthly class called 'Through Buddhist Eyes' run by a team of volunteers. The class involves inviting Sangha members to lead sessions on creative ways into practice. This has taken the form of rituals, writing and drawing workshops, singing and a tea ceremony. The events run on a Saturday morning and are our least well-attended, but provide an important context for Sangha members to come together and also a space for people who can't make weekday evenings to come and practice together.

2023 saw the second of our People of Colour day retreats. The Triratna People of Colour group is a pan-London group which involves members of our community. The group hosts events in different Triratna centres around London and it was a pleasure to be able to host them again. It is very important to us to provide a space for people of colour in our Sangha to practise together and to be represented, especially as Brixton has such a high population of people of colour. This event was very well attended and as a result we have decided to run two events of this kind in 2024.

Lizzy  
Programme Coordinator  
August 2024

## Finance Officer's Report

2023 has seen continued growth in our activities in Brixton, with Income increasing by 53% over the past two years due to the expansion of our offerings and a rising number of attendees. We continue to provide the vast majority of our services on a donation basis, ensuring that those unable to pay are not prevented from participating.

We have expanded our rental space and slightly increased our paid team FTE count, which now stands at 1.83 FTE, to support this growth. This expansion has increased our costs, which have risen by 63% over the same period. We are working towards achieving a break-even position, focusing our fundraising efforts on increasing standing order contributions. Additionally, we are exploring the introduction of new services or modifying existing ones that are not attracting sufficient interest. In 2023, we introduced Saturday classes, day retreats, and a creative 'Summer of Love' event series, which drew strong attendance during the typically slower holiday period.

We anticipated operating at a deficit of £5k in 2023 as we reorganised the team and allowed for a handover period for those transitioning out, including the role of Chair. However, we exceeded this deficit by £3k due to the need to settle some invoices missed in 2022, as well as delayed receipts from our January 2024 retreat.

The following table summarises income and expenses by category for 2023 and shows the year-end cash balance. The sections following provide more detailed explanations of these categories.

	2023	2022
<b>Income</b>		
Money from events	<b>£47,325</b>	£32,846
Money from fundraising	<b>£32,650</b>	£27,333
Gift aid	<b>£9,407</b>	£9,714
Subtotal	<b>£89,382</b>	£69,893
<b>Expense</b>		
Class rent & event costs	<b>(£51,965)</b>	(£28,038)
Team	<b>(£43,710)</b>	(£35,848)
Contributions to other Triratna charities	<b>(£2,037)</b>	(£6,770)
Subtotal	<b>(£97,712)</b>	(£70,656)
Net surplus/deficit	<b>(£8,330)</b>	(£764)
Cash balance previous year	<b>£56,282</b>	£57,046
End of year cash balance	<b>£47,952</b>	£56,282
Restricted balance	£156	£2,549

## INCOME

### **Money from events**

Overall income in this category was 12% above budget, primarily due to a strong performance in class income.

- Classes – Income was 34% above budget, with class attendance rising from approximately 28 to 36 participants per night compared to 2022.
- Retreat – Net retreat results met the budget after accounting for a late payment of a Rivendell Retreat Centre invoice from November 2022.
- Courses – A slight improvement over budget, with a comparable number of attendees to 2022 (222 vs. 232).

## **Money from fundraising**

- The 2023 fundraising budget was set 47% higher than 2022, which proved to be overly optimistic as we fell short of our target by 13%. This shortfall was mainly due to an overestimate of major donations (those over £1,000). Standing order income slightly exceeded its challenging target, resulting in a 74% increase in standing order income compared to 2022.

## **Gift Aid**

- Gift Aid income was only 69% of the budget for two reasons: one of our GASDS claims was rejected due to a form completion error, which will be corrected in 2024; and lower fundraising income resulted in a reduced Gift Aid collection.

## **OUTGOING**

### **Class rent and event costs**

- These costs increased significantly over 2022 for the following reasons:
  - o Rent increase – Our rental charges increased, and we also expanded the number of weekend events from 6 to 17 compared to 2022. These changes resulted in an additional £3.8k in rent costs.
  - o Late payment of 2022 invoices – £3.9k worth of invoices from 2022 were paid in 2023.
  - o Reclassification – an annual £3.5k donation we make towards costs incurred by the Danaprasada community have been moved from the 'Contributions to other Triratna charities' category into this one.

## **Team**

- Team FTE increased by 0.3 of an FTE in 2023, due to the need to provide a handover of the Chair role and to supplement the fundraising function. Costs were kept down to 93% of the budgeted amount however, because budgeted pay for sickness cover was not required.

## **Contributions to other Triratna charities**

- Only 27% of budgeted costs were spent in this area, as the Danaprasada contribution was re-categorized as explained above, and our contribution to the European Chair's Assembly was reduced to 2.5% due to operating at a loss during 2023.

## **Reserves policy and risk management**

Triratna Buddhist Community (Brixton) has no appreciable assets and operates from rented premises. The charity is run by a combination of part-time employees and volunteers. Income is generated from attendees of classes, courses, retreats, and special events organised by the charity.

A reserves policy is considered necessary in order to respond to the risk of losing our rented premises at short notice and thereby losing the basis of our financial support. In such an event, the reserves policy aims to retain employees for at least six months to continue our programme of events while we search for alternative premises. The reserves policy would also allow for administrative expenses during this period.

Amaladana  
Finance Officer

August 2024

### **Women's Mitra Convenor's Report**

2023 was my final year as Women's Mitra Convenor for Brixton, stepping down in December. Although I was reluctant to leave the role, my responsibilities as a carer had increased, leaving me with less energy to effectively carry out the duties. Additionally, I was no longer able to attend or teach evening classes, which limited my opportunities to meet and befriend newer women. I also stepped down from related roles, including Chair of the Women's Mitra Convenor Gathering in March 2023, and from the team revising the Dharma Training Course for Mitras, the Centre Team, and as a Trustee for the charity.

While no obvious successor emerged for the role of Women's Mitra Convenor, I felt confident that the Sangha could fill the gap left by my departure. The Centre Team and Trustees were united in their commitment and there was a strong network of experienced women who could foster outreach to newer women. During this period, I was accepted as a Private Preceptor after successfully completing the consultation process the previous year. I continued leading two study groups, one of which completed its course at the end of 2023. My many friendships with women in the Sangha continue, and I am particularly keen to support the fourteen women in the ordination process, participating actively in groups set up for this purpose called kulas.

In 2023, the number of women attending classes and events continued to grow. Many of these women expressed interest in deepening their practice. With the help of Order Member Vajratarā, a 'Vajra Kula' was formed, consisting of women Mitras training for ordination and external female Order Members beginning to get involved in Brixton. We met regularly after women's events and on Zoom to discuss outreach and support for newer women. Women's study events continued throughout the year at Danaprasada, with both new women and experienced Mitras participating. Various women Order Members, including myself, led these events. The community at Danaprasada was very welcoming and supportive, providing a positive atmosphere for these events.

I also met regularly with Maitrinara, the men's Mitra Convenor, and Lizzy, the Centre programme coordinator. Maitrinara proposed a creative solution to meet the needs of newer women: Lizzy would assume the new role of 'Women's Sangha Coordinator'. I endorsed this proposal to the Council when we sought funding for the role. I continued to support Lizzy both as a friend and in her new role. She organised a large study group of twenty women to start in Autumn 2024, which she will lead with Vandanasuri and Bex, a GFR Mitra. With Lizzy taking on this role, the Vajra Kula began to seem redundant and was dissolved in the summer of 2023.

Meanwhile, the pool of women Order Members available to teach in Brixton continued to grow. Maitrinara, who became a Trustee when I stepped down in December, has developed Person of Colour events in Brixton and is a valuable addition to the Council. Vandanasuri, originally from the London Buddhist Centre, has become increasingly involved in teaching and supporting new women in Brixton. Tarāmani continues to co-lead courses, and Maitrekara, another Order Member from the LBC, has also started teaching and attending events. Regular women's study events have continued.

I was very moved and heart-warmed by the many gifts and rejoicings that accompanied my stepping down from the Mitra Convenor role in December. I felt uplifted by taking in how many more committed women were regularly involved than when I first started and how much they obviously benefitted from their involvement and are also benefiting others. I feel blessed to have been able to serve the wonderful women of Brixton Triratna for so many years.

Amarapuspa  
Women's Mitra Convenor  
September 2024

## **Men's Mitra Convenor's Report**

2023 was a big year for the Brixton community as we welcomed our new Chair Prajñaghosa to continue the fantastic work of his predecessor Viryanaga. This appointment heralded in a new phase of growth and friendship to our community. The end of 2023 also saw Amarapuspa step down as Women's Mitra Convenor. We owe her a great deal of appreciation for the dedication and creativity she brought to the role for so many years. Here are some of the highlights of the year from my perspective as Men's Mitra Convenor.

Prajñaghosa, our new Chair, joined our men's residential community, Danaprasada. Our household continues to be a creative and social hub for the wider community. As well as living together, we host men's study and GFR groups, the centre team meetings on a weekly basis, Trustees meetings, chapter meetings and a range of social events.

In 2023, two men's study groups met weekly, with a total of 16 participants. These study groups are a highlight of Brixton community life, serving as a forum to explore and deepen our understanding of how Buddhist practice relates to our deeper aspirations. It's heartening to see how, as the men grow to trust and enjoy one another more fully, and as their understanding and confidence in Buddhist practice increases, a special atmosphere of confidence and possibility often emerges in these groups. In July, after completing the four year course, one of the study groups led by Sagarasila and me, came to an end. We shared some great times as a group and I appreciated co-leading the group with Sagarasila and witnessing his calm and intelligent exploration of the Dharma. Some of these men subsequently asked for ordination into the Triratna Order. In 2023, the four Mitras who had asked for ordination met weekly to deepen their practice and friendships. They also regularly travelled to Padmaloka, the men's ordination centre, for ordination training retreats.

We had a record five Brixton retreats in 2023, which included two retreats for newcomers and regulars at Vajrasana, one longer meditation retreat at Alfoxton and one weekend retreat for Mitras and study groups at Rivendell. We also had one men's working retreat at Alfoxton. It was lovely to see the men engaged with the meaningful work of restoring and renovating this retreat centre which has the amazing heritage of previously belonging to William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy. Working together during the day and enjoying each other's company around the campfire at night, we fostered a wonderful atmosphere of playfulness, camaraderie, and adventure.

In 2023, a total of five men—Jez, Jack, Sergio, Theo, and Dan—became Mitras, deepening their connection to the Three Jewels of Buddhism. The ceremonies, held on various festival days throughout the year, were marked by great rejoicing from the Brixton Buddhist Community. It was delightful to hear each of them reflect in their own unique ways on what had led them to this point of wanting to deepen their connection to the Buddhist path and community. Furthermore, two Brixton Mitras, Graham and Olivier, requested ordination and began the training process to join the Triratna Buddhist Order.

Our classes and courses at Effra Space remain the primary gateway for newcomers to connect with the vision, practices, and people of our community. In 2023, I am delighted to report that participation reached an all-time high. The special and friendly atmosphere of our regular events is due to both the quality of our teaching team and the fantastic support team, all of whom volunteer their time with great humour and dedication. The overall success of our programme is attributable to the efforts of our centre team, a small group financially supported to work together in promoting and organising all our events. It is a great privilege and inspiration to collaborate with this team in an atmosphere of dedication, creativity, and friendship, and to witness the impact of their efforts in the growing number of people coming to Effra Space and transforming their lives through encounter with the Dharma.

Maitrinara  
Men's Mitra Convenor  
August 2024

### **Team Champion's Report**

We welcomed Steph to the team in 2023, taking over from Ian as Events Coordinator. She has brought a lot of knowledge, skill and enthusiasm to the role as well as much friendship. The team has greatly benefitted from her input and I think being in the team has also led to a deepening of her practice and a greater commitment to the community.

We continue to gather weekly on a Monday to meet and work together at Danaprasada, the men's residential community. This has provided an opportunity for us to understand how to work more effectively together and to deepen practice and friendships within the team.

This year Prajñaghosa officially became Chair and took on more of a managerial role within the team. This required some re-organisation of the ways we had worked previously when Viryanaga was Chair, in order to understand and accommodate Prajñaghosa's vision for the community moving forwards. Although this took a bit of figuring out, I think the re-orientation has been very positive and, as a team, we are feeling increasingly empowered to work in a way that is both independent and collaborative.

I organised a couple of practice days for the team, during which we reflected on the ways in which we can approach work as a spiritual practice and how we can have a stronger sense of a shared vision for the work of the centre team. The feedback I received from these days was that they were helpful and contributed to a clearer sense of our direction as a team.

Lizzy  
Programme Coordinator  
August 2024



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name <b>TRIRATNA BUDDHIST COMMUNITY (BRIXTON)</b>	No (if any)
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## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date 1/1/2023	To	Period end date 12/31/2023
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### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Fundraising (unrestricted)	32,650	-	-	32,650	26,928
Retreat	20,716	-	-	20,716	14,104
Course	10,708	-	-	10,708	9,777
Gift aid	9,407	-	-	9,407	9,714
Class	14,925	-	-	14,925	8,729
Fundraising (restricted)	-	360	-	360	3,380
Interest	976	-	-	976	235
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>89,382</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>89,742</b>	<b>72,867</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>89,382</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>89,742</b>	<b>72,867</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Payroll	43,710	-	-	43,710	35,848
Rent	26,800	-	-	26,800	11,700
Retreat	14,981	-	-	14,981	9,474
Donation	2,037	-	-	2,037	6,770
Administration & expenses	6,830	-	-	6,830	5,468
Fundraising (restricted)	-	2,754	-	2,754	2,975
Course	960	-	-	960	1,396
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>95,318</b>	<b>2,754</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>98,072</b>	<b>73,631</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>95,318</b>	<b>2,754</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>98,072</b>	<b>73,631</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>- 5,936</b>	<b>- 2,394</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>- 8,330</b>	<b>- 764</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>53,734</b>	<b>2,550</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>56,284</b>	<b>57,046</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>47,798</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>47,954</b>	<b>56,282</b>

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Current account	8,949	270	-
	Deposit account	38,849	- 114	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>47,798</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval



# CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Charity Name

Triratna Buddhist Community (Brixton)

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31/12/2023

**Charity no  
(if any)**

1084889

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023

**Responsibilities and  
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent  
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

14/10/24

**Name:**

Fay Pritchard

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):**

MAAT

**Address:**

8 Darwin Street, Shrewsbury, SY3 8QE

### Section B

### Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).