



BIRMINGHAM BUDDHIST CENTRE

JUNE 2023 - MAY 2024

Annual. *review*



A letter from the Chair

First of all I want to thank you for your response to the standing order appeal. The end of this booklet tells you more about what happened and how it went.

The year has seen the birth of many new ideas, conversations and approaches.

One thing you might have noticed is the complete redesign and refresh of the Centre's website. Its pleasing visual impact is matched by a simplified navigation, *what's on* and *getting started*, to cater for both new enquiries and existing Sangha members.

We have also been delighted by the response to the renamed and relaunched Dharma Night which now consists of a sequence of evenings on particular themes, which has enabled us to get into more depth with our topics.

Some of this is visible to many of us. But there are many sides to the Centre many of us don't see.

In this review, we have tried to highlight those aspects of the Sangha that you maybe don't see happening. Quite apart from all the behind the scenes logistics, financial management and book keeping, publicity, and building maintenance done by members of the Centre team, there are many other projects and initiatives that you might not know about. We hope to give you a glimpse of them.



**MAITRISARA
CHAIR**





OUR FOUNDER, OUR BUILDING

In February 2024, we marked the death of Virachitta who was one of the founders of the Birmingham Buddhist Centre. He was hugely influential in the purchase and renovation of our current Centre in the late 1990s.

The Centre and its beautiful garden is such a resource for the hundreds of people who attend the many events and activities each year. And it takes a lot of upkeep.



461

people came across the Dharma on
14 different introductory courses,
with **283 people completing most
of the course**

93

attendees across 7
Going Deeper Courses
and

49

Thursday evening
events

This year in numbers

There are now

42

Mitras training for
ordination, with 5 new
people asking this year
and we also welcomed

10

new Mitras

6

day retreats and one
non-residential weekend retreat
with

6

other events aimed
at supporting
meditation practice

and there were...

116

attendees on retreat, with 3
weekend retreats and one
week long retreat

31

educational visits from 23
different schools

9

weekly study groups: 1 new
women's group, 1 new men's
group and 7 continuing to
further years



Did you know, not everything that happens, happens in the Centre?

We hold a weekly online Dharma group on Zoom called WAKE UP: The underlying message of the Buddha.

We also support and resource the Meditation Society at the University of Birmingham which meets weekly in term time. The students co-ordinate the project and we provide the content and teaching. Some day retreats take place at the Buddhist Centre and young people from the group often come to Centre events and have sometimes become Mitras.





The Warwick group is affiliated to the Birmingham Centre and serves the communities of Warwick, Leamington and the wider Warwickshire area. Offering weekly Sangha Nights on a Tuesday and introduction to meditation courses from time to time.

Last year we ran four different residential retreats. We are so lucky to be so close to Adhithana, a global resource for Triratna's teaching and co-ordination. We hold most of our retreats there apart from the weekend women's retreat we co-organise with the Nottingham Buddhist Centre. This retreat takes place at Taraloka Retreat Centre for Women in Shropshire.



Watch a
short video
about
retreats here

bit.ly/retreats-w-bbc-vid





COMMUNITIES

Three communities and five flats are also part of the Buddhist Centre mandala. A total of 24 people live in these properties. The communities create a context for living with others based on shared Buddhist values and practice.



Schools

Schools are welcomed at the Buddhist Centre almost every week in term time. A team of volunteers lead this work and the children, mostly of primary school age, come up with some great questions.

PEOPLE OF COLOUR

The People of Colour group meet monthly, gaining momentum:

"It's been an enriching experience to be part of a team holding a monthly space for People of Colour to come together to meditate, explore the Dharma and connect. I've enjoyed practising together, welcoming new people into the monthly sessions & the team are excited to see how we develop over the coming year"



PARVEEN

SUB30'S GROUP

The sessions for people under the age of 30 continue monthly. We were delighted that during the year Prakashamitra who lives at Adhithana formally became a friend and adviser to our young people's team and to the Centre in terms of young people's work.



“When you’re in your 20s so many things are uncertain, ungrounded and changing. The lotus is very much starting to bloom. This year we’ve seen the sub30s group also start to bloom, with more regular attendance and expansion of the supporting team for the sessions to reflect this growth. It’s a great space to start exploring practice and the myriad of things that includes, with other young people trying to do something similar around a similar age.”

ALICE

awareness
is revolutionary

SANGHARAKSHITA

DHARMA NIGHT

We introduced a new format at our weekly Sangha gathering on a Thursday. Five Order members have taken on a sequence of evenings offering themes such as the Tibetan Book of the Dead and Metta. We've also had some great talks from visitors from outside Birmingham, and monthly evenings dedicated to ritual.





Catch up with some of the previous Dharma
Night Talks on our padlet page:

bit.ly/Dharma-Night-Talks



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Where does your donation go?

The room hire has had another successful year with a 9% increase on the previous year.

The donations increased by 11% thanks to the generosity of the Sangha, especially as donations represent 53% of the total income of the Centre. The total income overall was up 10% on the previous year.

In terms of expenditure, we revised the pay levels to the team upwards to make them more realistic and the utility bills jumped by over 50% compared with the previous year.

All in all, the Centre managed to make a modest surplus of £3009 which goes into our reserves. It's tight but with careful budgeting and monitoring, we keep afloat.

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Donations (inc. classes)	98,062	Team	96,527
Retreats	16,710	Retreats	13,240
Room Hire	48,018	Classes and activities	7,806
Shop	11,351	Shop	7,347
Other	10,490	Centre Property	35,841
		Administration	15,791
		Other	5,070
TOTAL INCOME	184,631	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	181,622

A simple summary from the accounts for June 2023 - May 2024

In the summer of 2023, five courageous volunteers were trained to carry out a phone appeal. Over a total of 7 two hour sessions, we contacted 145 people raising nearly £20,000 in new or increased donations every year. This was a really wonderful response and gives us such confidence in the Sangha's support. What surprised us was how enjoyable this process for the team (also scary!) And what good conversations happened along the way.





The Centre team, trustees and president

Contact the team if you need to:

DHARMASHALIN - MEN'S MITRA CONVENOR - dharmashalin@gmail.com

MIKE - CENTRE MANAGER - info@birminghambuddhistcentre.org.uk

DHARMASHURA - CHARITY DIRECTOR - bbcdharmashura@aol.com

MAITRISARA - CHAIR - maitrisara1@gmail.com

VICKY - MAINTENANCE MANAGER - vicky.beckett.bbc@gmail.com

ALICE - COMMUNICATIONS AND PROJECT MANAGER - alice.evans.bbc@gmail.com

MAITRISARA (CHAIR)

SHUDDHAKIRTI (TREASURER)

PASANNAMATI (SECRETARY AND SAFEGUARDING TRUSTEE)

SINGHAMATI

DHARMASHURA

DHARMASHALIN

PRAJNABANDHU

PARAMARTHA (PRESIDENT)



*We would like to
remember Savapala
who died during the
year and who helped
with some of the
financial office
tasks.*



*And we'd like to say
a big thank you to
all the volunteers
and donors for
supporting the
Birmingham
Buddhist Centre*



Contact

info@birminghambuddhistcentre.org.uk
0121 449 5279

11 Park Road,
Moseley,
B13 8AB

ANNUAL REVIEW JUNE 2023 - MAY 2024



Scan to continue supporting us financially



**BIRMINGHAM
BUDDHIST
CENTRE**