

Charity Number: 1142973

Dragon Bell Temple

Report and financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2023

Dragon Bell Temple
Reference and administrative information
for the year ended 31 March 2023

Status

Established under a trust deed dated 30 July 2010, and registered as a charity 20 July 2011.

Charity number 1142973

Registered office and operational address

Cross Farm
Drewsteignton
Exeter
EX6 6PA
Devon

Trustees Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Rev W S Lee
Rev Finnan o'hEartain (resigned 24/06/2022)
Rev Leandra Robertshaw (resigned 24/06/2022)
Rev Elinore Agnew
Rev Daigen Weir
Rev Sanshin Alexander (appointed 13/02/2022)

Bankers Co-operative Bank
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Independent examiner

James Gore-Langton FCCA DChA
Garth
Outertown
Stromness
KW16 3JP

Dragon Bell Temple

Trustees' annual report

for the year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees present their report and receipts and payments accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023. The trustees confirm that the accounts comply with the current statutory requirements and the charity's trust deed.

The objects of the charity are to advance the Buddhist faith, in particular the Serene Reflection Meditation School of Buddhism (also known as Soto Zen). The charity operates within the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives.

Meditation and following the Bodhisattva Precepts is the foundation and heart of our practice. Buddhist teachings point to the potential in everyone to realizing the true nature of mind, and this is the purpose of practising of meditation and morality. Realization of the true nature of mind is characterized by the manifesting of compassion, love and wisdom in an individuals actions and behaviour in day to day living. This is how a unique individual expresses what are universal good qualities accessible to all, and this is inevitably an example to others. Anyone who is interested is welcome to practice at Dragon Bell Temple, the existence of the temple provides a location and resource for people which can support their efforts to practice the way of the Buddha.

The relationship between the ordained monastics and the lay trainees who support the charity, both spiritually and financially, is rooted in faith in practice. This is central to how a temple of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives is established and run. Gratitude and appreciation are at the heart of this endeavour. There are no charges for any of the services and events administered by the charity. The temple provides information and opportunities for people to contribute financially without expectation. All are welcome to come to learn about Buddhist practice, to join scheduled events and the services that we offer, such as ceremonial occasion marking for example.

The trustees continue to look at how best to introduce the practice to newcomers as well as how to respond to the needs of those with an established long-standing practise. The trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in reviewing and considering what activities the charity should undertake.

Dragon Bell Temple

Dragon Bell Temple was established as a trust on 20 July 2010.

Rev. Myfanwy McCorry came to Exeter to serve the local congregation in September 2002. The initial funding for her residency was provided by the South West Fund, a restricted fund within Throssel Hole Buddhist monastery. Over the years of her presence in Devon, the growth and commitment of the congregation, allowed for the renting of a house as the temple. In 2010, there was sufficient support to establish as a separate charity. The funds in the South West Fund were transferred to Dragon Bell Temple at the beginning of the financial year 2012.

Rev. Willard Lee took over the role of prior in August 2020 after the death of Rev. Myfanwy in July of that year.

Dragon Bell Temple

Trustees' annual report

for the year ended 31 March 2023

The temple is entirely funded by voluntary donations, currently the main running expenses are the living costs of the resident monk.

The administration of Dragon Bell Temple falls under the body of trustees, currently consisting of four members. The prior, who is continuously resident at the charity, is always a trustee by virtue of their office. The remaining body of trustees is made up of members who are in good standing with the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives (OBC). Membership of the OBC belongs to ordained monastics and Lay Ministers, all the current trustees are senior monastics. New trustees are appointed by a resolution of the trustees and are selected on the basis of their personal and professional qualifications to enable them to bring a positive contribution to the running of the charity.

Finances

The income of the charity for this financial year was £50,376 with an expenditure of £5,122. At the end of the year the charity's bank balances stood at £80,797. The trustees seek to maintain a minimum of £4,000 at the bank.

Dragon Bell Temple continues to accumulate funds due to the generous support of a donor hosting the charity in his house. The intention is to use the money saved towards either purchasing a property or to aid with renting a premises in the future. We currently have few running costs and minimal utility expenses. The main daily expense is food for the prior, Rev. Willard, this was the largest expenditure over the year. Other notable ongoing expenses were for the running and upkeep of Dragon Bell Temple's website, our regularly used Zoom account, and the annual insurance fee. The charity paid in advance for the hire of a premises and for the food for a residential retreat, these costs were covered by voluntary donations at the end of the stay. Unanticipated dental treatment for the prior over the last year has been a relatively large expenditure.

Dragon Bell Temple has no outstanding debts.

Review of activities

During the twelve months from the beginning of April 2021 to end of March 2022, Dragon Bell Temple maintained a regular monthly and weekly schedule running, both providing people opportunities to participate in person at the temple and remotely online via Zoom. The schedule was only interrupted when Rev. Willard was away visiting Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey and his family.

A typical weekly schedule consisted of one mid-week evening meeting, one weekend morning meeting, and four weekday early morning sessions. All of these were available for people to join in person or remotely, through the internet. One morning and one full day meeting were held on a Saturday each month when the temple was open, in some months an extra Saturday meeting was added.

Dragon Bell Temple

Trustees' annual report

for the year ended 31 March 2023

These Saturday sessions were only possible to join in person. Introductory sessions were also scheduled each month, there were three of these advertised every month. All the introductory sessions had to be attended in person. People are also invited to come to the temple, by arrangement, for introductions at times that suit them. For experienced people who would like to make use of the facilities at Dragon Bell, we clearly advertise that the temple space is available to make use of whenever the prior is resident.

In July the temple held a memorial day on the second anniversary of the death of Rev. Myfanwy. Members of the congregation gathered at Cross Farm for a day of meditation, a memorial ceremony, and a shared pot-luck lunch with a social time extending into a local afternoon walk and refreshments at a pub.

In September, Rev. Willard visited a small group of people in North Cornwall who have a long-standing connection with the temple and together they held a meditation day in a local village hall.

In December 2022, Dragon Bell ran a residential retreat in a hired premises, about an hours drive from the temple. 11 people attended, which is a comfortable number for the venue. The event received positive feedback from the participants. A number of the lay sangha and Rev. Willard, hope that this will be the first residential retreat of what will become a regular feature of the yearly calendar, twice each year. Interest was expressed beyond people previously known to Dragon Bell and provision was made to find ways to accept newcomers at this and future retreats. The retreat was advertised more widely than usual by utilizing a provision on the website of the Network of Wellbeing, who run the venue, Eden Rise.

Rev. Willard continued writing and posting teaching articles on the charity's website this year. These writings, along with news posts of upcoming events, are available to the general public via the website and a Facebook page. People who choose join a free subscription mailing list, receive news and teaching articles directly as they are published. In addition to the website news posts and the mailing service, a group news email is sent out once a month to people who have asked to be included.

The prior was able to remain a source of private spiritual guidance for people throughout the year and tries to remain readily accessible as much as possible.

The schedule of holding four steering group meetings continued during this financial year. Mostly these were attended online, though people can come in person, with the meetings being announced ahead of time using the above mentioned news email group. These meetings have no formal ability to make decisions but have a valuable role in giving a space for people to air their thoughts and ideas and for the prior to inform people of any new initiatives, ongoing working out of current tasks, and to test the waters by asking for people's thoughts about new or existing projects and events.

Dragon Bell Temple
Trustees' annual report
for the year ended 31 March 2023

Two of our trustees visited this year, Rev. Elinore Agnew for three nights in May 2022, and Rev. Daigen Weir for a week in February – March 2023. Both stayed at the temple and attended the weekly scheduled meetings that coincided with their stays, getting to meet some of the congregation in the process. Such visits are appreciated by both the lay community and the prior, they are beneficial for the charity and the temple's, ongoing well-being.

The trustees confirm that they have given due regard to the Charity Commission's statutory guidance on public benefit.

The trustees' annual report has been approved by the trustees on 30 September 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Rev. Daigen Weir
Trustee

Independent examiner's report

to the trustees of

Dragon Bell Temple

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2023 which are set out on pages 8 to 9.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees 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 charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all 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 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 charity as required by section 130 of the Act;
or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

James Gore-Langton FCCA DChA
Garth
Outertown
Stromness
KW16 3JP

15 October 2023

Dragon Bell Temple
Receipts and Payments Accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Receipts		
Donations	48,538	13,310
Gift Aid tax recovery	1,839	3,534
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total receipts	50,377	16,844
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Payments		
<i>Charitable expenditure</i>		
Monks upkeep	1,033	1,290
Household	21	7
Premises	-	96
Insurance	336	336
Office	513	516
Meeting room hire	1,761	-
Car and travel	42	-
Sacristy	107	134
Medical	1,111	69
Requisites	12	3
Miscellaneous	-	12
Trustee expenses	198	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total payments	5,134	2,463
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net receipts for the year	45,243	14,381
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Bank and cash balances at start of year	35,556	21,175
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Bank and cash balances at end of year	£ 80,799	£ 35,556
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

All of the charity's funds are unrestricted.

Dragon Bell Temple
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
as at 31 March 2023

	Note	2023	2022
		£	£
Bank and cash balances		80,799	35,556
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Other monetary assets			
Gift Aid receivable		1,940	1,839
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
		1,940	1,839
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Fixed assets		-	-
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Notes

- a) All the charity's funds are unrestricted.
- b) As resident monk at the temple, the prior, who is a trustee of the charity, has his day to day living expenses met by the charity, as permitted by the charity's rules.

Approved by the trustees on 30 September 2023 and signed on their behalf by: