

Reference and administrative details of the charity

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a Memorandum and Articles of Association, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006. The company was incorporated on 30 August 2016 and registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 5 June 2017.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

NI640489

Registered Charity number

NIC106141

Registered office

165 Donegall Pass
Belfast
Northern Ireland
BT7 1DT

CHAIRPERSON

Paul McCrory

TRUSTEES

Paul Haller
Michael O'Keefe
Paul McCrory
Frank Liddy
Richard Hall
Jean Gallagher
Jonathan Nixon
Steve Williamson
Clare McFadden
Paul Tohill

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Tony Clarke

53 Andersontown Road
Belfast
BT11 9AG

BLACK MOUNTAIN ZEN CENTRE

(Private company limited by guarantee without share capital)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Reference and administrative details of the charity

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements of the company for the 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the company's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practices applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019)

Structure, Governance and Trustees

Black Mountain Zen Centre which is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in Northern Ireland, registration number NI640489.

The Personnel

The current board of directors for Black Mountain Zen Centre has changed from the previous trustees' report.

The board of directors consists of directors from the previous year which are: Paul Haller, Jean Gallagher, Paul Tohill, Mary Price, Jonathan Nixon, Michael O'Keefe, Frank Liddy, Steve Williamson, Richard Hall and Paul McCrory.

Margaret Mulholland and Adam Murray have resigned from the board.

Mary Price has assumed a new role as chairperson of the board, Paul McCrory has continued in his role as treasurer.

The board would like to extend our deep thanks to Margaret Mulholland for her participation and work on the board over the past several years.

Chairs' Statement:

The 2023/24 period was one of 'settling in' to our new premises at 165 Donegall Pass, Belfast which facilitated expanding the range of practice opportunities open to both our local and online sangha.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I wish to express my sincere thanks to our Resident Teacher, Reverend Myogan Djinn Gallagher for transforming our physical rental space into a welcoming Zendo for those who join us for in-person zazen. Additionally, I would like to thank Djinn for facilitating a wide range of additional practice opportunities for our in-person and online Sangha.

In-person Zazen was offered each Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday morning, and was also available online, via Zoom, and every morning each week. In addition, our well-attended bi-annual five-day residential sesshins, led by our Guiding Teacher, Paul Haller, were accommodated in Tobar Mhuire Retreat and Conference Centre, Crossgar and Ards Friary, Creeslough and, for the first time, a 3-day Rohatsu Sesshin, led by our Resident Priest, Myogan Djinn Gallagher, was held at Tobar Muire, Crossgar in December 2023.

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) continued...

Chairs' Statement (continued)

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Also introduced were Monthly half-day sittings, Weekly well-being ceremonies, and Sunday morning Yoga classes for sitters. Each Saturday, after morning Zazen, there was an opportunity to participate in a Book Study Group. Earlier in the year the group studied 'Everyday Zen' by Charlotte Joko Beck. Participants are currently studying 'Seeing One Thing Through' by Mel Weitsman.

In July 2023, a small group of Sangha members traveled to Tassajara Zen Mountain Center in California to participate in a three-week Intensive Retreat. In June, Djinn hosted an in-person and online Beginners Class for four weeks, and in November, we offered a series of online classes hosted by our Guiding Teacher, Paul Haller. In conjunction with the Donegall Pass Community Forum, Sangha members now can contribute to their food bank and participate in their gardening projects.

Throughout the year our Resident Priest, Djinn Gallagher, was invited to participate in several outreach events, for example:

- Murder or Mercy, November 23, 2023,
- Perspectives on Suffering and Healing (Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism), January 26, 2024
- Zen and Art project at Queen's organised by Chinese PhD students, March 2024
- Two half-day seminars as part of Queen's medical student's Wholeness in Healing

Finally, throughout the year Djinn hosted a variety of different groups who are interested in meditation and the cultural significance of Buddhism, including

- a women's group sponsored by Bryson Charitable Group
- a seniors group of Presbyterians in Glengormley
- and a group of young Irish Baptist College students.

Our Journey:

BMZC is pleased to continue to offer both online and in-person sittings as well as workshops and classes. It must be noted, however, that this would not be possible without the efforts of Djinn Gallagher, our Resident Teacher, who has put in much time and effort to facilitate the online and in-person community with whom we now practice daily. BMZC continues to offer group sittings, workshops and retreats on a dāna basis and we would like to take this opportunity to also thank our sangha for their donations towards the centre and its teachers.

Guiding Teacher

Ryushin Paul Haller Roshi has continued to serve as our Guiding Teacher, and he has the deep appreciation of the board for fulfilling this vital role. Paul has been the guiding light for us and for Zen practice as a whole in N. Ireland since he first brought Zen to his home place in the year 2000.

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) continued...

Guiding Teacher continued...

His vision for what would ultimately become possible, his tireless devotion to visiting twice every year, leading sesshins, workshops, and sittings and giving dharma talks, and his calm guidance and raised eyebrow are all ultimately responsible for ensuring we have all come such a long way since those early days.

Paul led both our sesshins the past year in Tobar Mhuire Retreat and Conference Centre, Crossgar and Ards Friary, Creeslough. We would like to once again extend our thanks for his teachings in addition to the various online classes and workshops that Paul has offered to his students and fellow sangha members at Black Mountain Zen Centre.

Centre Management:

Our Resident Teacher Rev. Djinn Myogan Gallagher has kindly continued her offer of residency at BMZC as Resident Teacher. For this offer of steady, regular presence, offerings of guidance, dharma talks, work on the collaboration with Cara-Friend and for being the first friendly face most newcomers to BMZC will see, we truly cannot offer thanks for enough. It could be too quickly missed that Djinn has also supported BMZC in a myriad of background roles, including much day-to-day administration. Volunteering has always played a crucial role at BMZC, and the board wishes to thank all the sangha members who have made offerings of volunteerism.

Djinn continues to lead BMZC in the online world and in-person at our new premises - offering a place each day for our community to practice. She has continued to welcome new members into our sangha, offering guidance and training for those who wish to learn more about traditional Zen ceremonies.

Website, Social Media and Online Giving

The Board wishes to express our deep thanks for all those involved with the maintenance and work on the BMZC website.

In addition, the board would also like to thank Justin McCartney for his continued and ongoing support regarding the online presence of BMZC.

BMZC continues to offer teachings to our sangha through platforms such as Zoom, Soundcloud and Vimeo.

Charity Commission for N. Ireland

BMZC continues to be registered and compliant with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. Our Charity number is 106141, Company number NI640489.

Finance, Gift Aid and Fundraising

The board wishes to express our gratitude to our accountants, namely Tony Clarke and Colleen Doherty, for their assistance during the past year.

All accounts and confirmation statements are filed with Companies House, tax returns submitted to Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs, and Rates Exemptions secured from Land & Property Services.

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) continued...

The Annual Accounts have been prepared by our accountants based on bank statements and spreadsheets from the Treasurer, and are available separately from this document.

The Board would like to offer thanks to Steve Williamson once more who has assisted with securing additional funding for BMZC in the form of grants which have helped the centre continue operations and plan ahead for the future.

BMZC also expresses deep gratitude to our sangha for their generosity and support in the form of time and donations – to our sangha both home and afar, our deepest bows.

BMZC is a charity organization which relies on the concept of dāna to provide offerings, classes and teachings. These donations enable BMZC to build a reserve of funds to fall back on in addition to allowing BMZC to plan and grow in the years forthcoming.

Lastly, the board would like to express our ongoing thanks to all our members who submit application forms, set up their standing orders or agreed cash donations, and who continue to contribute to the centre. Thank you.

Going Concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

Financial Review

The results for the year ended 31 March 2024 are set out on pages 9 and 10 of the financial statements.

The total income for the year ended 31 March 2024 amounted to £51,823 (2023: £85,330) The total expenditure was £64,215 (2023: £37,108)

The Trustees consider that the unrestricted funds of the charity is sufficient and adequate to fulfil their obligations. The charity held £70,925 in reserves at the year end (2023: £83,317).

Reserves Policy

The income of the Company is considered adequate and the risks associated with any significant reduction in income is regarded as unlikely. The Trustees are satisfied with the current level of reserves at the present time. The Trustees are reviewing the Reserves Policy in the current year.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) continued...

Trustees' responsibilities statement


The Trustees (who are also directors of Black Mountain Zen Centre for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standard (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the income resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transaction and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and the enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2019. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report was approved by the Trustees, on and signed on behalf by:



Paul McCrory
Trustee