

Annual Trustees report September 2023 to August 2024

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 2024.

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 like Anguittara Nikaya by Zoom meetings.

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. These have been suspended at the moment.

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 well attended by devotees and members of the TBT. Most of 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.

i) Buddha Day or Vesak.

This ceremony was conducted on 25 May 2024

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.

(ii). Waso robe ceremony

This ceremony was conducted on 20 July 2024

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.

(iii) 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 29-10-23

(iv) Kathina Ceremony 26-11-23

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 a collective sponsored event. All the members of the Theravada Buddhist Trust and Dhamma friends chipped in to celebrate this auspicious event.

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 24-2-24.

(iii). Memorial days and Birthday celebrations

These were conducted by the resident monks. Between September 2023 and August 2024 there were 41 memorial services and 58 birthday blessings .

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

(v). Ad Hoc visits to the monastery by families

There were 48 visits to the monastery to pay homage to the resident monks and make donations to TBT.

(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 was no ceremony this period.

5. Activities of the resident monk

Ashin Gawsaka

He visited Myanmar, his hometown in April to May 2024.

There were 14 home visits/ housewarming blessings .

He was also invited to other Myanmar monasteries in Birmingham, London and Manchester to attend Kathina, Waso and ordination ceremonies.

6. 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.

7. Reference and administrative information

Charity registration number: 1160584

Resident monk and spiritual director Venerable Ashin Gawsaka (also a Trustee)

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

8. 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. Humanitarian aid efforts

Due to the political crisis in Myanmar there are a lot of needy places there. Following donations were made by TBT members and Dhamma friends

- (I) A £500 donation was made to Mawgyun Sayadaw in Myanmar , who was sick.
- (II) A donation of £600 was made to the flood victims in Myanmar. All Dhamma friends in Sheffield contributed to this fund.

- (III) A £300 donation was made to Mahagandaryon Sayadaw, in Myanmar, for his 75 th birthday

10. Other developments

A new bank account has been successfully opened with Charity Aid Foundation bank.

Aye Myat Phyu has been nominated as TBT accountant and her name has been added to HMRC and the Charity Commission.

Increasing numbers of Myanmar students attending Sheffield University are attending the monastery for religious and traditional ceremonies. This is a welcoming development.

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.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.

3. To apply to the Local Council to grant a piece of land where we can build a place of worship .

4. To consider supporting some needy local communities as part of the Trust's charitable work

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



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

THERAVADA BUDDHIST TRUST (TBT)

No (if any)

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

9/1/2023

To

8/31/2024

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 £
A1 Receipts					
	42,104	-	-	42,104	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	42,104	-	-	42,104	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	42,104	-	-	42,104	-
A3 Payments					
	27,285	-	-	27,285	-
	-	1,872	-	1,872	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	27,285	1,872	-	29,157	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	27,285	1,872	-	29,157	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	14,819	- 1,872	-	12,947	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	14,819	- 1,872	-	12,947	-

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		187,214	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	187,214	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
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 asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		DR. MAUNG MAUNG	DR. MAUNG MAUNG	5/27/2025
		DR. TIN MAUNG MYINT	DR. TIN MAUNG MYINT	5/27/2025



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

THERAVADA BUDDHIST TRUST

On accounts for the year
ended

29-AUGUST-2024

Charity no
(if any)

1160584

Set out on pages

1-3

**Responsibilities of
Trustees and
independent examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). 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 carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would 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**

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention;

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act 2011; 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: Khine Shwe War

Date: 30/05/2025

Name: Khine Shwe War, FCCA

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

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

Address:	132 Dunedin Road
	London
	E10 5NL

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.