



# **The Community of Interbeing UK**

## **Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**Year Ended 31 December 2022**

**Registered Charity**

No 1096680

**Company Registration**

No 04623280

## About the Community of Interbeing UK

The Community of Interbeing UK is the network of people in the United Kingdom who practise Buddhism according to the teachings of Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh (*Thầy* -pronounced 'tie' - as we call him, meaning teacher in Vietnamese). The UK Community of Interbeing is part of the wider international Sangha of many thousands of practitioners worldwide, all of whom follow *Thầy's* mindfulness practice and teachings.

Mindfulness is the energy of being aware and awake to the present moment. It is the continuous practice of touching life deeply in every moment of daily life. To be mindful is to be truly alive, present and at one with those around us and with what we are doing. We bring our body and mind into harmony while we wash the dishes, drive the car or take our morning shower, learning to do them with mindfulness, with an awareness that we are doing them. We practise mindfulness throughout every moment of the day and not just during meditation.

Practising mindfulness cultivates understanding, love, compassion, and joy. This practice helps us to take care of and transform suffering in our lives and in our society.

In practising together as a group, our practice of mindfulness becomes more joyful, relaxed and steady. We support each other along the path of practice. With the support of the community, we can practise to cultivate peace and joy within and around us, as a gift for all of those whom we love and care for. We can cultivate our solidity and freedom - solid in our deepest aspiration and free from our fears, misunderstandings, and our suffering.

In addition to providing national retreats and training, the Community of Interbeing supports around one hundred and twenty local Sangha groups around the UK, sells books and other media, and provides a weekly update for members called *Dharmabites*, plus a monthly e-News called *Here & Now*, as well as distributing the international *Mindfulness Bell* magazine.

Through our programmes of education and practice the Community of Interbeing endeavours to encourage more people to practise mindful living.

## 2022 Annual Review

In this annual review we set out our charitable aims, and for each aspect of our activities, the actions taken to implement them in this year as well as our plans for the future.

### Charitable aims

The Objectives of the Community of Interbeing are:

- a) To advance, support and encourage the study and practice of Buddhism and mindful living in accordance with the teachings of meditation master Thich Nhat Hanh, in the UK and overseas, in keeping with the Five Mindfulness Trainings.
- b) To assist and encourage the formation and activities of regional and local groups having this common purpose.

### National practice and training

#### What we do

- Organise retreats for adults, families and young people.
- Provide an in-depth training programme on the core teachings.
- Run a small practice centre – the Being Peace Cottage.
- Run 6 and 8 week introductory courses to Plum Village mindfulness practice.
- Offer and share our practice online in a variety of formats.

#### How what we do delivers public benefit

The principal benefit comprises the provision of opportunities for members of the public (including Buddhists and those interested in Buddhism) to learn more about mindfulness and Buddhism. We provide instruction from beginner to advanced levels, enabling people to deepen their knowledge and experience. We offer retreats for both individuals and groups, to enable them to develop their meditation experience and increase their understanding of the mindful way of life in the Plum Village tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh.

Our events are advertised publicly on our website, social media channels (e.g PlumVillageUK Facebook page) as well as our weekly Dharmabites offerings for members and monthly e-News (which anyone can sign up to). We offer a warm welcome to anyone who wishes to attend. We make a charge to recover the cost of running our retreats and training programmes with a lower rate applying to those in special circumstances. We also endeavour to raise funds to offer bursaries towards the cost of some of the events.

#### Action taken in 2022

The initial months of 2022 were marked by profound activity across the international community. The passing of our most respected teacher, Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, fondly known as Thay, ushered in a period of reflection, grief, and gratitude. Yet, amidst a backdrop of undeniable sorrow, our community's collective sense of togetherness was palpable. The core of Thay's teachings - that 'the next Buddha will be a Sangha' - was felt more than ever, as we united, drawing strength and solace from each-other and the many profound ways Thay's life was celebrated.

Across the broad community in the UK we supported a huge range of activities:

- **Buddhists Across Traditions Event: Tashi and the Monk, film screening** (2nd January): Our year commenced with joining friends across traditions watching the moving documentary, reminding us of the power of kindness and the importance of community, ensuring a compassionate beginning to 2022.
- **Morning of Mindfulness (8th January): Sister Chan Duc (Sister Annabel)** and the Sisters from Lower Hamlet, Plum Village, France, led a heartfelt Ceremony to Support the Sick. In these trying times, this was a moment for us to direct our compassionate energy to those ailing worldwide.

- **Music & Mindfulness** (throughout the year): Unique sessions with Susanne Olbrich and Joe Holtaway, aiming to strengthen our connection with the Earth through music and sound. Participants from all musical backgrounds were welcomed.
- **White Awareness Sangha Study Group** (27th January - 17th February): This online group was created for those who identify or have been socialised as white. Through reflection and sharing, the group aimed to understand white identities, history, and biases. The White Awareness Sangha hosts bi-monthly meetings serving as an open space for 'white-bodied' Sangha practitioners to confront and transform racism.
- **Mindful Morning** (30th January): With UK Lay Dharma Teacher, Vari McLuskie, whose talk combined Thay's teachings with her personal experience of offering mindfulness and love meditation in a range of settings to identify ways in which we can cultivate more love for ourselves, our fellow beings, and our planet.
- **Relaxing Dharma - Sangha Storytime** (Starting 30th January): On Sunday evenings, Teri West and Dene Donalds began reading from Thay's retelling of traditional stories from Vietnam. This was accessible to all ages and streamed live.
- **Dharma Training Programme - Mindful Living Retreat** (4th - 6th February): Located in Shallowford, Staffordshire and available on zoom, this retreat led by Dharma Teachers, Jane Coatesworth and Lesley Collington, aimed to answer deep questions about meditation, feelings, and consciousness. The teachings of the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing were the main focus.
- **Buddhists Across Traditions: Can Buddhism Grow Inclusive Communities?** (13th February): This online event was dedicated to LGBTQIA+ month (in the UK) and Black History Month (in the North Americas). The goal? To explore how Buddhist practices can be instrumental in growing inclusive communities that appreciate the intricacies of race, gender, and sexual identity.
- **Clown and the Art of Mindfulness (26th February)**: This creative workshop was designed to show how improvised clowning and mindfulness can inspire each other. Facilitated by Teri West, UK Dharma Teacher, and Nose to Nose Facilitator and Laughter Leader, Carol Thompson, it was a blend of laughter and awareness.
- **True Belonging Course** (26th February, 12th March, 26th March): This course, spread over three Saturdays, delved into self-compassion, inclusiveness, and interbeing. With guidance from Dharma teachers, Vari McLuskie and Susanne Olbrich, participants explored their connections with self, others, and the Earth.
- **Sunday Sangha Special with Kaira Jewel Lingo** (27th February): This was a celebration of Kaira Jewel Lingo's new book, 'We were made for these times'. Participants joined online to delve into the teachings and explore her ten Lessons in 'Moving through Change, Loss and Disruption.'
- **Mindful Morning** (6th March): This event brought forth the importance of accessibility & inclusiveness on the Buddhist path, particularly from a disabled person's perspective. The session began with a meditation followed by a thought-provoking talk by Sibling Yonten Phuntsok.
- **Thich Nhat Hanh's 49th Day Ceremony** (11th - 13th March): Plum Village orchestrated a 3-day online retreat, culminating around the 49th day since Thay's passing. The event comprised mindfulness practices, meditation, ceremonies, live talks, circle sharings, and a moving live-streamed ceremony centred around the spreading of Thay's ashes in Plum Village, France.
- **Be Calm Be Happy Spring Weekend Retreat** (18th - 20th March): A refreshing online retreat acknowledging the arrival of spring, based on Thich Nhat Hanh's renowned teachings.
- **Buddhists Across Traditions Event: White Awake Sanghas: Path to Racial Healing & Justice** (20th March): A critical dialogue focusing on the intersectionality of race, gender, and class. Supported by Plum Village UK, this online session explored how Buddhist practices can be pivotal in forging socially just societies.
- **10th Anniversary of 'Sit in Peace' on 31 March 2012**: The year 2022 marked a decade since the historic gathering in Trafalgar Square, London, where thousands sat in peace under Thầy's guidance. A revisit to

Wake Up London's reflections gave us renewed insight into how we can perpetuate the practice of Being Peace.

- **Mindful Morning: The Blooming of a Lotus** (3rd April): This two-hour online session featured a talk by Order Member, Sita Brand, that highlighted the serenity achievable through Thay's meditative techniques, allowing us to find calm even in tumultuous times.
- **New Course - Looking Deeply** (Starting on the 19th of April): A continuation from the "Be Calm Be Happy" course, the "Looking Deeply" course is designed to take participants deeper into Thay's teachings. 'Looking Deeply' provides a chance to expand one's mindfulness journey.
- **Ukraine Engaged Practice** (21st April and throughout the year): Responding to the global turmoil and the war in Ukraine, our community organised an initial sit & share session followed by regular meetings throughout the year. These meetings aimed to cultivate peace, discuss meaningful interventions, and extend our collective support to those affected by war.
- **Mindful Morning - The Third Noble Truth, Wellbeing** (1st May): Order of Interbeing Member, Gary Greenberg, led us in an introspective session centred around the multifaceted nature of wellbeing, probing deeper than just social and psychological health.
- **Dharma Training Programme: Stepping into Freedom Retreat** (27th - 29th May): This Dharma Training Programme in Briery, Ilkley, and also available on Zoom, provided an exploration into the teachings of the Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing. Led by Dharma Teacher, Dene Donalds, participants delved into topics of concentration, letting go, and freedom.
- **Mindful Morning - The Five Spiritual Powers** (5th June): This morning delved into Thay's invaluable teachings on navigating stress. Our members were treated to an insightful extract from Thay's 2004 talk, 'Practising in a Stressful Environment', enriching our understanding of mindfulness in challenging situations.
- **Love in Action Retreat** (24th - 26th June): Under the guidance of Dharma Teacher Vari McLuskie, this retreat, set against the scenic backdrop of Edzell, Scotland, focused on love and communal togetherness. An exploration of true love's elements provided fresh perspectives on enhancing self-love and its subsequent positive impact on the world.
- **Mindful Morning - Radical Joy for Hard Times** (3rd July): July saw Harriet Sams offer deep insights into mindfulness and our relationship with Earth. We focused on our connection with Earth, especially in landscapes that bear the scars of human actions. This session was a profound exploration of our relationship with Earth, even in difficult circumstances.
- **Buddhists Across Traditions Event: Nelson Mandela Day: Coming Home** (17th July): Aligning with the global celebrations of International Nelson Mandela Day, this musical gathering was an ode to Mandela's legacy and a tribute to the indomitable spirit of refugees worldwide. The occasion was a potent reminder of peace, justice, and resilience.
- **Buddhafield Festival Participation** - Early in the summer we had the honour of sharing Thay's teachings at the renowned Buddhafield Festival. A highlight was UK Dharma teacher Teri West's illuminating discourse on Thay's teachings and her own personal journey with the Plum Village practice.
- **Day of Mindfulness, Pangbourne** (7th August): Under the guidance of Dharma Teacher Angie Searle, this full-day session provided our community an opportunity to reconnect with the present moment and deepen our understanding of peace, both internally and globally. The day was structured around various meditation practices, fostering self-awareness and empowerment.
- **Touch the Earth Retreat** (1st to 5th September, Lipowa Dolina, Poland): This retreat, led by UK Dharma teacher Murray Corke, was a deep dive into the Diamond Sutra's teachings, examining its profound connection to our Earth and its myriad lives.

- **Mindful Morning - Living Long Term in Plum Village** (4th September): Order of Interbeing member, Joy Magezis, provided attendees a glimpse into life as a long-term retreatant at Plum Village in France.
- **Nature Connection Retreat** (13th to 16th September, Wiston Lodge, Scotland): A special collaboration between Border Collie Sangha and Deep Listening Sangha, this midweek retreat was led by Dharma Teachers, Murray Corke and Dene Donalds, focusing on reconnecting with nature and deepening our understanding of the world around us.
- **Mindful Morning - Outside In, Inside Out - Growing Beloved Community** (2nd October): Order of Interbeing member, Rehina Harilal, offered a personal reflection of how the journey inwards, towards personal transformation using mindfulness practices, yields insights into re-constructing, reconciling and cultivating beloved communities.
- **Reflect in Song with Melissa James** - In October, in honour of Black History Month, we embarked on a musical journey with Melissa, channeling the power of song to connect and stand in solidarity with all those affected by racial or cultural prejudices.
- **Clarifying Being Peace Sangha's Vision** - A notable addition to our Sangha has been Br Phap Vu, of Deer Park in California. He has a history of mentorship and retreat leadership in the UK and offers his support for our ambitious plan: establishing a UK practice centre. Br Vu's talk for us underscored the importance of creating a space for transformative practices in these challenging times.
- **Sunday Sangha Special - Diamond Sutra Reflections** (9th October): Dharma Teacher Dene Donalds, gave a talk on the Diamond Sutra, offering us alternative ways to look at the world in its wholeness so we can encounter a deeper reality; develop reverence for the Earth and more harmonious communities, families, and relationships; and act in the world skilfully and effectively.
- **Transformation and Healing - Dharma Training Programme retreat** (20th to 24th October, Sidcot, UK): Aimed at addressing inner turmoil and suffering, this five-day retreat, led by Dharma Teachers Angie Searle and Vari McLuskie, provided tools and teachings to transform personal pain into peace, joy, and self-compassion.
- **Earthing Our Practice: Dharma Training Programme** (20th - 23rd October): This retreat, set in Kilgraston School, Perthshire, led by Dharma Teachers, Martin Pitt and Susanne Olbrich, aimed to weave mindfulness practices with environmental consciousness. As the ecological and climate crisis looms, our focus is to harness mindfulness to strengthen our bond with nature and Mother Earth.
- **Day of Mindfulness - Zen and Climate Change** (30th October): Dharma Teacher Murray Corke, offered a talk anchoring on Thich Nhat Hanh's wisdom that the roots of climate change lie in the absence of mindfulness. Through guided meditation, Touching the Earth in Mindfulness, and a workshop, attendees were offered tools and insights on how their mindfulness practices could directly foster happiness and contribute positively to global well-being.
- **Mindful Morning - Interfaith Practice** (6th November): In this morning, Arezoo Farahzad discussed the legacy of Sir 'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas and the Bahá'í community's international contributions.
- **Mindful Morning - Feeding Our Senses** (4th December): This gathering brought together a panel of experienced practitioners to share how they practice with 'the Four Nutriments', understanding our consumption patterns across food, sense impressions, will or desire, and consciousness.
- **Day of Mindfulness - Nourishing Peace and Love** (18th December): Recognising the emotional challenges many face during this time of year, we aimed to provide a refuge. Guided by the practices of the Love Meditation morning Sangha and Thay's 'Teachings on Love', members from our facilitator group united to offer their experiences on fostering love and connectivity.

### Future plans for 2023 and 2024

Looking forwards we were excited to announce the introduction of One-to-One meetings in the early months of 2023. These sessions are designed to offer both new and experienced practitioners tailored guidance, deep listening, and support in refining and deepening their meditation practices. From sharing about current practices to addressing personal sufferings and the desire to deepen practice, these consultations provide a compassionate, confidential environment. While not replacing psychological therapy, these consultations are rooted in our commitment to community well-being. Starting January 2023, this by-donation service is founded on trust, ensuring that everyone, irrespective of financial means, can benefit.

## **Community Engagement and Volunteer Opportunities**

We actively sought out volunteers to support our myriad offerings and boost our web and community engagement. This outreach was essential for us to help our community blossom and expand.

The essence of Thich Nhat Hanh's teachings reverberated through every event and gathering in 2022. From looking back at his monumental contributions to directing our mindfulness practices towards the challenges of today's world. It was a year of deep connection, reflection, and growth for our community. Whether addressing global concerns like climate change or personal journeys in mindfulness, we were united in our commitment to foster a deeper understanding and practice of Thay's teachings.

### **Being Peace Cottage:**

- After many years faithful service, in the Spring of 2022 a decision was made to sell the Being Peace Cottage. The Cottage continued to provide peaceful accommodation for Sangha members and their families during the first half of the year, but no bookings were taken after the end of the Summer, and the cottage went on the market. A young family gave us a fair offer quite quickly, and the sale is proceeding. Many thanks to the Cottage Team, who have maintained it so well all this time.

## **Mindfulness courses**

- **Be Calm Be Happy**
  - We continued with Be Calm Be Happy courses, offered many times on different days and times of day online. We also offered Mindfulness for Neurodiversity twice. This is a popular adaptation of BCBH.
- **Looking Deeply**
  - This has developed into a good 2nd course following on from BCBH.
  - We are now able to offer this 6 times per year online as Course Leaders Clare Carlile and Ian Sneath have joined Vari and Lauri Bower.
- **Living Mindfully**
  - We offered the 3rd course entitled Living Mindfully in September 2022.
  - The focus for this is the 5 Mindfulness Trainings, looking in depth at one per session.
- We feel these 3 courses will give a good grounding into PV practices and Thay's teachings along with the DTP and retreats run by PVUK and PV itself.
- When Be Calm Be Happy was first developed the original idea was to have 3 courses which become a pathway leading people from no/little experience of Plum Village practices into attending a Sangha and hopefully retreats on a regular basis.

### Future plans for 2023 and 2024

- In 2023 we aim to offer a one-off seminar describing this pathway and giving information on all 3 courses.

## **Being Peace Residential Practice Centre**

- The Being Peace Project employed our first Project Manager – Dominic Munro McCarthy – and he quickly started work on a business plan and finance options for the Centre, guided by the Steering Group. Four working groups were set up; Finance, People and Programme, Property and Fundraising to work on these issues.
- At the beginning of the year a questionnaire was sent out to the membership, asking what sort of events people would like to see at the centre, where they felt it should be located and how much they would feel able to engage with it. We were very pleased that nearly 500 people responded to this. Besides learning what people would like to see on the programme, we also got a clear steer that the centre should be centrally located to be convenient for as many people as possible, and with reasonable access to public transport. The property group have taken note of this, and many people have helped with the search for a property.
- A new bi-monthly Sangha meeting on zoom was started, to engage with the wider UK Sangha and people interested in being involved in developing the new Centre. Attendance at this has been around 50-70 people, after an initial meeting with nearly 100 people attending.

### Future plans for 2023 and 2024

- Plan a major fundraising effort, so that together with the receipt from the sale of the cottage we can enter the commercial market for properties.
- Work with the proposed Monastic tour to publicise the search for a new centre and raise funds for it.
- Continue to work up proposals for financing and running the centre in anticipation of finding our centre premises in 2023!

## **Local Sanghas – practice and training**

### What we do

- Nationally we encourage and support the formation of local practice groups (Sanghas) by putting people in an area in touch with one another, offering public liability insurance to affiliated groups and by providing opportunities to benefit from the national Dharma teachers.
- Local groups run a variety of regular practice evenings, days of mindfulness, study groups and retreats to provide opportunities to practise and learn about mindful living and Thầy's teachings.

### How what we do provides public benefit

These activities provide the same public benefits as the National practice and training programme but on a local level making them as widely geographically accessible as possible.

### Action taken in 2022

- We maintained contact with 121 Sanghas to understand how best to sustain their development.



- We encouraged the development of new Sanghas drawing on the experience of members of established Sanghas to assist. Eight new Sanghas registered in 2022.
- We appointed a UK Sangha Coordinator volunteer, Kirstie Berridge, who has been maintaining contact with all Sanghas.
- Supported and encouraged local Sanghas to engage in organising the Monastic Tour 2023.

#### Future plans

- Support Sangha facilitators with opportunities for development.
- Continue to be open to opportunities to increase the number of Sanghas and to help them deepen the practice of people attending.
- Continue to develop guidance material, including Safeguarding policies, for people wishing to form new Sanghas and to grow existing Sanghas.
- Identify ways to attract more diverse Sangha members.
- Build a closer relationship with Sanghas by co-organising a Monastic Tour in 2023 and by creating closer links between Sanghas and the Being Peace Centre Steering Group.

## **Publications service**

#### What we do

- Provide a service selling books, CDs and DVDs of Thich Nhat Hanh's teachings and meditation bells.

#### How what we do provides public benefit

- Our service is available from our website and at retreats and Dharma training events and is open to any member of the public. Profits from the service are used to fund the development of our national and local activities.

#### Action taken in 2022

- We continued to provide the publications service. Feedback indicates how positively this service is viewed by members. We are able to recommend specific books based on people's interests.
- We established a new online shop on the website and shared new book releases with members via our monthly newsletter.

#### Future plans for 2023 - 24

- We plan to improve the way the online shop works on the website, developing our service and making it easier to find publications and to order them.

## Communications

### What we do

- Maintain a website and social media sites and feeds which provide information and inspiration about our practice and about opportunities to take part in retreats and training and to join like-minded people in local Sanghas.
- Provide a facility for UK residents to subscribe to “Mindfulness Bell”, the international journal of the art of mindful living. “Mindfulness Bell” is an inspiration and teaching resource for those practising mindfulness in daily life. Each issue features a teaching by Thich Nhat Hanh.
- Liaise with Plum Village, the monastery in France established by Thich Nhat Hanh.
- Provide a monthly e-News (Here & Now). This is an email newsletter to the broadest subscribing list of friends and it provides updates from Plum Village, the UK community, and details of upcoming retreats and activity in the UK. It also includes short dharma teachings to inspire.
- We aim to provide and share inspirational dharma teachings – this has been done in a regular way through our weekly e-News “Dharmabites” and via social media.

### How what we do benefits the public

Our communications programme supports and facilitates the achievement of our other activities and hence benefits the public as explained above.

### Action taken in 2022

- We continued to publish “Here and Now” to detail our programme of events each month.
- We published weekly Dharmabites emails for subscribing members and sent 51 editions in 2022.
- We maintained membership using online direct debit, allowing us to build effective ad hoc communication with COI members. We regularly communicated with members about our events.

### Future plans for 2023 and 2024

- Grow the communications Sangha with additional volunteers who have a background in practice and specialist communication skills.
- Understand how our community is reached and engaged online in ways that are most broadly and fully inclusive.
- Continue to develop social media presences (including blog) and our newsletters to promote our charity and our major events in 2023/24.
- Make it much easier for people to become members through the website.
- Offering Sanghas the opportunity to affiliate to the COI through the website, ensuring they continue to benefit from being covered by public liability insurance provision and from being listed on the PVUK website which is resourced and maintained through our charity’s funds.

## Technical systems

### What we do

We provide a web site with links to our events and other resources. We use other technical systems for event bookings and newsletters.

### How what we do benefits the public

People can use our website to book events and order resources such as books

### Actions taken in 2022

- In January, on the occasion of Thay's passing, we used the website to communicate a major programme of events and resources.
- In March, we simplified the home page of the website to provide a clear path of "begin- practice-deepen". We also changed the web site to allow more flexible content.
- In September and October, we undertook a major revamp of our online shop, making it much easier to use.
- In November, we added Earth Caring to our Resources section with a dedicated email group to the web site
- In December, we set up a CRM system and linked it to other systems to build a picture of our members and other donors.

### Future plans for 2023 and 2024

- Add search function to the online shop to make it easier to find a book.
- Rework the growing "Resources" section in website for easier navigation.
- Upgrade the website server to make the website faster and more secure.
- Set up an on-line auction site for our art auction.

## Dana

### What we do

The practice of dana or giving is a fundamental practice in Buddhism. The Community of Interbeing provides opportunities for people to give of their time and expertise and to give monetary donations. There are opportunities to support us in the UK and also to contribute to international charities associated with Thich Nhat Hanh and Plum Village including the Thich Nhat Hanh UK Action Fund and the relief of poverty in Vietnam.

### How what we do benefits the public

Our dana programme benefits the public both directly and indirectly. Direct benefits come through the alleviation of suffering and the teaching of programmes of mindful living. Indirect benefits come through the encouragement of responsible living and of the importance of charitable giving.

### Action taken in 2022

- Continued to offer a variety of opportunities for financial giving including joining the Community of Interbeing. We centred fundraising efforts on support to the global Monastic community and practice centres which lost most of their income with in-person retreats cancelled.
- Enabled more use of the website to manage fundraising and payment across all our activities.

- Continued to offer opportunities to volunteer to help the development of the Community of Interbeing. The Community directly benefits from the countless hours of selfless service provided by many members and supporters. Over 70 people offer their time and skills lovingly to do many of the tasks needed in the organisation including looking after the cottage, organising retreats, managing our members, looking after our money and much more.

#### Future plans

- Continue with our existing programmes and try to encourage more people to join and/or donate to and support the Community of Interbeing.
- Develop our legacy programme to encourage members and supporters to provide us with funds for future project development.
- Recruit more volunteers to help us mindfully support our initiatives including but not limited to
  - Marketing support to help us get our message out there more clearly
  - Be Calm Be Happy Course Leaders
  - Fundraising, financial and project support for the Residential Practice Centre
  - Supporting our retreat organisation at all levels

## **Engaged Action**

#### What we do

Many of our community members are very active in offering mindfulness practice to others in an engaged way. Examples include activism in racial and social justice, climate action and Earth holding, prison chaplaincy, healthcare chaplaincy, and teaching in schools. Many community members are engaged in significant ways across many such areas.

#### How what we do benefits the public

The engaged action of our members benefits the public both directly and indirectly. Direct benefits come through the contact and support with chaplains, teachers, and activists, and the associated ability to live more mindfully and calmly. This indirectly benefits all around those who have benefited from this contact.

#### Action taken in 2022

- We continued to financially support a project led by dharma teacher Dene Donalds (assisted by dharma teacher Mhairi McLuskie) to continue an outreach project with groups of people who are often on the fringes of society e.g. refugees and victims of sexual violence. This benefited the recipients considerably and also provided insights and experience of how to best engage with these groups of people and how our teaching approach can be tailored.

#### Future plans for 2023 and 2024

- The Outreach programme will continue to be delivered in 2022 by Dharma teacher, Dene Donalds.
- There will be a clear review of the learnings and benefits of the Outreach programme to identify future possible initiatives.
- We will introduce some website pages (under the resources section) about engaged practice to care for the Earth.

- The Plum Village community has been active in environmentalism and responding to climate change since the 1970s, and it has always been a part of the practices (our contemplations before eating include the line, 'Let us eat in such a way that we reduce the suffering of living beings and reverse the process of climate change.'
- A Working Group are working on increasing the presence and importance of responding to climate change and the environment in our community, partly by offering meetings and afternoons where there is space for building connections and momentum for action, and partly by articulating ways that we can act from a Buddhist perspective of being interwoven with the Earth to support and contribute to the response and transformation required by the increasing urgency of the climate crisis.

## Charity Information

### CURRENT TRUSTEES

Ms L Beth  
Mr P Croton  
Dr J Edwards  
Mr K Place  
Ms A Searle

### COMPANY SECRETARY

Ms I Wen

### LEGAL STATUS

#### Registered Charity

No 1096680

#### Company Registration

No 04623280

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Website: [www.plumvillage.uk](http://www.plumvillage.uk)

### BANKERS

Bath Building Society, 15 Queen Square, Bath, BA1 2HN  
The Co-operative Bank, PO Box 250, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT  
Ecology Building Society, 7 Belton Road, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD20 0EE  
Monmouthshire Building Society, Monmouthshire House, John Frost Square, Newport, NP20 1PX  
Nationwide Building Society, Nationwide House, Pipers Way, Swindon, SN38 1NW

### INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Alex Chandler ACA, Sygma Chartered Accountants, 1 Sopwith Crescent, Wickford, Essex, SS11 8YU

## Annual Report of the Trustees of the Community of Interbeing UK for the year ended 31 December 2022

### 1 Factual Information

#### 1.1 Structure

The Community of Interbeing UK is a company limited by guarantee (company number 04623280) and a registered charity (Charity number 1096680). The Charity also uses the working name "Plum Village UK".

#### 1.2 Objects

The Objects of the Community of Interbeing are:

- a) To advance, support and encourage the study and practice of Buddhism and mindful living in accordance with the teachings of meditation master Thich Nhat Hanh, in the UK and overseas, in keeping with the Five Mindfulness Trainings.
- b) To assist and encourage the formation and activities of regional and local groups having this common purpose.

#### 1.3 Governance

The Charity is managed by a Committee of Trustees. The trustees are also the directors of the Charity for the purposes of the Companies Act. All trustees are required to be members of the Community of Interbeing who have taken the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Trustees are recruited on the basis of skills needs identified by the Board of Trustees. A variety of methods is used to identify suitable candidates. Trustees are elected by the members of the Charity at the Annual General Meeting. Each year one third of the Trustees retire by rotation. The Committee of Trustees has the power to co-opt members during the year but these members must stand for election at the next Annual General Meeting. Trustees are given an induction pack on joining the Committee and are encouraged to identify gaps in their knowledge, which are then addressed by briefings or other training delivered to some or all of the trustees as appropriate.

#### 1.4 Management

The Committee of Trustees currently comprises 5 members and meets formally in person or via videoconference call several times a year. Members of the Committee individually or in small groups also act to take forward the Charity's plans assisted by other volunteers. Trustees serving since the last annual report have been:

Ms L Beth (appointed 15 February 2020, elected 19 September 2020, re-elected 9 October 2021)  
 Mr P Croton (appointed 17 April 2020, elected 19 September 2020, re-elected 24 September 2022)  
 Dr J Edwards (Treasurer, appointed 6 January 2014, elected 24 May 2014, re-elected 9 October 2021)  
 Mr K Place (appointed 12 June 2020, elected 19 September 2020)  
 Ms A Searle (appointed 30 August 2018, elected 29 September 2018, re-elected 24 September 2022)

The appointed Company Secretary is Ms Isabelle Wen. In addition to the Trustees and Dharma Teachers, key volunteers included Br Yonten (Dharmabites), Ann Irving (bursaries management), Nan Dower (Cottage Treasurer), Karen Boreham (Vietnam dana fund), Sarah Sweet ("Mindfulness Bell" subscriptions) and Ian Parker (publication sales). The Charity employs an admin and communications manager, Kasia Stepien. In addition, the Charity purchases the services of a number of individuals to fulfil administrative, technical and management roles. During 2022 these have included the services of Lauri Bower (BCBH course management), Kesley Cage (admin and events management), Will Wassenaar and Dominic Munro-McCarthy (Being Peace Practice Centre project management) and Theresa Samworth (Practice Centre fundraising).

### 2 Review of Activities

The review of activities is set out in the 2022 Annual Review earlier in this report.

### 3 Financial Review

Total income for the year was £317,443, a 19% increase compared to 2021 (£266,884). Membership subscriptions and donations received during the year totalled £228,000, a 70% increase compared to 2021 (£134,006). This increase was largely accounted for by one very substantial donation for Plum Village France. Our members and supporters continued their generous financial support for the Plum Village monastics and a further £25,000 was sent on to Plum Village during the year. Income from retreats and courses was £77,095, up by 72% compared to 2021 (£44,836) as we expanded the range and number of in-person and online courses and retreats offered. Sales of books, bells and the Mindfulness Bell magazine amounted to around £9,000 – similar to 2021. We received £47,700 in donations towards

our Being Peace Practice Centre fund. We are grateful to all those who support the Community of Interbeing/Plum Village UK through membership, donations, volunteering, attending our events and buying from our book service. It's your support that allows us to continue our work to spread the Plum Village practice and Thây's teachings throughout the UK.

Total expenditure for the year was £244,836, an 83% increase compared to 2021 (£133,566). This increase is largely accounted for by sending on the large donation received for Plum Village. Further donations from our members and supporters amounting to £25,000 were also sent on to Plum Village. Expenditure associated with retreats and courses at £72,881 was up 80% compared with 2021 (£40,348) as we expanded the range and number of in-person and online courses and retreats offered.

The financial review can give only a limited idea of the activities of the Charity. This is because so much of our work cannot be measured in monetary terms. A deep bow of gratitude is due to all those volunteers who do so much to make our activities a reality.

The Community of Interbeing owns freehold premises (fixed assets) occupied by the Charity as a retreat practice centre (the Being Peace Cottage in Devon). During the year 2022 the property was put on the market for sale with an asking price of £300,000. An offer has been received and it is expected that the sale of the property will be completed in 2023.

#### **4 Risk Management**

The major risks to which the Charity is exposed, as identified by the trustees, have been reviewed during the year and the trustees are satisfied that systems have been established to mitigate those risks.

The Charity has in place a Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually. A Safeguarding Policy covering children and vulnerable adults is currently under preparation by the Trustees.

#### **5 Format of Financial Statements**

The report and accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Small Companies and Groups (Accounts and Directors' Report) Regulations 2008.

#### **6 Trustees' Responsibilities in relation to the Financial Statements**

Legal regulations require the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities for the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Committee of Trustees and signed on their behalf by



Dr J Edwards  
Trustee and Director

23 September 2023



## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
<b>From generated funds</b>					
<b>Voluntary income:</b>					
Subscriptions		36,451	-	36,451	35,856
Donations	11	13,855	177,694	191,549	98,150
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>					
Merchandise sales		-	-	-	-
<b>Investment income:</b>					
Revaluation of Peace Cottage	6	-	-	-	72,431
Interest		257	290	547	305
<b>From charitable activities</b>					
Educational events & publications	2	88,896	-	88,896	60,143
Other		-	-	-	-
Total incoming resources		139,459	177,984	317,443	266,885
<b>EXPENDED RESOURCES</b>					
<b>Costs of generating voluntary income</b>					
Marketing & Communications	4	18,318	-	18,318	15,417
<b>Cost of charitable activities</b>					
Educational events & publications	3	85,322	-	85,322	52,836
Donations, bursaries and expenses	11	-	133,599	133,599	50,300
Administrative costs	4	7,104	-	7,104	14,520
<b>Governance costs</b>	5	493	-	493	493
Total resources expended		111,237	133,599	244,836	133,566
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers		28,222	44,385	72,607	133,319
<b>Transfers</b>		-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement of funds</b>		28,222	44,385	72,607	133,319
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
Balance brought forward at 1 January		388,686	266,646	788,651	655,332
<b>Balance carried forward at 31 December</b>		<b>£ 416,908</b>	<b>£ 311,031</b>	<b>£ 861,258</b>	<b>£ 788,651</b>

The Accounting Policies and the Notes on pages 19 to 23 form part of these Accounts.

**BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2022**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
<b>TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS</b>	6	300,000	-	300,000	300,000
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Stock of publications		3,256	-	3,256	2,628
Debtors	7	20,541	102,694	123,235	91,993
Cash at bank and in hand		192,748	246,845	439,593	398,537
		216,545	349,539	566,084	493,158
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>					
Amounts falling due within one year	8	4,826		4,826	4,507
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		211,719	349,539	561,258	488,651
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>£511,719</u>	<u>£349,539</u>	<u>£861,258</u>	<u>£788,651</u>
<b>Represented by:</b>					
<b>FUNDS</b>					
Unrestricted		511,719	-	511,719	483,497
Restricted	11	-	349,539	349,539	305,154
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<u>£511,719</u>	<u>£349,539</u>	<u>£861,258</u>	<u>£788,651</u>

For the year ending 31 December 2022 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- the members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,
- the directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.
- the accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the trustees on 23 September 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Dr J Edwards (Trustee and Director)

The Accounting Policies and the Notes on pages 19 to 23 form part of these Accounts

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022

### 1. Accounting Policies

#### (a) Basis of preparation

These financial statements have been drawn up under the historical cost convention. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' published in March 2005, applicable UK accounting standards, and the Companies Act 2006.

#### (b) Company status

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per member.

#### (c) Fund accounting

The Charity has two types of funds, unrestricted, and restricted. The unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity. Restricted funds are funds that are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the providers of the funds.

#### (d) Recognition of Income

Donations, and other forms of voluntary income are dealt with when the Charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. Membership subscriptions are due on 1 January each year and are recognised as received. Sales of publications and income from retreats are dealt with on an accruals basis. Gift Aid receivable is included in the category of income to which it relates. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

#### (e) Recognition of Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Expenditure on future retreats is deferred until the retreat takes place.

#### (f) Depreciation

No depreciation is provided on freehold premises since this would be immaterial having regard to the length of the useful economic life of the property. Depreciation of equipment is provided on cost at the rate of 25% per annum.

#### (g) Assets

Fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Stock of publications is stated at the lower of cost and realisable value. Debtors are stated at the amount expected to be recoverable.

### 2. Income from educational events and publications

	2022	2021
Retreats, courses and Being Peace Cottage income	79,755	50,596
Income from organising major retreat	-	-
Sale of publications & bells	9,141	9,547
	<u>£ 88,896</u>	<u>£ 60,143</u>

### 3. Expenditure on educational events and publications

	2022	2021
Retreat, Courses and Being Peace Cottage expenditure	77,133	43,414
Books, other publications & bells	8,189	9,422
	<u>£ 85,322</u>	<u>£ 52,836</u>

**Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)****4. Administration costs**

	2022	2021
Bookkeeping and accountancy	782	9,612
Insurance	1,602	1,505
Website, Zoom and other IT costs	4,251	3,270
Bank charges & other administrative costs	469	133
Project cost salary	-	-
	<u>£ 7,104</u>	<u>£ 14,520</u>

The Charity employed one member of staff during 2022, the employment costs during the year totalled £15,742 and are included under "Marketing and Communication" expenditure. Otherwise the work of the Charity is carried out by volunteers and by the purchase of services from a number of individuals. These expenses are included under expenditure on educational events and publications (Note 3) and administration costs (Note 4).

**5. Governance**

	2022	2021
Room hire	-	-
Independent examination and statutory costs	493	493
Trustees' meeting travel expenses	-	-
	<u>£ 493</u>	<u>£ 493</u>

No Trustees (2021: 0) received reimbursement of their travelling expenses totalling £NIL (2021: £NIL) in relation to their role as Trustee.

**6. Fixed assets**

	Freehold premises	Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
Purchase cost (September 2008)	227,569	-	227,569
Revaluation (October 2021)	72,431	-	72,431
Book value at 31 December 2022	<u>300,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>300,000</u>
Depreciation			
As at 1 January 2022	-	-	-
Charge for the year	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
As at 31 December 2022	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net book value			
At 31 December 2022	<u>300,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>300,000</u>
At 1 January 2022	<u>300,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>300,000</u>

The freehold premises have been occupied by the Charity as a retreat practice centre. During the year 2022 the property was put on the market for sale with an asking price of £300,000. An offer has been received and it is expected that the sale of the property will be completed in 2023.

**Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)**

<b>7. Debtors</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Gift Aid	120,894	88,944
Other debtors	2,341	3,049
Prepayments		
	<u>£ 123,235</u>	<u>£ 91,993</u>

<b>8. Liabilities: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Loans	-	-
Deposits received for Retreats in 2022	-	-
Accruals	4,826	4,507
	<u>£ 4,826</u>	<u>£ 4,507</u>

**9. Reserves adequacy**

Much of the Unrestricted fund represents fixed and working assets required by the Charity to carry on its day to day work. The remainder of the Unrestricted fund comprises cash at bank. For the Charity to function successfully, it must maintain an adequate level of Unrestricted reserves that can be used to finance the Charity's day to day operations and provide a precautionary reserve in case of fluctuations in the future level of income. The Trustees consider it appropriate that the level of precautionary reserve should be of the order of twelve months' expected future expenditure plus an allowance for property maintenance. At 31 December 2022, the Charity's bank balances were in excess of £50,000 above this level. The Trustees are satisfied that this situation is satisfactory having regard to the expected pattern of expenditure over the next few years especially the set up costs of future major events and the acquisition of new practice centres.

**10. Statutory and general information**

This note contains information required to comply with statutory and technical accounting pronouncements:

*(i) In relation to the statement of financial activities*

None of the Charity's activities was acquired or discontinued during the current or previous years. Accordingly all of the Charity's results relate to continuing operations.

As the Charity is a company limited by guarantee, it is required to present an income and expenditure account in its financial statements. The Charity's Statement of Financial Activities includes all matters that would require inclusion in an income and expenditure account and hence no separate income and expenditure account is presented.

Because the Charity has no gains and losses not disclosed in the Statement of Financial Activities, a statement of total recognised gains and losses for the year has not been presented as this would be the same as the Statement of Financial Activities.

No taxation is payable as the Society is a registered Charity and accordingly is entitled to exemption from taxation on its charitable activities.

*(ii) Balance sheet*

There are no pension or other contingencies at 31 December 2022 and 2021.

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)

## 11. Restricted funds

	UK Action Fund for PV £	Vietnam Dana £	Practice Centre Fund £	Wake Up Fund £	Total £
Balance at 01 January 2022	82,480	11,342	192,852	18,480	305,154
Donations received 2022	127,088	2,885	47,721	-	177,694
Other income	-	-	-	-	-
Interest	-	-	290	-	290
	209,568	14,227	240,863	18,480	483,138
Applied during the year	(125,000)		(8,599)		(133,599)
Transfer	-	-	-	-	-
Balance at 31 December 2022	£84,568	£14,227	£232,264	£18,480	£349,539
Comprising					
Debtors (GiftAid)	54,300	3,194	45,200	-	102,694
Creditors	-	-	-	-	-
Cash	30,268	11,033	187,064	18,480	246,845
	£84,568	£14,227	£232,264	£18,480	£349,539

## Prior year comparison:

	£	£	£	£	£
Balance at 01 January 2021	63,378	7,542	177,245	18,480	266,645
Donations received 2021	64,102	3,800	20,855	-	88,757
Other income	-	-	-	-	-
Interest	-	-	52	-	52
	127,480	11,342	198,152	18,480	355,454
Applied during the year	(45,000)		(5,300)		(50,300)
Transfer	-	-	-	-	-
Balance at 31 December 2021	£82,480	£11,342	£192,852	£18,480	£305,154
Comprising					
Debtors (GiftAid)	51,600	3,594	20,400	-	75,594
Creditors	-	-	(1,469)	-	(1,469)
Cash	30,880	7,748	173,921	18,480	231,029
	£82,480	£11,342	£192,852	£18,480	£305,154

The Thich Nhat Hanh UK Action Fund (*formerly called the Thich Nhat Hanh Continuation Fund*) raises money to promote Thầy's teachings internationally and in the UK.

The Vietnam Dana Fund comprises donations given to support Plum Village's "Humanitarian Relief" programme which offers material and spiritual support to hundreds of communities in the poorest areas of Vietnam where education, development, social services and relief work are in great need to ensure healthy and happy lives for all. The donations received are paid to Plum Village to be spent in Vietnam in the way Plum Village considers best to meet current needs.

**Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)**

The UK Action Fund for Plum Village (PV) comprises donations given to support the monastic community in Plum Village, France and the European Institute of Applied Buddhism (EIAB) in Germany.

The Practice Centre Fund collects donations to finance the acquisition of practice centres for the UK Sangha.

The Wake Up Fund is for donations to support Wake Up, which promotes Thích Nhất Hạnh's teachings for young people.

**Independent Examiner's Report**

To the trustees on the unaudited accounts of the Community of Interbeing UK;

I report on the accounts of The Community of Interbeing UK for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on pages 17 to 23.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

**Independent examiner's statement**

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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



Alex Chandler ACA  
Sygma  
Chartered Accountants  
1 Sopwith Crescent, Wickford, Essex, SS11 8YU  
30 October 2023