



# **Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust**



29/31 Osler Street, Birmingham B16 9EU

0121 454 6591

Registered Charity No. 513368

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*[www.birminghambuddhistvihara.org](http://www.birminghambuddhistvihara.org)*

## **Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust Trustees' Annual Report**

**1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023**

The Trustees present their report and independently examined financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. They have been prepared in the

light of the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities and the Charities' Act.

### **Administrative Information:**

Charity Name: Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust

Charity Commission Reg No:513368

Address: Birmingham Buddhist Vihara  
29/31 Osler Street  
Ladywood  
Birmingham  
B16 9EU

Trustees for the period:

Chair: John Beard  
Secretary: Suraj Lal  
Treasurer: Maung Maung Kyi  
Trustees: Monica Ann Lovelock  
Andrew Williams Nicholl  
Chit Ko Ko  
Keith Jones  
Mar Mar Lwin  
Su Theingi Thant

Spiritual Leader: Ven.Dr.Uttara Nyana

Independent Examiner:  
Mr. A. Dervish  
496-498 Bearwood Road  
Bearwood  
Birmingham  
B66 4BH

Bank Details: Barclays Bank Plc  
Leicester  
LE87 2BB

National Westminster Bank Plc  
Harborne  
Birmingham

### **Structure, Governance and Management:**

The Trust is governed by a Trust Deed dated November 1982 with an addendum dated May 2003. There is a provision for a maximum of nine trustees with a minimum of five trustees. When there is a vacancy, the spiritual director puts forward names which the remaining trustees then consider, trying to ensure that there is an even representation of gender, ethnicity, and interests. All trustees must be practising Buddhists.

### **Objectives:**

The objectives of the charity are to promote the study and practice of Buddhism according to the traditions of all schools of Buddhism, but particularly the Theravada School. To this end the Trust presently supports a Spiritual Director and two other Myanmar Buddhist monks who reside at the monastery (Vihara) on Osler Street.

They teach basic Buddhism as well as run higher Buddhist theological classes, perform religious rites as required, and look after the religious and spiritual needs of the laity.

Buddhist monks are traditionally totally reliant on the monastery and donations from the devotees for their basic needs.

### **Management:**

There are no paid workers in the Trust, and it relies totally on volunteers. The Trustees meet regularly to plan events and to oversee the running of Birmingham Buddhist Vihara and the Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda.

### **Activities at the Vihara:**

#### **Meditation Classes.**

With the easing of the COVID-19 restrictions, meditation classes on Thursday evenings have started again. Monday evening classes have not started again yet. Birmingham Zen Group also started their once-a-month meditation sessions on Fridays.

Meditation Online: Ven. Dr. Nagasena held meditation classes online every Monday at 7pm.

### **Retreats.**

10 Days Vipassana retreats did not take place at the Vihara.

### **Publication.**

Lotus: The Journal of the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara.

Issue 55 Published in August 2022

Issue 56 Published in November 2022

These publications were only in electronic format as during the COVID-19 Restriction period and were distributed on-line and via email.

We are truly grateful to our trustee, Theingi Thant, for her contributions in producing these publications on a regular basis.

### **Ceremonies.**

#### **The Buddha Day (Vesak Day Celebrations).**

The Buddha Day ceremony was held on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2022. This was the first celebration to be held at the Vihara after the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. It was attended by about 100 devotees and was sponsored by Dr. Kyaw Htun Aye and Dr. Htet Nwe Win.

Arts Society Birmingham sponsored VYKA Ltd, a production company to film

the event to be able to produce short films to support a virtual visit to a Buddhist place of worship.

Birmingham City Council did not hold Vesak Ceremony at the Birmingham Museums this year.

#### **24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda & Waso Robe Offering Ceremony.**

It was held on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2022 with well over 100 devotees attending the ceremony. Seven monks presided over the religious ceremony. Dr. Peter Rookes from Birmingham Council of Faiths was the guest speaker. Dr. Mar Mar Lwin, one of our trustees, sponsored the event and provided food Dana.

#### **Abhidhamma & Pavarana Day.**

End of three months lent was celebrated on full moon day on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>

October 2022 with offering of light at the Vihara and chanting of Patthana section of the Abhidhamma. Over 40 devotees attended the ceremony.

### **Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony.**

Kathina Robe Offering ceremony was held on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022. The ceremony was sponsored by Dr. Kyaw Htun Aye and Dr. Htet Hnin Nwe. Over one hundred and fifty devotees from different Buddhist communities joined in the robe offering to the Sanghas.

### **Patthana-Abhidhamma Chanting.**

The bhikkhus observed an auspicious recitation of the Patthana to welcome the New Year 2023 on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> January.

## **Other Activities**

### **Arts Society Birmingham.**

Forty to sixty primary schools routinely visit the Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda every year for religious education purposes every year with some visits from private schools, GCSE pupils, and university students.

As the visits did not happen during the pandemic, The Arts Society Birmingham supported by a generous grant from Westhill Endowment Trust, collaborated with six different places of worship, Birmingham Faith Leaders, and other organisations produced resources designed to enhance religious education school visits for children of 8-13 years. This resulted in 2000 copies of an illustrated guide distributed to the six different places of worship including Birmingham Buddhist Vihara. With the surplus money the other five places of worship, St. Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham Central Mosque, Birmingham Progressive Synagogue, Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha Gurdwara, and Shri Venkateswara (Balaji) Temple had film clips of virtual tour of the places made. The Society used library film clips available with all these places of worship with new filming kept to a minimum.

As a new film would have to be made for Birmingham Buddhist Vihara, Liz Dancey of the Arts Society Birmingham applied for a new grant of £4500 from Westhill Endowment Trust. Liz Dancey then commissioned Paul Davies of VYKA Ltd, a digital media company of Birmingham to produce a Religious Education film of Birmingham Buddhist Vihara and the Dhamma Talaka Pagoda. Filming was done during Vesak Ceremony held on Sunday 15th May 2022 and the following 2 days. Despite a lot of filming material and

interviews filmed a lot had to be edited out to suit the required script of the Arts Society Birmingham.

Three short films for Religious Education of the virtual visit to Birmingham Buddhist Vihara is available of the Arts Society Birmingham's website, suitable for 8 to 13 years, looking at the Buddhist Faith, Faith in the community and the religious buildings therein.

### **Birmingham Heritage Week.**

Birmingham Buddhist Vihara took part in Birmingham Heritage Week from 10<sup>th</sup> September 2022 to 18<sup>th</sup> September 2022 with 297 visitors taking part in the event.

### **Birmingham Buddhist Academy.**

The academy continued to run its on-line courses on Abhidhamma, Pali Grammar and Meditation on Fridays and Saturday evenings. The new semester started on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022. The classes are taught by Ven. Dr. Uttara Nyana and Ven. Dr. Nagasena.

### **Wedding Ceremonies.**

There were two wedding ceremonies held at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara.

- Dr. Ye Wint Naing and Dr. Aye Myint Myat Thon along with their parents jointly offered Dana as part of the traditional wedding blessing ceremony on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

- Dr. Rony Syal and Dr. Nan Thinzar Aye offered lunch Dana on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2022 as part of the wedding blessing ceremony.

- Dr. Arkar Min and Dr. Khin Lai Ye Win held their wedding ceremony and blessing ceremony on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

### **Birmingham Council of Faiths.**

The Annual General Meeting of Birmingham Council Faiths was held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara with Andrew Nicholls, our trustee, taking up chairmanship for one year. It was attended by 47 members of the Council where a tribute was paid to ER Queen Elizabeth II.

### **Funeral Ceremony.**

Funeral ceremony of Mrs. Raksa Devi Lal, the wife of Mr. Lal, who was one of the founder trustees of Birmingham Buddhist Vihara, was completed on 2nd October 2022 with the attendance of her children, grandchildren, and relatives. About 100 people attended the ceremony. Two monks from the Sri Lankan temple and three monks from Birmingham Buddhist Vihara attended the funeral ceremony held at Perry Barr Crematorium after which all

relatives and guests joined for blessing at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara.

### **Ordination.**

Mr. Khun Oo Lwin, Mrs. Thandar Lwin and family from Bromley, Kent offered lunch dana to the Sanghas at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara for Mr. Khun Oo Lwin's ordination held on 8th October 2022.

### **Network of Buddhist Organisations.**

Annual General Meeting of the Network of Buddhist Organisations was held at Birmingham Buddhist Vihara on 5th November 2022. The main discussion topic was "Awakening: Collective or Individual?" Vegetarian food was sponsored by the NBO chair.

### **Activities Abroad.**

#### ***Ven. Dr. Uttara Nyana.***

**Belgium** - Metta Retreat (18th July to 24th July 2022)

Dr Uttara Nyana led Metta retreat in Dhammaramsi, Belgium and taught Metta Sutta & Káyagatásati Sutta during the retreat.

**Belgium** - Vipassana Retreat (21st October to 30th October 2022)

Dr Uttara Nyana led a ten days Vipassana retreat at Dhammaramsi in Belgium during October 2022. Abhidhamma (Four Paramatthas) and Maha Dukkakkhandha Sutta were taught from a practical point of view during the meditation retreat.

#### ***Ven. Dr. Nagasena.***

**Chittagong Hills, Bangladesh.**

Dr. Nagasena paid a visit to Lotus Children's Home, Chittagong Hill Tracts between February 2022 and April 2022. He spent three and a half months with the academic teaching staff and people involved in the education project. He also trained the teachers, novices, and children of the Lotus Children Home every day on zoom.

### **Republic of Ireland.**

Ven. Dr. Nagasena attended a two Buddha Day events in Ireland during June 2022. He has been looking after Buddhist groups in Dublin and Cork for the last 12 years.

### **Brno, Czech Republic.**

Ven. Dr. Nagasena held a Loving Kindness retreat in Dhamma Rama, Ayukusala Vihara in Brno, Czech Republic from 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022. The Dhamma group also donated £500 towards Dr. Rewata Dhamma's school in Thamangone Village, Myanmar.

### ***The Late Ven. Dr. Rewata Dhamma's School* Thamangone, Myanmar.**

Donations were made to voluntary teachers at Dr Rewata Damma's School in Myanmar by Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust. Five students who passed their high school, volunteered to teach back at the school while they were waiting for their university entrance. The Trust donated £2000 to support those five young teachers.

### **Outreach.**

The Dhamma Talaka Peace Pagoda is open during the day for visitors. It is closed to the public during religious education school visits. There were fifty-three school visits during the year. Visits were made by schools based mainly in the West Midlands but schools from as far as Oxfordshire, Pembrokeshire, and Cheshire have visited the Vihara.

We are aware of our public benefit responsibility and make sure that we welcome all visitors of any faith or none.

Ven. Dr. Uttara Nyana and our present Chair are members of Birmingham Faith Leaders' Group.

The monks have open links with other Buddhist Viharas (Myanmar, Thai, Sri Lankan, Tibetan, Vietnamese) in London, Birmingham, Rugeley, Oxford, Sheffield, Manchester and Sunderland.

### **Renovation and Maintenance Work.**

- The Trust bought two computers, one laptop and one desktop to upgrade the computer system at the Vihara. Software programmes were also upgraded.
- Electrical fuse boards were upgraded to metal boards to comply with electrical safety standards. They will need reviewing in 10 years' time.
- On 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 annual fire-safety check was done on all fire extinguishers in all three buildings.
- Oliver Architecture Ltd. performed second survey of the Dhamma



Talaka Peace Pagoda via a cherry picker in September 2022 with a view to start reparative/renovative work on the stupa in early 2023. The company has been commissioned to act as Principal Designer for the project.

- Roof of Sangharama Vihara was inspected in June 2022 and repair work done.
- UV light filtration system in the fishpond replaced.
- According to gas safety guidelines 90 cm dual fuel cooker in Sangharama Vihara was replaced with a new one.

### **Buddhist Community**

We are grateful to our many supporters, donors and volunteers, in particular:

- The sponsors for our ceremonies.
- Dr. & Mrs. Kyaw Myint Oo, patron of Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust for their continued support.
- Dr. Mar Mar Lwin for her day-to-day support.
- Ashin Rahtapala for organizing and coordinating the Dana ceremonies for the devotees and his acknowledgement and blessings for these events on social media platform.
- Ashin Rahtapala also looks after the grounds and the security of the Vihara.
- Ven. Dr. Nagasena for keeping the Vihara in bloom and his help in the Academy.
- Mr. Htet Hla and his friends from London volunteering to keep the fence of the Vihara in shape. Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust would like to thank them for their annual contribution.
- Su Theingi Thant for editing and helping print Lotus Journals and in preparing the calendar and invitations for events and ceremonies of the Vihara. She also looks after the paperwork for the Birmingham Buddhist Academy.
- Mr. Wunna Shitka for updating and maintaining the Birmingham Buddhist Vihara website.

### **Financial Report**

The financial assets of the Trust are in a reasonable position. The cash funds bank balance stands at £695,851.00 (£683,431.00-2022) for general expenses.

There is £16,971.64 in a deposit account [NatWest] which is our

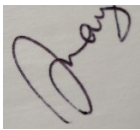
contingency fund.

The Birmingham Buddhist Academy functions as an independent organization and has a balance of £31,010.19.

No expenses or remunerations were made to any trustee or volunteer who gave their time freely. No contracts were given to any company associated with any trustee.

### **Risk Assessment**

The Trustees are aware of the need to consider the major risks to which the Charity is exposed. The Trustees continue to consider risks, their impact, an estimation of the likelihood of each risk, measures that must be taken to avoid exposure to the risk. These risks are reviewed on a regular basis.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Maung Maung Kyi', is positioned above the printed name.

Maung Maung Kyi  
Trustee







## 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 £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Cash at bank and in hand	664,841	31,010	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>664,841</b>	<b>31,010</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK


	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Freehold land & buildings	Unrestricted	860,905	-
	Motor vehicles	Unrestricted	8,300	-
	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Unrestricted	13,128	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Creditors	Unrestricted	816	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	MAUNG MAUNG KYI	02/02/2024



**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31/03/2023

**Charity no**

513368

**Set out on pages**

1,2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2023.

**Responsibilities and  
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed 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 material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

**Signed:**

**Date:**

02/02/2024

**Name:**

Ahmet Dervish

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

Institute of Financial Accountants  
AFA MIPA

**Address:**

A Dervish & Co Limited,  
496-498 Bearwood Road,  
Bearwood, B66 4HB.