

Trustees Annual Report for y/e 31-12-2020

Management

Trustees:

Vidyaketu	Chair of Trustees
Nagarakshita	Trustee
Sradhamayi	Trustee
Jane Bolger	Trustee and Treasurer
Shuddhadhara	Trustee
Lucy Mitchell	Trustee
Nicci Lowit	Trustee

Steering Committee

Vidyaketu	
Jane Bolger	Treasurer
Angela Miles	
Vidyakaya	
Nagarakshita	
Lucy Mitchell	
Penny Noyes	Safeguarding Officer

Governance

- **Constitution and Governing Document** - The Triratna West Kent Buddhist Group (TWKBG) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Registered Charity No 1179930. It was granted charitable status by the Charity Commissioners on 14 September 2018. It is governed by a constitution dated 1 August 2018 amended 7th September 2020
- **Relationships** – TWKBG maintains close communication with and works under the guidance of the Triratna Buddhist Order and in co-operation with other centres and groups with the same objects.

- **Organisation** – TWKBG is run on a day to day basis by a Steering Committee, whose members are appointed by the Board of Trustees. The members of the Steering Committee at 31st December 2020 are as shown above.
- **Activities** – The teaching and Practice of Buddhism.
- **Members** - Membership of the CIO is open to those who are members of the Triratna Buddhist order or a Mitra of the Triratna Buddhist Order who is Training for Ordination.
- **Trustees** - Every trustee of the TWKBG must be a member of the Triratna Buddhist Order or a Mitra of the Triratna Buddhist Order who is Training for Ordination.
- **Safeguarding** – TWKBG has prepared specific guidelines intended to offer guidance where Order Members or other experienced members of the Triratna community are presenting to and communicating with those where a duty of care is owed. There are overall Ethical Guidelines with separate documents for the spiritual and secular activities covering Child Protection and the treatment of Sub-Adults and “Adults at Risk”. All documents were last updated in October 2019
- **Health and Safety** – TWKBG has additional procedures for handling and evacuating the premises in the case of fire or flooding. The Health, Safety and Security Risk Register is updated annually.

Objects and Activities

Summary

The object of the TWKBG is to support the advancement of the Buddhist religion, by:

1. Encouraging members and others to live ethical lives in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha.
2. Supporting ordained members of the Triratna Buddhist Community and other members of the Sangha, at the discretion of the Trustees of the TWKBG.
3. Maintaining close communication with and working under the guidance of the Triratna Buddhist Order and in co-operation with other centres and groups with the same objects.
4. Using applications of the Buddha’s teaching to promote the health and well-being of all.

Main Activities

The Covid 19 pandemic completely changed the way we carried out our activities in 2020 in the accordance with our objectives.

Prior to lockdown at the end of March 2020 we carried out the following activities – much the same as in the previous year:-

- Sangha Night – every Wednesday evening throughout the year providing teaching, discussion and group meditation for our regular attendees. Sangha nights are open to all who are familiar with the two core meditation practices (Mindfulness of Breathing and Metta Bhavana).
- Monthly Saturday afternoon newcomers' meditation classes - teaching the basics of Buddhist meditation as practised in the Triratna Buddhist Community i.e. Mindfulness of Breathing and Metta Bhavana. These classes are open to all and in particular provide an easy entry for those wishing to join our Wednesday Sangha nights.
- Two planned weekend Sangha retreats open to everyone familiar with our two core meditation practices (Mindfulness of Breathing and Metta Bhavana) but cancelled because of Covid restrictions
- Classes - weekly Mitra study groups (currently 2 groups) led by Vidyakaya and Vidyaketu. Membership of these groups is by invitation.
- Supporting and leading other groups – pre lockdown, our order members have led and supported other Triratna groups particularly Hastings Sangha where Vidyakaya attended on a monthly basis.

After lockdown we ceased all our face to face activities and it became apparent that we would not be able to hold the two weekend Sangha retreats that had been planned. In response to the pandemic, the West Kent Sangha joined with the Triratna Sanghas in Eastbourne and Hastings to form a new combined sangha 'Sangha South East' and moved all of our activities on line using the Zoom platform:

- Combined Sangha Night – every Wednesday evening providing teaching, discussion and group meditation for those attending. In the absence of a monthly beginners meditation class we opened Wednesday sangha night to anyone who wished to join in regardless of previous experience. This has proved to be very successful and, no longer being restricted by physical location, we now have regular attenders from all over South East England and further afield including the West Country and abroad.

- Our weekly mitra study groups have continued online
- Our Order Members have joined with those of Eastbourne and Hastings to form a combined Order team allowing us to broaden and deepen our teaching and Dharma related activities.

The Role of Volunteers

All spiritual activities are provided by volunteers. Order members of the Triratna Buddhist Community give of their time freely to teach and provide spiritual guidance.

Before lockdown, where a guest order member must travel to attend a meeting of TWKBG then only their travel expenses are reimbursed. Since lockdown, using the Zoom platform, guest order members have not had to incur travel expenses.

Prior to lockdown, occasionally an order member and or Mitra would be reimbursed for the travel expenses and the cost of attending a retreat where such a retreat has a direct bearing on the duties the order member / Mitra carries out in relation to the group and its members e.g. Mitra Convenor retreats and Groups and Pioneers retreats

Order Members, Mitras and Friends bring their organisational skills to the group which are given without payment.

Grant Making Policy

TWKBG may, from time to time, make grants at the discretion of the Trustees. These would normally be to financially assist Sangha members to attend retreats or undertake training that they may otherwise not be able to afford. Grants may also be made to other Triratna charities at the discretion of the Trustees.

Financial Overview

As we do not own or lease premises, although our income from donations has fallen considerably our ongoing financial commitments have also considerably reduced so our financial position at the end of 2020 remained much the same as at the end of 2019

Balance sheet and Annual Total Income and Expenditure are included on pages 6 and 7 below

Funding

TWKBG is funded by a combination of donations and fees.

- Those attending the regular weekly spiritual activities i.e. Sangha Night and Mitra Study donate to the Group what they can afford either on a monthly basis or at each meeting.
- Weekend retreats, when these are able to take place, are charged on a fee basis with reduced rates offered to any that cannot afford the full fee.
- Our monthly classes for newcomers, when these are able to take place are at present funded by donations made on the day by those attending.
- TWKBG has also benefitted in the past by small one-off donations from 'sister organisations' which have been used for the purchase of meditation mats and cushions and second hand books for our library. However, no such donations were applied for or received in the current year that this report relates to.

Expenditure

Some of the expenditure which would normally be expected is covered at no cost by our volunteers (see above) who donate their time freely.

So, our income from the sources described above was able to deliver:

- Two donations totalling £2,000:

£1,000 to Dhammaloka for the promotion of Dharma activities in India
£1,000 to Dharmachakra for the Buddhist Centre Online.
- The day to day running costs of the Group, the main ones being room hire (prior to lockdown), the cost of insurance and the Zoom platform. These are much reduced from previous years
- The cost of consumables i.e. stationary, shrine sundries (candles shrine cloths etc.) again much reduced from previous years
- Payment for other venues, such as retreat centres also much reduced this year
- Where a professional service (for example accountancy or legal) cannot be provided by one of the Sangha then it may be necessary to use a paid for outside source. This has not been necessary in the year this report refers to.

Balance Sheet 31 December 2020

**Triratna West Kent Buddhist Group
Registered Charity Number 1179930
Balance Sheet 31 December 2020**

31 December 2019		31 December 2020
	Current Assets	
-9,520.25	Cash at Co-op Bank Current Account	-9,043.32
-195.32	Cash at Paypal Account	-137.59
0.00	Less current liabilities	0.00
<u>-9,715.57</u>		<u>-9,180.91</u>
	Unrestricted funds	
	Balance at 31.12.19	-9,715.57
	Surplus for 2020	534.66
	Balance at 31.12.20	<u>-9,180.91</u>

Jane Bolger
Treasurer

I have examined the accounts of the Triratna West Kent Buddhist Group together with the books of the Group, the vouchers produced and the explanations given. In my opinion they are in accordance therewith.



Keith Mitchell
Independent Examiner
May 2021



CHAIR OF TRUSTEES
24-5-2021

Triratna West Kent Buddhist Group (TWKBG) Registered
Charity No 1179930

Annual Total Income and Expenditure

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Income						
Cash donations	-2,170.00	-4,362.00	-3,430.23	-2,990.30	-2,255.22	-315.70
Standing order donation	0.00	-40.00	-1,255.00	-2,205.00	-2,520.00	-2,160.00
FWBO Grant	0.00	0.00	0.00	-394.30	0.00	0.00
Beginners course participant fee	0.00	-90.00	-185.60	-1,332.80	-279.60	-104.52
Day retreat participant fee	0.00	0.00	0.00	-50.00	0.00	0.00
Sangha retreat participant fee	0.00	-1,484.00	-1,444.39	-3,849.38	-4,186.46	0.00
Special event participant fee	0.00	-855.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special event dana	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One-off donation to WKBG	-5.00	-0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Legacy donation to WKBG	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gift Aid	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank Interest	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Income total	-2,175.00	-6,831.01	-6,315.22	-10,821.78	-9,241.28	-2,580.22
Expenditure						
Room hire	520.00	1,215.00	2,010.00	1,465.00	1,530.00	548.29
Speaker expenses	0.00	0.00	125.00	30.00	0.00	0.00
Sundries	24.98	164.82	78.55	438.84	51.10	0.00
Website	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Insurance	0.00	231.40	50.00	196.00	196.00	196.00
Library purchases	0.00	0.00	0.00	132.30	0.00	0.00
Beginners course room hire	0.00	0.00	210.00	440.00	440.00	115.00
Sangha retreat venue hire	0.00	1,100.00	1,152.00	2,800.00	3,000.00	0.00
Sangha retreat food and sundries	0.00	166.71	0.00	557.16	178.57	0.00
Sangha retreat refund	0.00	580.00	120.00	120.00	140.00	0.00
Special event room hire	0.00	446.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special event speaker expenses	0.00	150.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special event publicity	0.00	90.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special event sundries	0.00	128.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Order member expenses	0.00	31.30	60.30	131.57	0.00	0.00
Order member retreats	0.00	632.30	0.00	275.00	288.90	0.00
Order member support	0.00	0.00	1,100.00	1,200.00	0.00	0.00
Training	0.00	165.00	0.00	1,045.00	395.85	197.86
WKBG charitable donation	0.00	200.00	60.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00
Bursary	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Expenditure total	544.98	5,301.92	4,965.85	8,830.87	6,220.42	3,057.15
Annual surplus(-) / deficit(+)	-1,630.02	-1,529.09	-1,349.37	-1,990.91	-3,020.86	476.93
Cumulated surplus(-) /deficit(+)		-3,159.11	-4,508.48	-6,499.39	-9,520.25	-9,043.32