

Annual report September 2021 to August 2022

Theravada Buddhist Trust (TBT)

Theravada (school of the elder monks) is a branch of Buddhism that uses the teaching of the oldest recorded Buddhist texts. It is the dominant form of religion in Myanmar (formerly Burma) and its neighbours, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Sri Lanka.

Annual report by the board of Trustees for the financial year ended 31 August 2022

1. Objectives and activities

Our aims and objectives are clearly stated in our trust deeds which are summarised below:

- (1) To advance the Theravada Buddhist practice in the Yorkshire area for the benefit of the public by encouraging and facilitating religious practice through provision of place of worship. This will hold religious ceremonies, mass chanting open to the public, prayers meetings, public celebration of religious festivals plus long and short stay meditation retreats.
- (2) To promote awareness and understanding of Theravada Buddhism by providing regular religious teachings and meditation practice for the public.
- (3) To provide religious devotional acts by facilitating the Buddhist reverend, visiting the sick for encouragement and support of pastoral work

2. Worship and prayer

There is regular chanting, group meditation and discussion of Buddha's teaching by attendees at the monastery as indicated by the daily programme below.

6:00 Chanting. 18:30 Chanting

Wednesday and Sunday 20:00 – 21:30 Group Meditation, Dhamma talks and reading of Buddhist scriptures by Zoom meetings.

Second week of Saturday every month, 10:00 to 14:00 (offering food, chanting, group meditation and Dhamma discussion.)

The activities above give spiritual support and fulfilment to the Buddhist community in Sheffield and beyond. People from surrounding areas as far as Leeds, Manchester and even from London attended these meetings. The meditation and Dhamma discussion sessions are quite useful for the attendees to further their knowledge on the teachings of the Buddha and enhance their practice of insight meditation.

Children's classes to learn Burmese literature and culture also bring enormous benefits to the children who are keen to learn their language of their homeland which they have left for so many years. Children are actively encouraged to be involved in these activities promoted by the monastery to maintain the culture of the ethnic minorities of Burma. These classes have been suspended since COVID-19.

3. Other religious and fund-raising activities

In addition to the above activities there are regular religious activities carried out under the direction of the resident Buddhist monk and teacher Venerable Ashin Gawsaka. These are important days in the Buddhist calendar as depicted below.

These events are conducted in hired community halls or school sports halls to accommodate the

number of people attending these events which include not only Myanmar devotees but also people from various backgrounds like British, Europeans and Asians.

Due to the COVID-19 , ceremonies and gatherings were conducted in accordance with the COVID-19 restrictions and regulations.

i). Thingyan festival (Myanmar New Year) and Myanmar food fair. This is to usher in the Myanmar New year, which usually falls in April. In Myanmar, the festivities last for about four days (public holidays) and is also called the water festival. It is celebrated as Songram in neighbouring countries like Thailand and Laos. It is usually celebrated in the month of April.

Due to the pandemic this year's festival (2021) was cancelled. Sayadaw made his New Year blessings from the monastery In Sheffield by Zoom.

ii) Buddha Day or Vesak.

This ceremony was conducted on 7 May 2022

This is to honour the birth, enlightenment and passing away of the Buddha. In temples all over the world Buddhists engage in prayers and reflect on the virtues of wisdom, courage, and compassion of the Buddha.

TBT organised this event at the TBT monastery, Sheffield, which includes group chanting and praying, readings about Buddha's life and his achievements.

(iii) Waso robe ceremony

This ceremony was conducted on 16 July 2022

This ceremony commemorates the first sermon of the Buddha and marks the beginning of the Buddhist lent. Monks were offered new robes (Waso robes) and other requirements to tide them through the months ahead. Children were encouraged to do readings about the first sermon and group chanting of Buddha's first sermon were performed by the members of the Trust and attending guests. This was conducted at TBT monastery, Sheffield.

(iv) Abhidhamma Day

This is also called the Festival of Lights, marking the end of Buddhist Lent, held on the full moon day of Thadingyut (usually in October) .This last for three days in Burma during which houses and streets are festively decorated and illuminated.

Usually it was celebrated by TBT members at TBT monastery Sheffield, by offering decorative lights to the Buddha, group chanting and refreshments for the guest. In accordance with the tradition younger members paid homage to the elders of the Trust and elders gave pocket money to the children .

The ceremony was conducted on 20-10-21

(v) Kathina Ceremony 23-10-21

This is the largest alms giving ceremony of the Buddhist year. It occurs at the end of Vassa, or monsoon period, in October and November. During the rains retreat the Buddhist monks will have remained in one place for three months, and the Kathina celebration marks the time for them to move on. The festival also celebrates the offering of Kathina robe to the monks by lay people.

This was celebrated by TBT members in a hired school sports hall/community hall due to large numbers of devotees attending. The ceremony began by offering lunch to the invited monks and guest.

The Kathina robes, gifts and cash were offered to the monks followed by talks and readings about Kathina ceremony, ending with a group prayer. All donations went to TBT. Devotees donated Kathina robes as usual. This year it was sponsored by 1993 graduates of Institute of Medicine (1), Yangon.

4. Myanmar traditional community activities

(i). Annual Htamenae (crushed glutinous rice) ceremony.

This is historically a celebration of rice harvest marked by cooking of special sticky rice made with sesame seeds, peanuts, and ginger.

TBT members cooked Htamenae in large woks and offer this to the Buddha, monks and attending guest. There was also group chanting, praying and sharing of merits. The ceremony was conducted on 19-02-22

(iii). Memorial days and Birthday celebrations

These were conducted by the resident monk. Due to the pandemic these blessings were done in accordance with the COVID-19 regulations. Between September 2021 and August 2022 there were 46 memorial services and 39 birthday blessings .

(iv). Regular second Saturday of the month meditation and collective food offering by TBT members. These were deferred due to the pandemic.

(v). Ad Hoc visits by families

There were 24 visits to the monastery.

(vi). Bereavement support

The spiritual director regularly gives bereavement support to bereaved families in accordance with the Myanmar culture and Theravada Buddhist tradition. This is a much-needed service for the Myanmar community living in this area and beyond.

(vii). Ordination to monk-hood

Every Myanmar men has to enter monk-hood temporarily as a novice and a monk at least once in their lifetime at a certain age to learn Buddhist scriptures and meditation. These ceremonies are conducted by the resident monk for those who wish to go through with this experience.

There were two ceremonies this period.

5. Activities of the resident monk Venerable Ashin Gawsaka

Due to the pandemic Ashin Gawsaka activities were reduced. There were 6 home visits/ housewarming blessings in accordance with the pandemic regulations.

6. Special Birthday celebration for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi 19-6-21

A special ceremony was conducted to mark Daw Suu's birthday as a UK country wide support by Myanmar Buddhist devotees for her.

7. Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

TBT is a charitable trust registered with the Charity Commission in December 2014 (reg. Charity number 1160584.) and governed by a Trust Deed approved by the Charity Commission on December 2014. This is available on the Charity Commission web site.

Organisational structure

The trustees of the charity are responsible for the general management and activities of the charity. The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or any other financial benefits from TBT.

8.Reference and administrative information

Charity registration number: 1160584

Resident monk and spiritual director. Venerable Ashin Gawsaka

Board of trustees

Dr. Ye Myint (Chairman)

Khun Saing (Secretary)

Min Min Zin (Treasurer)

Dr. Tin Maung Myint (member)

Ko Aung Myint (member)

Win Maw (member)

Dr. Soe Naing (member)

Dr. Maung Maung (member and joint treasurer)

Dr. Yin Thu Aung (member)

Contact: 59 Southey Green Road, Sheffield S5 8GU

Tel. 0114 3487865/ 07729243899

Website: www.dhammikaramavihara.co.uk

Facebook: Dhammikarama monastery

10. Use of volunteers

There are about 10 dedicated volunteers who help in the religious events. Their work includes moving chairs, cooking, cleaning, putting up decorations, washing up, throwing waste, and serving food to the guest on large occasions. These volunteers also regularly clear the garden and cut down the branches of overgrown trees. We would like to acknowledge their hard work, dedication, and support to the organisation.

9. New Developments

Buddhist Chaplaincy

Our resident monk Ashin Gawsaka visits Northern General Hospital and Hallamshire hospitals to carry out the duties of a Buddhist Chaplaincy.

Ashin Khemika Linkara

He has arrived at Dhammikarama monastery, Sheffield in May 2022 to take up the duties as a Tier V religious worker. He is highly qualified in Buddhist studies and an experienced meditation instructor. Since his arrival he has been assisting Ashin Gawsaka in all aspects of the religious work at the monastery. He has also started a regular weekly Dhamma talk and meditation session by Zoom.

Levelling of the ground

A patch of ground in the garden of the monastery has been filled and levelled. This will provide a much needed space to conduct gatherings at the monastery.

10. Future direction of the Trust

1.To encourage younger members of the trust to be more involved in the work of the trust. It is envisaged that these young members will become more active and take on more responsibilities.

Currently there are young members from South Yorkshire and beyond who are starting to take on some responsibilities.

2. After the establishment of a monastery in 2016, to conduct smaller religious activities at the monastery.

3. To give support to members of local Buddhist community (particularly to promising youngsters) who are in genuine need for their education/career progression via special awards/grants as well as rewarding them for excellence.

4. To invite famous meditation teachers and Buddhist monks for lectures and guidance.

5. To conduct weekend day courses on Buddhism for young people at the monastery.

11. Financial report (to be submitted by the accountant)



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

THERAVADA BUDDHIST TRUST (TBT)

No (if any)

CC16a

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period
from

01/09/2021

To

31/08/2022

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 £
A1 Receipts					
	47,335	-	-	47,335	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	47,335	-	-	47,335	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	47,335	-	-	47,335	-
A3 Payments					
	25,867	-	-	25,867	-
	-	1,570	-	1,570	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	25,867	1,570	-	27,437	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	25,867	1,570	-	27,437	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	21,468	- 1,570	-	19,898	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	21,468	- 1,570	-	19,898	-

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		156,948	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	156,948	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
		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	
	DR. MAUNG MAUNG	DR. MAUNG MAUNG	16/06/2023	



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

THERAVADA BUDDHIST TRUST

On accounts for the year
ended

29-AUGUST-2022

Charity no
(if any)

1160584

Set out on pages

1-3

**Responsibilities of
Trustees and
independent examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for preparing annual report and accounts in accordance with applicable law and regulations. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("The Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

As an independent examiner, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention

**Basis of independent
examiner's statement**

My examination was completed in accordance with general guidance provided by the Charity Commission. The work was done through the review of accounting records kept by the charity and consider reasonable and completeness of the accounts presented with those records. Any unusual transactions or disclosures in the accounts are being considered and seek explanation from the trustees for anything of any concerns. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that will be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

Regarding my examination, nothing has come to my attention;

1. that give reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: Aye Myat Phyu

Date: 13/06/2023

Name: Aye Myat Phyu

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

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

Address:

Section B

Disclosure

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

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.