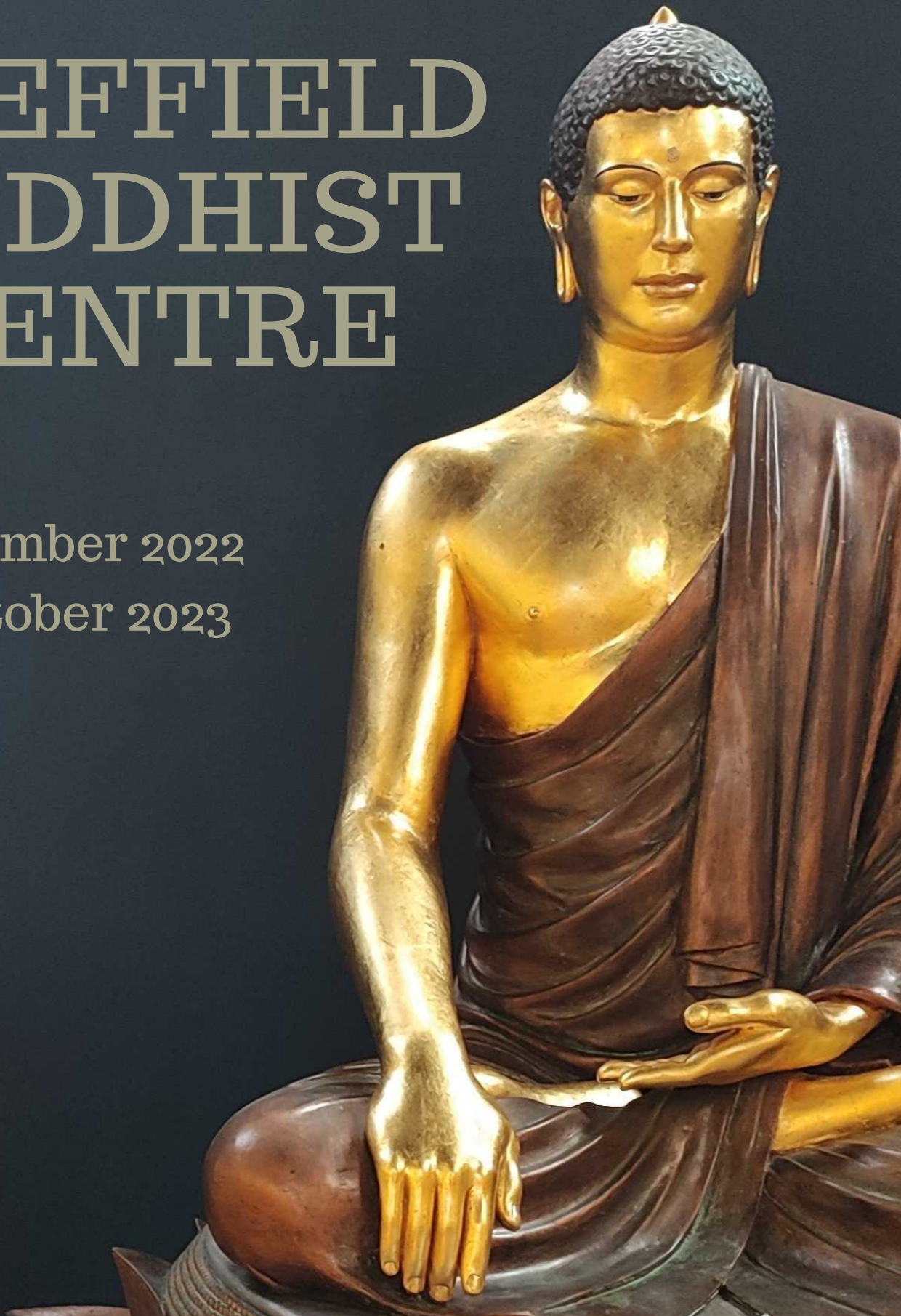


ANNUAL REPORT

of the

SHEFFIELD  
BUDDHIST  
CENTRE

November 2022  
- October 2023



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Garden Party 2023



# 1. Introduction

Sheffield Buddhist Centre is run by the Sheffield Triratna Buddhist Community. Our main activities include **teaching the Dharma** (i.e. the teachings of the Buddha) to people at all levels and supporting around **280** Buddhists to deepen their practice and to benefit the world at large. In order to do that, we seek to **build a thriving, supportive Sangha** (i.e. spiritual community) based on friendship, shared spiritual values and clear Buddhist principles.

We aim to **benefit the world** through these activities. People from all over Sheffield (and beyond) are welcome to attend our events for newcomers and to move on to becoming committed members of our Sangha. Through supporting people in their practice of Buddhist ethics, meditation and wisdom, we aim to encourage them to live in a way that benefits the world at large.

This Annual Report is about **the Sangha that meets and practises at Sheffield Buddhist Centre**, and its activities in the last year.



**2022-23** has been a remarkable year for the Centre. It has been a year of growth, as we welcomed many new Sangha members, and of deepening, as people took their commitment to their practice further. The post-lockdown interest in newcomers' courses has continued apace - at one point this year **around 400 people had requested to come on a course**, and the courses were booking up within four hours of the page going live! We ran extra newcomers' courses to meet this need - a total of seven this year, including one specifically for people under the age of 30. You can read about some of the effects of taking part in the course in Glesni's story later on in this report.

This growth was also reflected in the numbers of people making the commitment of becoming a mitra this year. We were delighted to welcome **34 people taking this step** and include here some excellent photos from the ceremonies, and Rodney's story of becoming a mitra. We also gained three new order members this year - see Viryananda's story for more on this!

As this report outlines, there has also been a wide range of activities, groups, celebrations, events, rituals and retreats on offer for the Sangha this year. So many people have contributed to this **varied and creative programme**, which has allowed people to meet the dharma or deepen their practice. And so many have contributed to the perhaps more invisible life of the Sangha; the many meetings and walks, shared tasks and companionship, coffees and conversations that happen every week, and which foster and strengthen the bonds between us all. We are hoping that you might get a sense of all of this through the 'Sangha Stories' that we have invited people to contribute to the report this year.

Ours is a true Sangha of people contributing to this flow of giving. And I would like to say thank you to you all. If you're not named in this report, you will have contributed to this sense of Sangha too. **We might think of Sangha as a noun, but it is actually a verb.** It's in the communication with one another that we create Sangha. So a hearty sadhu to everyone - you've created Sangha in real abundance this year!

# A message from Satyajyoti, Chair of the Buddhist Centre





# STORIES FROM THE SANGHA

This year, we have included 10 ‘Sangha Stories’ from members of our wonderful community in this report. They represent a variety of experiences and perspectives on being part of the Sheffield Sangha over the past twelve months. People were asked to reflect on their highlights, what had been important to them, and how being part of the Sangha had affected them and others this year. We hope you enjoy these snapshots of Sangha life! And thank you to all of our contributors for sharing your experiences so generously.

## **Sangha stories:**

**Alex Calderdale**, GFR mitra & Vimalakula member

**Amoghavamsa**, a founder member of the Centre

**Tee Bruno**, GFR mitra & Hridaya team member

**Viryananda**, new Order Member this year

**Glesni Lewis**, newcomer this year

**Jayagupta**, Order Member

**Rodney Nyanhete**, new mitra this year

**Liz Zijlstra**, GFR mitra & families kula member

**Pretti Desai-Cooke**, GFR mitra & YUBS team member

**Paranita**, Centre team member



# 2. Building Sangha

## A Shared Enterprise

One of our basic principles, taught from the newcomers' courses onwards, is that **people need the support of a spiritual community (Sangha)** if they are to make consistent progress on the Buddhist path. Building Sangha is therefore **the Centre's primary aim**, and everyone who comes to the Centre is invited to get involved.

Sheffield Buddhist Centre is the joint project of the Sheffield Sangha, and Sangha members take responsibility for it to the extent that they are willing and able. For some that means regular attendance at classes; for others it means helping with Centre activities, from teaching to cleaning.



Gardening team members 2023

**There are many opportunities to contribute to the running of the Centre, including:**

**Gardening teams** - Mondays & Fridays

**Caretaking/cleaning team** - Tuesday mornings

**Sangha night team** - Tuesday nights

**Maintenance team** - Thursday mornings

Teams running and supporting the regular **newcomers' courses**

**Shrine-building team**

**Regular Sangha Works days** - working outside in the garden and grounds, and inside decorating and maintaining the building



Maintenance team members 2023

# Living Together

There are currently **16** people living together in three Buddhist residential communities connected with the Centre. Such communities provide **important, stable contexts for people to strengthen their friendships and deepen their Buddhist practice** together. They offer opportunities to live a more full-time Buddhist life. People in these communities eat together, meditate together and meet regularly to share their lives and reflect on Buddhist teachings.

- The **Vimalakula men's community** above the Centre currently has seven residents: Alex, Aryadasa, Paul, Prajnahridaya, Shubhasingha, Vidya and Viryananda. The past year has seen big changes in that Maitrivasin and Amoghavamsa have both moved on (see Alex and Amoghavamsa's Sangha Stories below for more about this). The community also had Kai staying with them for 6 weeks in January 2023, and Jordan for 3-4 weeks.
- The **Vajramandala women's+ community** lives together in a house in Walkley, and in 2022-23 had six residents: Dharmajivana, Satyajyoti, Vicki, Kately, Anna and Saffron. During the year Sanghagita lived in the community for a few months and Phoebe regularly stayed for a while.
- A **mixed community** of three people live together in a rented house on Heavygate Road, Crookes. The household currently consists of Suvarnagarbha and two GFR (Going for Refuge) mitras, Luke and Laura. Rhys, another mitra, lived in the community until recently. The community is currently unnamed, but is referred to as the '279 community' and is extended to include GFR mitra Nigel who lives alone in a rented property nearby. This year the community hosted Mira, a mitra from the Hanover Sangha in Germany, for a week, and GFR mitra Phoebe had a trial stay in October 2023.



# Sangha stories

## Alex Calderbank

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GFR mitra living in  
Vimalakula men's community



In training to be ordained, two years ago I entered into a Going For Refuge group that meets once a week on Sundays. Practically, we discuss our shared ethical lives and help clarify **how we can bring Buddhist ethical principles to bear more fully in our lives and relationships**. More deeply, week on week we cultivate more intimate, honest and warm friendships. It's been a great boon to my life, and essential, to have friends that are based in something much bigger than any one of us.

Sending off Edward who then became Viryananda from our group was a massive highlight of the year. It was a clear symbol of how the collective practice of our group had borne fruit. It had the effect of **making getting ordained a reality** as opposed to an abstract future. I think it had a collective effect for the group of intensifying our practice.

Another great delight of the Going For Refuge group has been welcoming three new men into our group. Knowing the existing weight and momentum of our friendships it was a delight to introduce and exemplify the vision of friendship that's possible. It's also a delight to have the new guys so readily up for entering wholeheartedly into that vision with us.

I also have the great good fortune and privilege of living in Vimalakula, the community above the Buddhist Centre. As most people know **it's been a big transition for us over the last year**, with Amoghavamsa leaving in December 2022 and Maitrivasin leaving in September 2023, both of whom were big and grounding presences in the community. Since then it's been a very exciting time working out, with the help of our elders, what sort of community we want to be. There's been a very creative tension emerging between wanting to honour the lineage of our past community members whilst also wanting to move the community on and practise in a way that leaves the community better for those who will come after us.

Whilst that might sound a little serious **we're all very good at having fun and playing together**. The ongoing highlight of my life in community is undoubtedly our impromptu sessions of creating music together, featuring such titles as 'Sound the Bear', 'There's a Skull on the Mantelpiece' & 'Window Pain'. The delight we have playing together was epitomised when we did a weekend retreat together in Sheffield. This was a send-off weekend for Maitrivasin. We played frisbee, cooked together, jumped into the Rivelin Valley plunge pool together, made music, performed ritual and generally had a fun time together.

# Sangha stories

## Amoghavamsa

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A founding member of the  
Sheffield Buddhist Centre



The past year has been a **very momentous year for me**. Since recovering from a heart attack and having three stays in hospital I knew that I had to find my own place to live.

I found it within three weeks of searching and the Sangha too numerous to mention helped me in so many ways. They gave me domestic appliances, furniture etc and decorated the flat for me, and lots of kindness and love. They have been very supportive by visiting me and making sure that I am comfortable and well connected. It has been a challenge as I have lived in Triratna communities since 1987.

**Communities are very supportive and sadly it's easy to take that for granted.**

Friends with cars take me out into the country, help me with bulk shopping and for all this I am very grateful. Many friends visit me and I so enjoy the connections I have and the new ones I am making. I have also been involved in the maintenance team, enjoy gardening, mitra group, and Order Chapter. I have a weekly yoga session and Andi takes me swimming every fortnight.

I am also having art therapy which has helped me to connect with my emotional body.

So it's still early days, I can get overwhelmed, feel lonely, and generally challenged by the ageing process. I know death is not a problem, ageing is the great challenge. (I'm 76 now).

I'm also to be on Sangha Desert Island Discs organised by Prajñāsī.

I am very fortunate to have **so many great friends and strong connections with the Sangha** in Sheffield and around the world.

# Working together

## Centre teams

Working in teams is a key activity at the Centre, as it encourages the Sangha to get to know each other well and to practise going beyond the self. During 2022/23:

- **8** people have worked on the **Centre Team**, which has overall responsibility for Dharma teaching and Sangha building in the Centre.
- **8** people have worked on the **Hridaya Team** which looks after the day to day administration and upkeep of the Centre.
- **20** people have worked on our **Sangha Night Team** to ensure the smooth running of our weekly Tuesday evening Sangha Nights.
- Teams of people also support the running of our weekly Wednesday evening and Saturday morning **Newcomers' Courses**. Places on these courses continue to be very much in demand. In a new venture this year, three mitras who are training for ordination are also collaborating with the Buddhist Society at the University of Sheffield to run a six-week Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation course for students and staff based there.
- The **Young Buddhists (YUBS)** team works together to organise Dharma events at the Centre for those under 35. This is part of our core principle of presenting the Dharma in a way that is attractive to younger people
- The **Shrine team** has built very beautiful shrines in the Great Hall for Sangha night and for festivals



YUBs facilitator team 2023

## Working together, continued ...

- Many people have worked together weekly in the **Gardening Team** to keep our wonderful garden thriving. The garden is an amazing resource: it adds beauty to our environment, gives us an outdoor space in which to meet, and ensures that our Centre shrines have a homegrown supply of fresh flowers throughout the year. Thanks to Suryamati's creative vision and a hard-working and dedicated team, the garden is flourishing and growing more beautiful year on year.
- A **Cleaning team** meets together weekly on a Tuesday morning, and is responsible for cleaning the Buddhist Centre
- About **10** people have worked together on the **Maintenance Team** to ensure the building is kept in good repair. They ran several Sangha Works Days throughout the year when Sangha Members came and worked together in a spirit of friendship for a day to keep the building and the garden well maintained. These are days when people get a taste of what it is like to work in a team of Buddhists
- A team of **4** people have also worked together in the **Families Kula** which runs events throughout the year for people of all ages. This year they have mainly concentrated on family activities at large festivals, and the Summer Garden Party, with some additional Earth Sangha events that are family friendly.
- An **Eco Group** is working together on projects such as better insulating for the Centre and exploring the most effective way to heat the Centre.
- A Sheffield team of **Tiratanaloka [Un]limited Champions** are raising money as part of the wider fundraising campaign for a bigger women's ordination retreat centre



We miss you Maitrivasin!

# Sangha stories

## Tee Bruno

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GFR mitra & Hridaya team member



I've spent the year experiencing what it's like to be more exposed to a culture which is radically different to capitalism. My being has often been confused when I've witnessed interactions where Sangha have responded in love mode instead of the habitually used to power mode. For example, I once needed a nap before Sangha night and Satyajyoti and Prajnahridaya moved their meeting out of the Green Room so that I could do that. I felt genuinely confused and very loved at the same time. Daily interactions like this are mysteriously reorienting me somehow. Also I really do believe that Satyajyoti, Prajnahridaya and Emma really do care about and support my art practice; from coming to art openings and asking me how it's going, to offering me flexibility with days and Zoom calls, I have often cried at their support in my other job. And lastly, my practice is deepening at a quicker pace and my friendships with Emma, Prajnahridaya and Order Members have been so important. I don't always find working here easy, and their consistent, reliable love and care is radically breaking down a larger story of mine that I can't rely on others. Working here is deeply changing who/what I am.

One of my favourite projects has been setting up Kusala with Emma and the volunteers. I love solving big complicated puzzles, so I was in my element working out logistics, creating systems and feeding in volunteer ideas into the growing business plan. I always feel most energised after a monthly meet, where the volunteers' enthusiasm and contribution creates this amazing feeling and energy behind the project!

Another highlight has been supporting the Centre's Tiratanaloka Unlimited fundraising initiative. I am thick-skinned when it comes to targets and making money and it's been such a pleasure to transfer that skill and confidence behind something skilful like Tiratanaloka. Different Sheffield Champions have needed different things, Sarah Blagdon and I trained and walked the Sheffield Round Walk, Ellie Clark needed a 20 minute chat to share ideas and now she's confidently planning a fundraiser with Steph, I've sent a couple of personal invites for Phoebe's upcoming workshop ... it's been great to just be there and kickstart things by offering energy and enthusiasm. Other highlights include supporting Emma for the first time on a Lockerbrook retreat (her equanimity throughout had a big influence on me) and I love supporting festival days!! I have also loved how the office team have drawn my confidence out by doing little things like dancing at 9am when I first get into the office (I really love dancing).

There have been many times where Sangha members randomly stop me to ask questions about something to do with an event or retreat, and I've been able to confidently answer the question with love and care being the first priority. I deeply enjoy those moments. Enabling Sangha to contribute to the magic of the Centre is also deeply rewarding and satisfying. Contributing to the atmosphere in the women's study breakout group at Sangha night nourishes me. Rejoicing in Melissa in her mitra ceremony was a huge highlight. Little tasks like helping Hilary with bringing the Quiet Room to life for neurodivergent Sangha is also wonderful... I could go on. It's been magical and very intense! Thank you for the opportunity and privilege.

## Working together, continued ...

### Dana cafe

Dana Café is based about ten minutes' walk from the Centre in Crookes. Although now a separate business, **the Dana Cafe is still very connected to the Sangha**. Many Sangha members are involved in working at the café, volunteering there or just coming for a coffee or a meal.

### Still Learning

Still Learning CIC is the Centre's schools' project. We host and make school visits for students studying Buddhism, usually as part of their Religious Education curriculum. In the year covered by this report (November 2022 to October 2023), we hosted 26 tours at the Centre and visited eight schools. We cover the whole range of primary and secondary ages and, as you may have witnessed, they bring a whole other sort of energy into the Centre!

The project is one of the Centre's Sangha teams. Srivati was managing the project and doing most of the teaching with support from an excellent volunteer team made up of Emma Ward, Janet Snowdon, Pretti Desai and Vimaladasa. Prajnahridaya helped out too.

For the pupils, we help deepen their understanding of Buddhism and they get to experience the atmosphere of our vibrant Centre. We're supporting not just academic education but the exploration of values and meaning in life from a dharmic perspective. We find that the accompanying staff are grateful for what we offer as it enhances students' learning in an engaging way. Although our work is part of secular education, we're sure that meaningful seeds are planted...

Still Learning is in flux at the moment as Srivati is moving on from the project. We will keep you posted about our next steps!



## Working together, continued ...

### Buddhist Centre Charity Shop

Two members of the Hridaya Team (Emma and Tee) took three months to intensively scope the viability of a **charity shop to raise money for the Centre** in 2021/2022. The outcome was that this was financially viable but that we would need two to three committed Sangha members to run the shop and at the time there was no one in a position to do this. The project was put into hibernation and the Kusala online project was launched to help test the idea of selling clothes and recruiting volunteers in a low risk way in the meantime. In the summer of 2023 it became clear that there were a few members of the Sangha that would be interested in the project, and the plans were taken out of hibernation. We are currently looking at a number of local premises and have a small team of potential people who could run the shop, with a possibility of opening in January 2024.



### Kusala online clothes shop

Kusala has been set up as a project to give Sangha volunteers a taste of working in right livelihood, whilst also providing a low-risk opportunity to fundraise for the Centre. Satyajyoti has chosen Mamaki as our patron deity for the project. We collect unwanted clothing donations from the Sangha and sell them via an online app called Vinted.

The idea for the project came because of research into the charity shop project, where we found that since Covid, charity shops now sell their stock online as well as in shops. The project has come to life in an organic and co-operative way, with volunteers helping us shape the business model with their ideas. One of our favourite aspects to the project is its flexibility, allowing volunteers to contribute in different ways via different roles, and also offering opportunities for them to take ownership in tasks that they love/are good at. We have tried to establish the business as ethically as possible, for example sourcing second hand equipment where possible, and avoiding buying things made from plastic. We currently have approximately 12 active volunteers taking part and have already made £188 without officially launching the project with the Sangha. Some highlights include our Mamaki opening dedication ceremony, designing our Mamaki themed logo and the excitement of selling a Burberry coat for £100. The project's future has great potential and will hopefully support the future charity shop's online efforts.

# Communication within the Sangha

Communication and connection within the Sangha is aided by the following online resources:

- A **YouTube channel**, with uploads of Sangha Night and other event talks. The channel also enables a weekly online discussion group for those who are unable to be at Sangha Night in person
- A **Slack Channel**, which has over 460 members and has successfully enabled the Sangha to communicate directly with each other without going through the office or using social media
- A '**Weekly Essentials**' email, containing news of activities and events at the Centre
- an **Instagram** account



Vadanya streamed on the Youtube channel

# Significant Sangha numbers

## In 2022-23 there are:

**7** Private Preceptors and **1** Public Preceptor in Sheffield

**58** Order Members involved in the Centre

**16** people living in residential Buddhist communities associated with the Centre

**3** people who were ordained into the Order in 2023

**2** people (so far!) who have been invited for ordination in 2024

**77** people who are training for Ordination, and are supported through pre-ordination study groups and practice sessions, as well as 'kulas' to advise and support individuals. We continue to provide opportunities for more experienced mitras to take responsibility and gain some experience of teaching the Dharma in supported contexts (e.g. our Winter Mornings series)

**182** people who are active mitras (including those training for Ordination), and are undertaking or have completed the Triratna Dharma Training Course in study groups facilitated by Order Members, supported in some cases by experienced GFR mitras.

**34** people who became mitras this year

**8** people who asked for Ordination this year

**15** mitra study groups which meet at the Centre throughout the week, including one group for gender-diverse people



# Sangha stories

## Viryananda

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### Maintenance & Centre team member & newly ordained Order Member

For me the real highlights of the Sangha are expressed in a few personal moments. On Wednesday evenings when I'm putting our bins out, people are arriving for the Intro course and I share in the unique atmosphere of excitement, curiosity and spiritual adventure that fills the tea room. I love having the intro course team for dinner in the men's community on Wednesday nights before the course starts, hearing about everyone's week and sharing our lives as 12 of us sit around the table. I love the spark in the eyes of the people I meet for the first time at Sangha night, chatting over hummus and touching on the path which we share here.

Amazing things happen when we practise together. I'm thinking of the transformation I've seen in the lives of my brothers in the men's community, welcoming in Paul and Vidya and sending forth Amoghavamsa and Maitrivasin to bold new lives. I remember the magic of the January mitra retreat when, suddenly without a leader, the team came together to deliver a full programme beautifully improvised. Finally, affirming experiences of harmony and love in the maintenance team as we collectively figure out how to do bricklaying and seeing solid walls rise up before our eyes.

The last year has been particularly significant for me because of my ordination - becoming Viryananda and joining the Order. Ordination marks my commitment to a life of building Sangha, a life which I was invited into when I first came on the intro course and have found joy and meaning in ever since. I am delighted to be part of the Order and more recently the Centre Team because this gives testament to the effectiveness of what our Sangha does, as I see in my own transformation over seven years of Dharma practice. Being part of the team also enables me to give back and to share what I have received with more and more other people. Long may this dance continue!



Maintenance Team, working in the Remembrance Garden 2023

# 3. Practising & Celebrating Together

Throughout 2022-23 there have been many opportunities for the Sangha to come together. There have been regular events such as Sangha Night, celebrations of the major Buddhist festivals, newcomers' course nights, mitra study nights and both meditation and Sangha retreats. There have also been special study, meditation and social events, and a number of other regular groups based around particular themes or interests. Here we celebrate some of the many activities that have happened this year!

## **Spreading the Dharma**

Spreading the Dharma is a voluntary activity, and one in which every Sheffield Order Member engages to some extent, through teaching, leading events or study groups and through spiritual friendship with individuals.

Newcomers' courses

Teams of experienced Order Members and mitras ran 7 'Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation' courses during this period:

- September-December 2022 - Wednesday nights - 12 weeks
- October-December 2022 - Under-30s special - Friday nights - 11 weeks
- January-April 2023 - Wednesday nights - 12 weeks
- April-July 2023 - Monday nights - 12 weeks
- May-August 2023 - Wednesday nights - 12 weeks
- September-December 2023 - Wednesday evening - 12 weeks - 59 people started
- September-December 2023 - Saturday mornings - 12 weeks - 27 people started

# Sangha stories

Glesni Lewis

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Attended a newcomers' course this year



I started my Intro course at Sheffield Buddhist Centre in September 2023 and reflecting on the last year feels like it's been a lot longer (in a good way)! The first event I attended after finishing my intro course was the YUBS group in February. Going to an event on my own when I knew there was going to be a lot of people attending, that I didn't know, felt very daunting. **As soon as I arrived I was welcomed with so much kindness and warmth**, that I knew from then onwards that I could attend anything at the Buddhist Centre and that it would feel friendly and safe. This gave me the confidence to start coming to Sangha nights, which if I'm able to go on Tuesdays - always becomes a weekly highlight. I enjoy listening to talks, chatting with new people and getting into reflective and honest conversations. I think this is what makes me feel most connected to others and in everyday life, there aren't that many people I know who want to engage in this type of conversation. **Going to Sangha nights always gives me a boost of energy for the week.** Being around people who are actively meditating as part of their routine has been a massive motivation for me to meditate daily. Regular meditation means that even if I'm late for work, it feels a lot easier to access love and patience. My job involves helping older people and I think this extra space in my mind has increased my capacity to be present for others.

My highlights have been attending the Buddhafield North women's retreat where I formed a closer connection with members of the Sheffield Sangha as well as women from other Centres. Having a schedule of meditation, talks, working periods, silence, eating together and times around the fire really helped me to realise that I needed to slow down and this is something I've continued working on throughout the year. From conversations I had at the retreat I decided to go to the Buddhafield Festival and camp with others from the Sheffield Sangha. Not only was this a fun time but **I also felt a deep sense of community in how everyone looked out for each other** during the festival. One night during a storm and 40 miles-an-hour wind, I came back to my very flimsy tent to see that a friend had put weighted items around it to ensure it didn't blow away. Another great experience was going on the Sangha retreat to Adhithana. This was one of my favourite weekends of the year. I loved being able to meditate as a group in the mornings, walk around the beautiful grounds, learn more throughout talks, form new friendships and I left the retreat feeling super rested and restored.

I joined the Buddhist Centre with my partner which I feel grateful for. I think starting something new can be hard but starting at the same time meant that we've been able to motivate each other to keep showing up. Tuesdays can sometimes look like one of us saying we're too tired and the other one of us saying that so far **Sangha night has not failed to make us feel better leaving than we did going in.** We're both hoping to become mitras in November and I'm excited to see what the next year brings!

## Sangha Night

Those who join the Sangha from introductory courses attend our popular **Sangha nights** on Tuesday evenings. Following requests from Sangha members, we have continued post lockdowns to run the night as a hybrid event (i.e. options to attend in person and online) in order to better meet the needs of our diverse community. For example, continuing the online option enables those who live further away and people who are ill or managing long-term conditions to keep their regular contact with the Sangha as a large group. In October 2023 around 60-80 people attend Sangha nights in person, and around 20 attend online.

The **Sangha night** themes this year have been:

- **November 2022: Radical Reality** (the radical teachings of the Buddha)
- **January 2023: Wisdom Beyond Words** (the Wisdom teachings of the Dharma)
- **April 2023: Living Buddhism** (how to live Buddhism with the whole of yourself)
- **August 2023: Light in the Darkness** (the Buddha's Enlightenment and decision to teach)
- **September 2023: Tantra for Today** (a journey into Vajrayana Buddhism)

We also had some **guest speakers** at Sangha Night, including Padmavajra in November 2022 and October 2023, and Nagabodhi in April 2023, who introduced his new book about Sangharakshita

## Meditation

We have offered a range of ways for the Sangha to meditate together:

- **Mon-Fri morning meditation** in the Red Shrine Room, led by the men's community at 7 a.m.
- **Friday evenings on Zoom**, 7.30 - 9.30 p.m., led by a team of Order Members
- **Monthly Sunday mornings** of walking and sitting meditation with Dharmajivana, a new opportunity which began in February.
- **Adventures in Meditation**, a six-week course run by Upeksaraja and Khemasuri with a team of Order Members, September - November 2023

## Retreats

We encourage Sangha members to deepen and intensify their practice by attending residential retreats at retreat centres. We also ran retreats ourselves including:

- **Sangha Retreat** (9-11 December 2022) at Duke's Barn
- **Mitra Retreat** (13-18 January 2023) at Adhithana: The System of Practice
- **Urban Retreat** (25 March - 2 April 2023) led by Vadanya, Dharmamayi and team
- **Sangha Retreat** (21 - 23 April 2023) at Lockerbrook: Riding the Windhorse
- **Sangha Retreat** (4 - 7 August 2023) at Adhithana: The Call of the Dakini
- **Men's Retreat** (15-17 September 2023) at Lockerbrook



## Festivals

The **Sangha Day festival** happened in November 2022 with families activities (crafting, ritual and storytelling), a singing workshop with Sanghagita and the Sangha choir, the Sangha hustings vote to decide how to give away the money raised at the Garden Party, and a Big Sangha Day puja. The Sangha raised £6,425 over the year, and the money was given away as follows: £3049 to Tiratanaloka [Un]limited, £1016 to the Abhayaratna Trust, £907 to the India Dhamma Trust, £798 to the Retreat Bursary Fund and £653 to the Future Dharma Fund.

**Parinirvana Day** in February was a day to celebrate the final passing of the Buddha into Nirvana and to remember loved ones who had died during the past year.

**Ambedkar Day Festival** in April offered an Indian feast and stories and reflections from some of the participants in the January/February Sheffield Sangha pilgrimage to India. Padmavajra gave a talk about Dr Ambedkar and led an Indian-style 7-fold puja.

The biggest festival of the year, **Buddha Day** in May, offered a morning families session, a Buddhanusati (recollection of the Buddha) meditation, opportunities to create ritual offerings and a beautiful puja.

**Dharma Day** in July included activities for families, study sessions and 'Dharma Gems' talks, as well as the main ritual.

And finally, **Padmasambhava Day** in October was led by Padmavajra and included an electrifying talk and a mighty seven-fold puja!



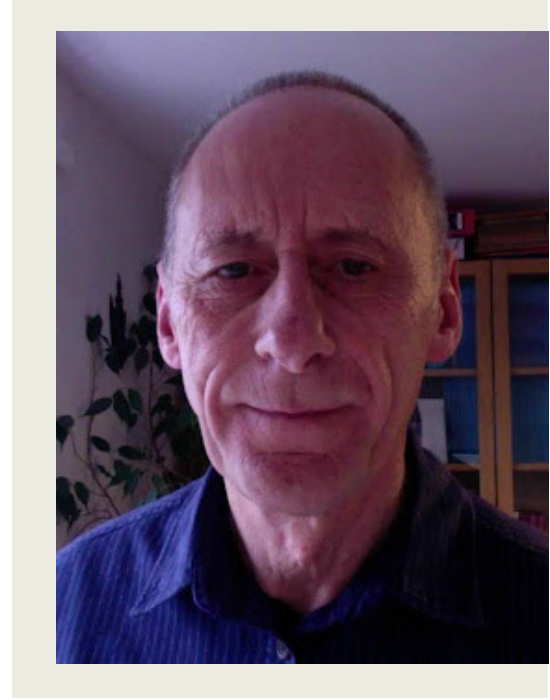
The Sangha Day Panto, 2023

# Sangha stories

## Jayagupta

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Order Member



**Getting on retreat is one of the best things you can do.** Most years I'll go on a couple of Sangha Retreats as well as the longer mitra retreat at Adhithana, which I lead. Last year I was on the team for the Sangha Retreat at Duke's Barn in December. I really enjoyed that - and leading a workshop and ritual on our heart connection with the Dharma. But, despite putting together a strong team and a great programme, I didn't get any further than Junction 29 on the M1 for the Adhithana retreat - but I did hear that it went extremely well without me! There was a strong turn-out for the Sheffield India Pilgrimage later in the year and **it was great to meet up with everyone in Bodh Gaya and then visit all those places we know so well through Bhante's life story.** All that seemed to reach a greater depth reading Nagabodhi's excellent book Sangharakshita: The Boy, the Monk, the Man. Fortunately, I was able to arrange for Nagabodhi to visit us and talk about his book at Sangha Night - all very significant, because Sangharakshita ordained Nagabodhi and Nagabodhi ordained me!

In May I went out to Guhyaloka, our men's retreat centre in Spain, to ordain two well-loved mitras from our Sangha, and in that way the noble tradition continues. And so at the beginning of August we welcomed back three brand new Order Members, Shubhasingha, Karmajit and Viryananda, for a joyous Tuesday night celebration. Then in September Prajnahridaya organised and led a fabulous Men's Retreat at Lockerbrook - I really enjoyed contributing to that and meeting some really inspiring newcomers, too. **Our friendships continue to thrive and really are the lifeblood of the Sangha,** but this doesn't just happen at the Centre and on retreat. I enjoy meeting up with a whole range of people, making new friends, nurturing old connections and that might well involve walking in the Peak District or just meeting up for a coffee. We have such rich resources in each other and I'm extremely grateful for this.

# Rituals and ceremonies

## Mitra ceremonies

Throughout the year we held many rituals to mark Sangha night themes, seasons and special occasions:

We had two **mitra ceremonies** in November 2022 and May 2023. November's ceremony was our biggest yet, with 17 people committing themselves to the Dharma - and then 17 more did the same in a joyous celebration in May! May all blessings be yours!!



< Alison, Duncan, Emma, Georgia, Jenny, Jordan, Lawrence, Laura, Liam, Matt, Nix, Rhys, Shelagh, Stuart, Sue B & Sue R who became mitras in November 2022

Anita, Bee, Carol, Daniel, Gemma, Joe, Joe, Laura, Mark, Melissa, Nick, Rebecca, Rich, Rodney, Roy, Sarah & Susanna, who became mitras in May 2023 >



## Ordination send-offs and rejoicings

In April we went **Into the Tiger's Cave** to send off Owen, Edward and Tim on their ordination retreats with our love ... and welcomed them back in August as new Dharmacharis Viryananda, Shubhasingha and Karmajit in a joyous Sangha Night celebration in August!



L-R: Karmajit, Shubhasingha, Viryananda

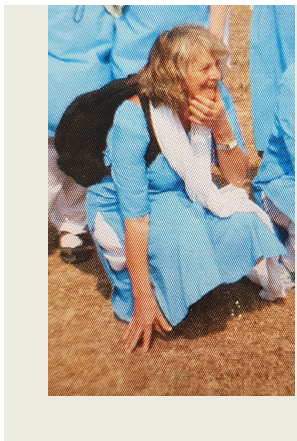
## In memory of ...

We **celebrated the lives of three much-loved Sangha members** who passed away this year.



Gavin Bateman

In July there was an evening of rejoicing and ritual in the Great Hall for Gavin Bateman, and he was remembered in our weekly newsletter by Bodhinaga.



Wendy Curtis

Some sangha members also attended the funeral of **Wendy Curtis** who had been involved at the Centre for many years and was remembered in our weekly newsletter by Satyajyoti.

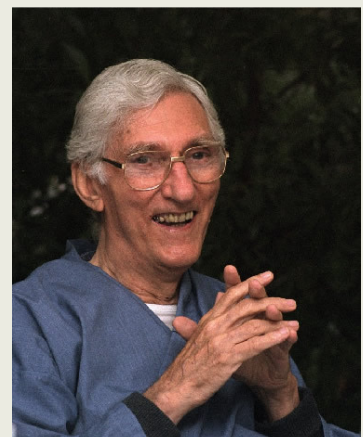
And October witnessed the first funeral to be held at the Centre, where Punyamala led a moving ceremony for a beloved Dharmacharini Sihapada, attended by her family and many friends.

Sihapada played a crucial role in setting up Sheffield Buddhist Centre and has been a generous and delightful friend to many of us. Her contributions to the Centre include serving as women's mitra convenor, and her aesthetic sense can be seen in many of the colours used to decorate the Centre.

We also remembered **our founder, Bhante Sangharakshita**, with a celebratory puja led by Santasiddhi and Vimaladasa to mark his birthday in August, and an opportunity to listen to the 1980 Taste of Freedom Lecture, and a puja led by Punyamala to mark his death in October



Sihapada



Bhante

# Sangha stories

## Rodney Nyanhete

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### Became a mitra this year

I first came to the Sheffield Buddhist Centre after a friend suggested that we go to the intro course the Centre was running which was aimed at people under the age of 30, starting at the end of October 2022. We attended the Intro course and **from the get-go I had caught the Dharma**. I found the materials taught on the intro course were in line with my beliefs and values. I had also been interested in Buddhism from a young age; however I had not come across a group of people who actively studied the Dharma.



Within a few weeks of starting the Intro course the team invited us all to go on a retreat at Adhithana. I jumped on to the opportunity even though I was extremely nervous. **My first retreat experience was magical**, and I was completely hooked. I found people in the Sheffield Sangha were friendly and approachable. The wider Triratna Sangha also validated this for me. I felt like I was home.

After being on retreat and going to Sangha night from January 2023, I felt that I wanted to go deeper with my study and my practice, therefore I decided that I wanted to be a mitra. In May 2023 I became a mitra. **The mitra ceremony felt like such a transcendental experience**. I felt like I had joined a beautiful Buddhaland with amazing people. To this day when I look at my mitra cards I always cry.

**Being part of the Sangha has been an amazing experience.** The highlights for me have been the Sangha retreat in April, Men's mornings on the Five Jina Mandala, the mitra ceremony in May, young Buddhists retreat in August and Men's retreat in September. I have really enjoyed Sangha retreats as these have been an opportunity to connect with other Sangha members when there has been more time compared to Sangha night. I have also enjoyed helping at festival days and the intro course. Being part of the Sangha has been transformative in my life. **My actions are more in line with my beliefs and values.** I have also increased my awareness of the loved ones around me, meaning I have more time for them. I look forward to more experiences as a member of the Sheffield Buddhist Centre Sangha.

## Other Sangha activities

### One-off events through the year

Sangha members and visiting guests have organised an enormous variety of **one-off events** this year. In November 2022 there was **Exploring Earth**, a morning of yoga and reflective writing with Liz A, Laura S and Sanghagita; and **The Art of Dreaming**, a day workshop led by Arthabandhu. In December there was a **special film screening + Q&A** with Jayaraja about the Alfoxton project; the regular **Winter Mornings** series on Winter Tales from the Tradition; and **Candles for Winter**, a Winter Solstice poetry and meditation event with Punyamala, Bodhivasini and Clair. We also held the annual **Winter Solstice** and **New Year's Eve** rituals. In February, Vadanya led a **chanting workshop on the Heart Sutra** in Sanskrit, and in April there was a **Buddha Day Crafting** opportunity to craft origami lotus flowers with Phoebe. In June Steph and Abhayamala treated us to **Songs of Praise**, a musical puja where we shared our favourite tracks. In July there was a **Dharma Study weekend** run by Triratna scholar Sagaramati and our own Khemasuri. In August Suvarnagarbha and Laura Eddey created a magical summer evening with their **Garden of Buddhas** event, displaying artwork inspired by the Five Buddha Mandala in the Centre garden. September saw an **Earth Metta Day Retreat** on the Dasadhamma Sutta, led by Suddhacandika and Lilamati; the **Wolf at the Door** writing weekend and **Poetry evening** with Ananda and friends; and a **White Tara Day Retreat** led by Sanghagita and Dayasingha. Finally in October there was the opportunity to attend **Being Fully Human in this World**, a 'Work that Reconnects' two-day retreat led by Khemasuri and Lilamati. What a feast of fabulous opportunities! Thank you to everyone who contributed to our calendar of events in such creative ways.



# India Pilgrimage

In February 2023 a group of sangha members took part in the Sheffield Sangha pilgrimage to India, led by Maitridasa and his team. Denis says: "When I first came to the Centre on an introductory course in 2015, I noticed a photo of the most recent pilgrimage and it really struck a chord with me. I wondered to myself if I would ever make that trip, could it be possible? Fast forward to 2023 and I am now a seasoned traveller in search of Dharma connections and Dharma opportunities. Leading up to the trip I found myself longing for the Buddha, to be in his environment and landscapes and to literally walk in his footsteps.

The trip didn't disappoint. So many great memories, perhaps the highlights were walking in silence to the parks at Kusinagar and Vaishali in the early morning sun, as the earliest followers of the Buddha would have done. The rituals here were full of meaning and very intense for me. As was our visit to Bodh Gaya, so many pilgrims had gathered to visit the Mahabodhi temple and everyone was paying their respects in their own way, a pageant of sound, colour and fragrance.

Later in the trip we retraced our teacher Bhante Sangharakshita's footsteps in the foothills of the Himalayas - seeing the sites where he had lived and worked 'for the good of Buddhism' was hugely inspiring, it really brought the memoirs alive and I remember feeling immense gratitude to him for his works there and further forward when he started a movement in the West.

The Sangha jewel also shone brightly throughout, the organisers were so friendly and efficient, the fellow pilgrims endured the heat, tiring journeys, persistent salespeople, the sheer unfamiliarity of it all with great patience, humour and kindness, they were all such a joy. Also the Indian brothers and sisters at the various projects were so kind and welcoming, I have enjoyed keeping in touch with some of them.

So much to say but perhaps the best summary I can make is to say: I would love to go back! Jai bhim!



## Changes to the Centre

There have been a few changes to the Centre this year. The backdrop to our beautiful shrine got an impressive makeover, thanks to hard work by Janet Snowden and Sarah Blagdon, with creative input from Mahaprasara.



**Before...**



**and after!**



## Regular events and groups

As well as the one-off events, we have other regular opportunities throughout the year for study, retreat, ritual and creativity, either open to all or organised for particular groups. These include:

**Men's mornings:** opportunities for meditation, talks, puja and discussion led by Dayasingha and Vimaladasa. This year's theme was **Discovering the Buddhas**, exploring our relationship to the enlightened mind.

**Women's Order/mitra mornings:** this year exploring the **stages of the Metta Bhavana**.

**Women's Order/GFR mitra day retreats** offering opportunities for Dharmacharinis and women training for ordination to come together for talks, discussion and prostration practice. This year's theme was the **Going for Refuge and Prostration Practice**, exploring our relationship with the practice and the figures on the Tree of Refuge and Respect.

The **People of Colour** team have run meditation and check-in events for those from an ethnic minority/global majority background, led by Amalasiddhi and Phoebe.

**12 step fellowship meetings:** Informal gatherings and mornings of meditation, ritual, talks and discussion for Sangha members, led by Emma.


The **Neurodiverse group** led a Retreat Day for people identifying as neurodivergent in December. They've also been working on making our Sangha events and retreats more inclusive, including the instigation of a quiet room on Sangha nights, and a small group at the Sangha Retreat

**YUBS events:** the team have organised monthly evenings of meditation, Dharma discussion and ritual with other young Buddhists, and an annual retreat, offering opportunities to explore what it means to practise as young people living in the world today.



# Regular events and groups


## Arts Events




We have expanded the number of opportunities to engage with the arts this year, thanks to a number of committed creative beings! There is now a regular Sangha **Arts Expo** event (which ran this year in November, April, October) where members of the Sangha can share their creations and hear about others'. And there are regular changing exhibitions on the new **Art Wall** in the bookshop, including art created by Sangha folk to raise money for the Centre and Tiratanaloka [Un]Limited, and an exhibition by Dharmachari Garava in October 2023.

## Earth Metta Sangha

The Earth Metta Sangha team has run regular Puja in the Peaks events: opportunities for outdoor meditation, poetry and ritual organised by Lilamati, Liz Annable and Liz Zijlstra. This year they celebrated the Spring Equinox, Midsummer with Mamaki and the Autumn Equinox with Pandaravasini.



## Sangha choir



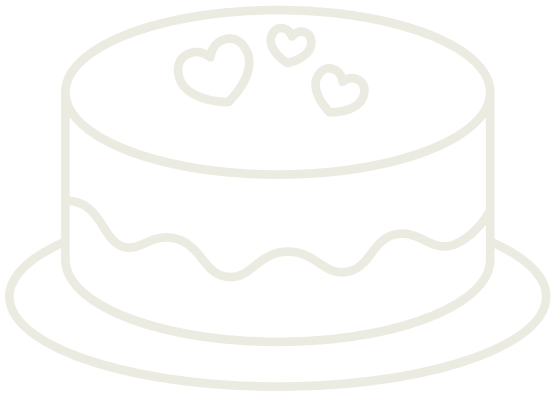
The Sangha choir, led by Sanghagita, has added much beauty and joy to our festivals and celebrations.



L-R: Sangha choir with Sanghagita, Earth Metta Sangha puja in the Peak District and Buddhist centre art wall

## Garden Party

In June we held the second annual Summer Garden Party which was a huge success. The hard work of many Sangha members running stalls for selling plants, books, food and refreshment and a Bazaar raised £X - TBC in total. The charities which will benefit from this will be decided at the Sangha Day festival in November



The arts stall and games stall at the 2023 Summer Garden Party



Chris Hardy from the s6 foodbank

## Foodbank

Throughout the year, the Sangha has brought in contributions of food and other essential items towards the Sheffield S6 foodbank. These efforts have been coordinated with great dedication by Aryasakhi.

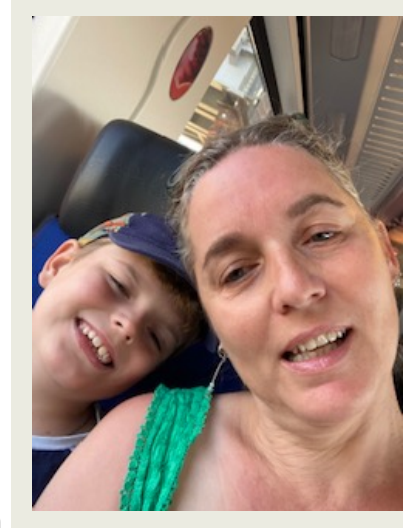
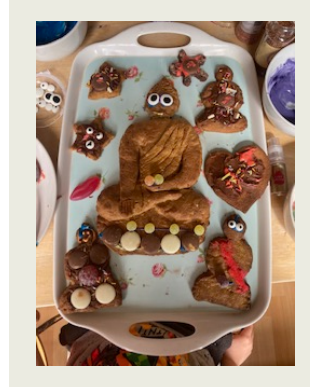


# Sangha stories

Liz Zijlstra

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GFR mitra & Families kula member



## What is my experience of Sangha?

In the last year of Sangha, coming back together after the dramatic effects of COVID pandemic and social restrictions, there has been **a strong sense of interconnectedness and how fundamental that is** in lots of ways for health, well-being, living in positive ways on this planet, and spiritual growth.

It has been a pleasure to see people returning and coming together in the Sheffield Buddhist Centre to support each other, practice and grow in their path to ordination on Women's TFO (Training for Ordination) days, with women from all over the region attending.

I have loved leading and practising with men and women from across the whole Sangha who have **braved the elements of earth, water and wind** to practise together at the Pujas in Peak (run by the Earth Sangha Group) – when the universe has made it possible for these to go ahead and let us experience the joy of practising in connection to the earth.

Here are a few highlights from the **Families Kula**:

I thoroughly enjoyed seeing a large number of the Sangha come together to plan, set up and run the Summer Garden Party again, connecting to the local community around the Centre, raising money for communities across the world and enjoying spending a sunny summer day together having fun. I spent a relaxed day making animal masks and head-dresses of endangered species from our planet with children in the children's tent.

The Families Group also came back together to lead family friendly activities on the main festival days such as Sangha Day, Buddha Day, and Dharma Day. This year we all enjoyed connecting around decorating Buddhas and stars for the Buddha Day birthday party and feast. Here's some of our tasty handiwork! Some families in the Families Group also came together to raise money to protect the rainforests of our planet and raised nearly £1000 for the World Land Trust that buys up rainforest land. Here we are at the end of the sponsored bike ride.

The effect on me personally, being able to connect more strongly with the Sangha this year, has been important in helping me to manage some tough personal demands with my health and work this year. I have felt more held by my spiritual community and have a stronger sense of connectedness, friendship, and reduced isolation.

# 4. The dana economy

Our Buddhist Centre runs on "dana" or generosity

All Dharma events are offered free of charge in a spirit of generosity.

This is only possible because Sangha members give money and time.

Our dana (generosity) economy means that all our Buddhist activities are free of charge – from newcomers' courses to Sangha retreats. It means that anyone can learn the Dharma and be part of the Sangha, regardless of their financial resources, and that has been pivotal in enabling younger people and those with low or no incomes to get involved. Many people take part in the life of the Centre without paying anything, while others give generously, including giving regularly through monthly standing orders. Those who are supported to work at the Centre and in Right Livelihood businesses take only living expenses rather than salaries as an act of generosity, to help the Centre's resources go further.

Thanks to the huge generosity of Sangha members, standing orders this year have been around £5500 per month. With income from the men's community, the bookshop and dana given for courses, this has allowed the Centre not to need to go into the reserves. For the financial year of 2022-23 we managed to break even (excluding large gifts for future projects) even though it was a challenging year due to the increases in fuel costs and inflation, because of the generosity of the Sangha and careful management of resources. We would like to thank Vimaladasa, Ian Hewson and the Finance kula for all their help this year.

This year

**188**

people gave standing orders

totalling

**£65,947**

## Giving money away

As part of the flow of generosity, the Centre practises giving away 5% of its annual income to other charitable causes and this year gave money to the Tiratanaloka Unlimited (towards a much-needed larger Retreat Centre for women's ordination training) and the European Chair's Assembly Development Fund.

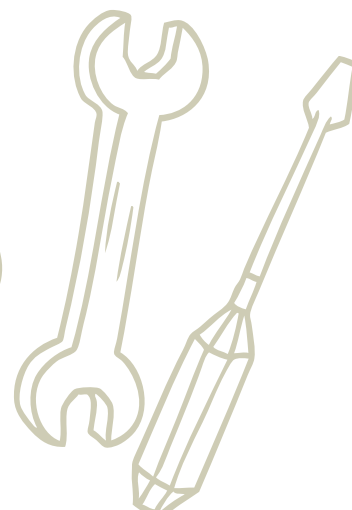
The £4800 raised by the hard work of many at the Summer Garden Party the previous year was given away to the Future Dharma Fund, India Dhamma Trust, the Abhayaratna Trust and Karuna.

We also run a retreat bursary fund (from income and special gifts) which enables Sangha members who couldn't otherwise afford it to go on residential retreats.



## Giving ourselves

The Dana Economy is not just about giving money. Sangha members of all levels of experience give their time, energy, skills and friendship in many ways, as can be seen throughout this report. This includes cleaning, gardening and decorating, running the Centre library and bookshop, supporting classes, running events and social activities and serving on the Centre's Council



# Sangha stories

## Pretti Desai-Cooke

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GFR mitra and YUBS team member



YUBs feast in the garden, 2023

What a wonderful Sangha we are! I am part of the YUBS (Young Under 35ish Buddhists of Sheffield) team and wanted to share some highlights and reflections with you. We hold monthly events and I look forward to them as a chance to discuss Dharma with my peers, to engage in powerful ritual and (often) to have a good laugh together! A year ago (October 2022) we held a night focused on Vajrayogini and Issy ended the night with **a fantastically energetic ritual where we collectively made music, whooped and howled!** It was a special time of year because we also held a sub-30 intro course, the first time we have done that at the Centre. It was such a good opportunity for the YUBS facilitators to work more deeply together and so many YUBS volunteered to be on the wider support team, which led to a lovely atmosphere each week.

I warmly recall an evening in June 2023 led by Aryadasa and Nicolle, where we reflected on time, money, work and love. This had a big impact on many of us, as over the evening we were drawing on Pali canon sources to help us work out our own personal reflection questions in each area. So helpful! Shortly after we welcomed back Shubhasingha and Viryananda from their ordination retreat (the team had really missed them over the summer!) And then we had a meditation weekend retreat in August 2023, focusing on balanced effort with reference to the story of Sona's lute. **This was one of the most transformative meditation retreats I've ever been on**, quite remarkable it was just a weekend. Prajnahridaya and Aryadasa led masterful workshops influenced by Satyaraaja's Essential Meditation material (you can find this on Free Buddhist Audio!) 'Relaxing into broad awareness' is a summary of what I took into my meditation practice from the retreat. In November 2023 we are experimenting with a new evening format centering around a Dharmic conversation between Shubhasingha and Aryadasa which I'm really looking forward to.



YUBs event in the red shrine room 2023

# 5. Leadership & vision

**The Buddhist Centre Council** consists of 12 trustees who meet monthly to discuss business relating to the financial, legal and spiritual vitality of the Centre. This year they are: Aryasakhi; Bodhinaga, Dayaloka, Khemasuri, Prajnahridaya, Prajnasri, Punyamala, Satyajyoti (Chair), Sanghagita, Suryamati, Vadanya and Vimaladasa (Observer). In addition, Ian Hewson is co-opted by the council to act as Treasurer.

**The Centre Team** is delegated to coordinate Dharma teaching and Sangha building. The team for most of this year has consisted of Bodhinaga, Maitrivasin, Paranita, Prajnahridaya, Satyajyoti and Sanghagita. In September 2023 Maitrivasin left to move to Turkey, and in October 2023 Viryananda and Vimaladasa joined the team. All the team receive living expenses which are funded by the standing orders of Sangha Members or are able to support themselves financially.

**The Hridaya Team** takes care of the day to day admin and premises work. It is a context where mitras training for ordination can work alongside Order Members. In 2022-23, Emma Ward, Prajnahridaya and Viryananda worked full time on the team for the whole year. Tee Bruno started working two days a week from November 2022, Moksatara started working one day a week in January 2023, and Phoebe Thomas started full time in May 2023 for a 6 month period. Maitrivasin was a full time team member until leaving the Sheffield Sangha for pastures new in September 2023. Ellie Clark led on the Garden Party and supported other projects. At various times other Sangha members gave valuable voluntary support to the Hridaya office team, including Lynne Fox who is helping with tax and building information, and Joy Llewellyn-Beardsley who started volunteering with the Hridaya team one day a week in September 2023.



L-R: Viryananda, Phoebe, Tee, Prajnahridaya, Maitrivasin, Emma & Moksatara, the 2022/23 Hridaya tea

The **Mitra Convenors** are responsible for the spiritual welfare of mitras. Bodhinaga is the mitra convenor for men, supported by a kula of Order members. Sanghagita is the women's mitra convenor and is also supported by a kula of Order members. Dharmamayi supports the mitra convenors by meeting with people who are gender diverse.

**Safeguarding:** PrajnaHridaya is the safeguarding officer and Satyajyoti is the acting safeguarding trustee.

**The Chair** of Sheffield Buddhist Centre in 2022-23 was Satyajyoti. Bodhinaga is the Deputy Chair.

The **President** of the Centre is Padmavajra. He usually visits the Centre twice a year from his home at the men's ordination retreat centre, Padmaloka. This year we had the pleasure of hosting him three times! In November 2022 he ran an 'Essence of Enlightenment' day retreat for all. In April he led the Ambedkar Day celebrations and gave a Sangha Night talk looking at archetypal embodiments of wisdom and compassion. And in October 2023 he led the Padmasambhava Day celebrations and gave a Sangha Night talk on the Tantra. Each time he visits he also meets with many Sangha members and leads study sessions for different groups and teams. His continued support is enormously appreciated.

These core teams are the people who make the Centre and our vibrant Sangha what it is at every level. Their work is often invisible, but it holds the whole Sangha together. The Council oversees all of the strategy work – the Centre's vision, mission and direction. The Centre team and the mitra convenors are at the very heart of it all – they have the creative overview of all Centre activities. The Hridaya team makes sure that everything happens on the ground. On behalf of the whole Sangha, thank you for all that you do. Your work and your generosity is seen, appreciated and valued!

**This Annual Report has been compiled by Joy Llewellyn-Beardsley, November 2023. A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed through sharing their stories, writing about their activities and providing numbers!**

**Special thanks to Tee for design support.**

thank  you

# Sangha stories

## Paranita

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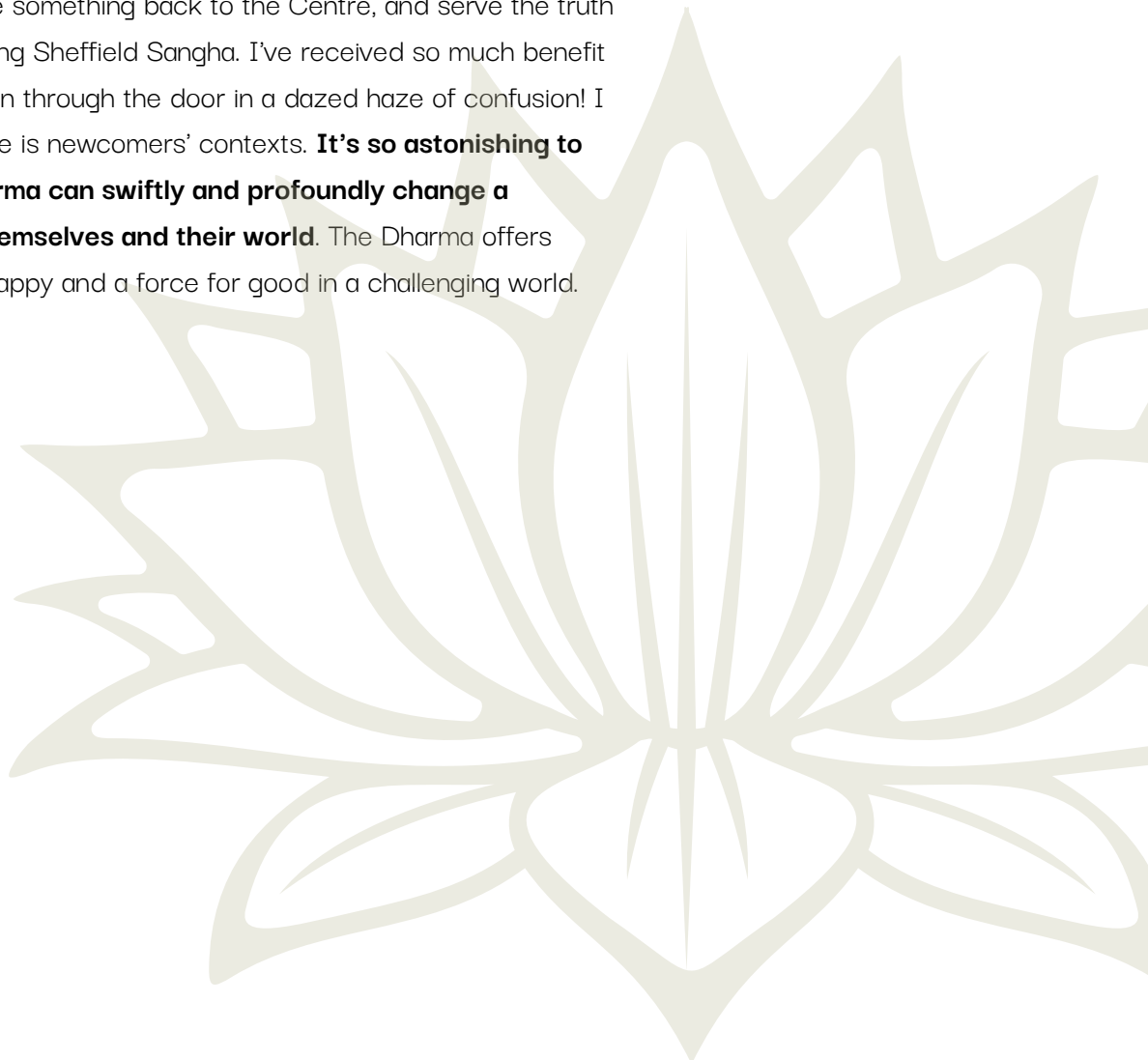
Centre team member

### My Sangha Year

During this year my main contexts in the Sheffield Sangha have been as a member of the Centre Team and Sangha night team, Sangha night talks, mitra study, newcomers' courses, and Sangha retreats and festival teams.

My lovely family life is full on, both rewarding and challenging. **My context at the Centre nourishes me so much**, it's meaningful and supportive of depth of practice, friendship and a joyful life. I love my Sangha, and I'm very grateful to be able to be part of it!

It's deeply satisfying to give something back to the Centre, and serve the truth of the Dharma in our amazing Sheffield Sangha. I've received so much benefit myself since first wobbling in through the door in a dazed haze of confusion! I think my favourite thing here is newcomers' contexts. **It's so astonishing to see how meeting the Dharma can swiftly and profoundly change a person's experience of themselves and their world.** The Dharma offers people a path to become happy and a force for good in a challenging world. Amazing.



**Charity number 1024087**

## **Sheffield Triratna Buddhist Community**

### **Statement of Accounts for the year ended 5th April 2023**

#### **Contents**

**Statement of receipts and payments**

**Balance Sheet**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**Accountants' Report**

**Sheffield Triratna Buddhist Community**  
**Balance sheet at 5 April 2023**

	Notes	12 months to 5 April 2023 £	12 months to 5 April 2022 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Property at cost		<u>624,693</u>	<u>624,693</u>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Stocks		5,000	5,000
Bank		124,698	80,013
Gift Aid Income accrued		17,775	14,948
		<u>147,473</u>	<u>99,961</u>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Other creditors		11,000	11,000
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>136,473</u>	<u>88,961</u>
Long term liabilities			
Property loans		281,545	284,910
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>479,621</u>	<u>428,744</u>
<b>Reconciliation of net assets</b>			
Net assets at start of year		428,744	409,288
Surplus for the year		50,877	19,456
<b>Net assets at end of year</b>		<u>479,621</u>	<u>428,744</u>
Being			
Womens' community designated fund	2	93,587	86,384
Undesignated fund		386,034	342,360
		<u>479,621</u>	<u>428,744</u>

**Sheffield Triratna Buddhist Community**  
**Receipts and payments account**  
**for the year ended 5 April 2023**

	Notes	12 months to 5 April 2023 £	12 months to 5 April 2022 £
<b>Receipts</b>			
Standing orders	1	65,947	58,350
Donations	3	64,139	23,301
Gift Aid tax	1	17,775	14,948
Yoga & tai-chi		33	104
Mens' community rents		25,495	22,510
Womens' community rents	2	20,738	19,937
Other earned income (book shop etc.)		5,070	3,462
Sangha fundraising		7,569	1,756
		<u>206,766</u>	<u>144,368</u>
<b>Payments</b>			
Yoga & tai-chi		-	74
Costs re, other earned income		3,844	2,061
Sangha fundraising expenses (summer fair)		1,234	-
Premises costs		32,850	23,539
Mens' community expenses		1,032	2,346
Womens' community expenses	2	2,649	3,214
Centre team support	1	74,055	63,995
Retreats, course, events & projects		18,308	15,374
Charitable giving		10,851	10,515
Interest on Womens' Community Property loans	2	10,886	3,578
Interest on Sangha Property loan		180	216
		<u>155,889</u>	<u>124,912</u>
<b>Surplus arising on ordinary activities</b>		<u>50,877</u>	<u>19,456</u>
<b>Being</b>			
Designated womens' community fund	2	7,203	13,145
Undesignated fund		43,674	6,311
		<u>50,877</u>	<u>19,456</u>

#### Notes to the accounts

- 1 Standing Orders income is ring-fenced to support the Team who run the Centre and its activities. Together with the associated Gift Aid, this is currently sufficient for this purpose. Trustees monitor this regularly and communicate with the Sangha about our financial position at least once per year.
- 2 The Womens' Community House income and expenses are ring-fenced as a separate designated fund, with all the profits from the community (rental income less direct costs and interest on loans) being set aside for this purpose. When this is taken into account (ie. both income and expenses of the Womens' Community House are removed from the receipts and payments for the year) the Charity made a surplus of £43,674, which amount includes two large donations - see note 3 below.
- 3 Donations include gifts from the Dana cafe (£27,565) and from a member of the Sangha (£10,000).

## **Accountant's Report**

In accordance with the instructions given to me by the Trustees I have prepared, without carrying out an audit, the annexed financial statements.

I confirm that these are consistent with the underlying accounting records and with the information and explanations supplied to me.

**Andrew Howson**

**Date**

**Chartered Accountant**

# **Sheffield Buddhist Centre**

## **Accountant's Report**

In accordance with the instructions given to me by the Trustees I have prepared, without carrying out an audit, the annexed financial statements.

I confirm that these are consistent with the underlying accounting records and with the information and explanations supplied to me.

**Andrew Howson Date Chartered Accountant**