



Annual General Meeting Report 2023

Liberation through Imagination



Offerings in the Dharma life

I am delighted to report as 2023 draws to a close, a year full of the expressions of our deepest heart wish that all beings have the conditions to move away from suffering towards happiness, peace and freedom. We have cultivated a community where friendships thrive and people deepen their practice. Our events have increased people's resilience to face the challenges that life inevitably throws up. In our small corner of influence in the world, we have been countering the ills of alienation, hopelessness and overconsumption, offering food for our imagination to live in the beauty of the world we know is possible.

- Amaragita, Chair of Trustees

Mitra News

Muditajina has recently taken on the role of men's Mitra convenor, while Viryanaya continues to serve as the women's Mitra convenor. Kamalanandi is there to support non-binary Mitras. Their primary responsibility is to ensure the availability of study groups for people who have become Mitras or 'friends' of the Triratna Buddhist Order and Buddhafield. They also answer any questions or concerns that may arise.



This year, we had two Mitra ceremonies, adding seven new Mitras to our community – Jane, Gayle, Sam, and Antonia in the spring followed by Luke, Steve and Rob in October.

Currently, we have six online study groups and 34 active Mitras.

This autumn, Muditajina and Alobhin organised a men's Mitra retreat at Tirylan House, where they focused on sharing life stories and nourishing themselves through friendship. It was an excellent opportunity for them to practice together and relax after a busy season.



Pathways to Ordination

Nagalila returned to a warm welcome from her ordination retreat in Spain. She first came to Buddhafield by volunteering in the cafe when she was 19 and followed practice and friendship all the way up the mountain to ordination.

Here are some words shared by Lokabandhu at Nagalila's welcome home:



'Anybody can ask to be ordained into the Triratna Buddhist Order, and then they enter a process that is mysterious. It's not like studying for an exam; it's impossible to define precisely when somebody is ready to be ordained. The touchstone is 'Is somebody's practice effective? Is it having a positive effect on them and those around them? Is it consistent?'' When someone's practice is witnessed as being effective, they will be invited for ordination.

During our team gatherings in spring and autumn, we provide a space for dialogue and connection with Order Members to support those seeking ordination. Pathways to Ordination meetings are a part of this process, where we help people in their journey towards ordination. We currently have 27 Mitras in the Sangha who have asked for ordination.

In the spring, we discussed the 'four lines of acceptance' of the public ordination ceremony:

- With loyalty to my teachers, I accept this ordination.
- In harmony with friends and companions, I accept this ordination.
- For the attainment of Enlightenment, I accept this ordination.
- For the benefit of all beings, I accept this ordination.

In the autumn, we offered one-to-one meetings where people could reflect more deeply on their journey to ordination.





In November, Amaragita, Viryanaya, and Ambaranta held a GFR weekend at Tirylan House called "*The Lotus and the Thousand Arms.*" Thirteen practitioners gathered in Wales to explore Tara, Avalokiteshvara, and the three jewels by the fire, on the cushion, and in the developing forest garden at Tirylan.

So, how do we prepare ourselves for ordination into the Triratna Buddhist Order? We can strengthen our ability to take inspiration from the Buddha, deepen our connection with the Buddha's teachings, and rest in our friendships with fellow dharma-life farers. Meditating, going on retreat, working with others in the Sangha, studying together, and spending time playing games like Codenames - all of these actions contribute to our preparation.

The Anuruddha Programme (Mandate holder: Alobhin, Organiser: Laura - passing on to Felicia for 2024)

This year, we reinstated the Anuruddha programme - a unique work/educational programme blending Buddhist study, practical land work, communal activities, and meditation. Six participants were on the programme, accompanied by one Order Member who stayed with them for the duration. Most of the programme was spent outdoors, camping, with some time indoors at the beginning, middle and end.



It started with an induction retreat at Tirylan House, followed by supporting various retreats on the Buddhafield calendar, such as the Spring Team Gathering, Total Immersion, and Routes to Resilience. There was time for a week at rented accommodation for a mid-season Dream Retreat and land work at both Buddhafield sites (Frog Mill and Bowerwood). The Anuruddhas also spent time as guests at the Hridayabija, Sagaravajra's East Devon forest garden and Tinker's Bubble.



Following this, the team spent almost four weeks participating in the setup and take down of Buddhafield Festival. This was followed by some time at Lokhabandhu's land near Glastonbury Tor and finishing up with an end-of-season retreat back at Tiryan House. The programme aims to provide an intense opportunity to live a full-time Dharma life. It also seeks to build capacity in Buddhafield by imbuing more people with in-depth knowledge of our structures, processes and principles.

We will run the Anuruddha programme again in 2024 and already have a great team.



2023 Events

We had a full calendar of beautiful events this year. Attendee figures below are booked tickets and do not include the crew and contributors that are integral to each event.

We ran a varied programme of retreats in 2023 aiming to appeal to a wide range of people, including experienced practitioners and those relatively new to Buddhism.

Buddhafield Festival (attendees: 2890, mandate holder: Muditajina)

Another sold-out year and our most successful ever. The event went smoothly, and we continue to have a strong team and many beautiful volunteers.

Welcomes and goodbyes:

- We said goodbye to Padmapani and Indrabodhi, who have been leaders of the meditation space for the last couple of decades. They have offered thousands of festival participants beautiful, mythical, magical meditations and puja, keeping the beating heart of practice going for many years.
- Rupadharshin has stepped down from running the saunas and showers at Buddhafield events. We are grateful to him for the last 15 years and more of running Rupa's Realm at Buddhafield Festival. So many have benefited from the space and consider it a vital part of their festival experience.
- Nick Meadows has been an excellent member of the team running bands for the last five years. He is moving on to focus on other aspects of his life, and we wish him well and offer gratitude for his contribution to the festival.
- We are welcoming Richard into the support role in the shower and sauna area.



Buddhafield Café (@Glastonbury and @Green Gathering as well as the festival, mandate holder: Priyadaka)



All three Buddhafield Café events went well this year. Maisie and Laura worked alongside Trevor to cover all the bases. We held a café Sangha building weekend in March, where essential conversations began and a work week in preparation for Glastonbury. These smaller, team-only events gave us a flavour of what is possible in the café's future.

There is a new wave of energy behind improving and growing the café. The aim is to go to more events and create more roles, run more efficiently and have the café more aligned with the ideals of a team-based right livelihood. There is already a dedicated group meeting regularly, and the Café is due to become a circle within the Mandate System at the January mandates meeting. We are working from a beautiful proposal created by Jamie Penston-Raja.

We aim to create a few more paid roles in the café next year, improve our volunteer retention, and implement more staff/volunteer training and a higher level of pastoral care at all events.

There was also a new role created for research and development to look into the possibility of expanding the café outside of the regular summer season and potentially developing the café into a sustainable, year-round, team-based livelihood.



2023 Retreats

Retreats Mandate Holder: Mark

At Home with the Elements (attendees: 130 Organisers: Utpaladhi & Ruth Love, Element leaders: Subhadassi, Viryanaya, Singhashri, Dhivan, Ratnadeva, Maitridevi and Amaragita with rituals held by Amidasuri and Ruth Couthino)

With a theme of 'Be with the Trees', this year's elemental online event grew once again. Participants travelled up the trunk, over branches and out to the leaves before bringing themselves into communion with all six elements at the end of two weeks on retreat.



*Connecting with roots, I bow to earth
With reverence and love to all that is form
Fungus and tendril, sinew and bone
Grounded and peaceful, let mindfulness
flow.*

*Connecting with sap, I bow to water
With reverence and love to all that moves
The tides of the trees, the tides of the body
With kindly awareness, let clarity flow.*

*Connecting with heartwood, I bow to fire
With reverence and love to all that
transforms
From sunlight to acorn, from acorn to oak
tree,*

*From greed to devotion, let energy flow.
Connecting with leaves, I bow to air
With reverence and love to all that
breathes*

*With gratitude taking the gift of the trees
Inspiring, releasing, let spaciousness flow.*

*Connecting with paths, I bow to space
With reverence and love to all that is
empty*

*Potential for everything, holding to nothing,
Treading the Way, let freedom flow.*

*Connecting with forests, I bow to consciousness
With reverence and love to all that is boundless
Ungraspable mysteries, interdependent,
Both within and without, let all blessings flow.*

- Daily blessing for At Home with the Elements by Viryanaya)



Spring Yatra (Attendees: 36) Leaders: Lokabandhu and Vimalaraja



In April, we held what may be our most dramatic yatra yet in North Wales, led by our own Lokabandhu and Vimalaraja. We started at the imposing castle at Harlech. We followed the coastline down to the wild and beautiful Mawddach estuary before heading inland to ascend the

legendary mountain of Cadair Idris. Over the six days of the walk, we experienced almost every kind of weather imaginable, at one point waking to find the mountains covered in fresh snow!

"I loved the overall experience. The vision, the rhythm, being outside, the connection to self, group, and nature. The silent walking. The form. Feeling so alive."

- Retreatant feedback

Women's and Non-Binary Person's Yatra (Attendees: 14) Leaders: Aryanisha, Karunagita, Pranjadevi



Following hot on the heels of the first yatra, a second group of yatrika set off on another pilgrimage led by Karunagita, Aryanisha and Pranjadevi. They began at Feniton in East Devon and traversed the Blackdown Hills before crossing the Somerset levels to reach the mythical Glastonbury Tor.

"I loved the overall experience. The vision, the rhythm, being outside, the connection to self, group, nature. The silent walking. The form. Feeling so alive."

- Retreatant feedback



Men's Wilderness (attendees: 11, leaders: Muditajina, Akashapala)



This year, the men's wilderness was a well-attended retreat taking in the wilds of Snowdonia. It is a mythic journey through the mountains, bringing men closer together, exploring community and living simply on the land. An unseasonable heatwave made for beautiful moments and brought its own struggles. Still, the feeling of practising Dharma through adversity, beauty and being in nature profoundly infused the whole experience.

Beloved Community (Attendees: 25) Leaders: Singhashri, Kamalanandi, Upekshapriya



In late May, we ran our first gender-diverse retreat at our Bowerwood site in East Devon. The event was well attended and was led by Kamalanandi and Upekshapriya, who heroically kept the show on the road when the other retreat leader, Singhashri, unavoidably had to leave. Developing a new retreat that speaks to our community's needs is courageous, challenging and an expression of our commitment to all beings.

Total Immersion - Greening the Heart (Attendees: 20) Leaders: Paramananda, Kshantika, Satyamuni, Satyamanas

For the first time in many years, we held this meditation retreat on our land at Bowerwood. The title proved entirely fitting for two weeks of practising amongst the lush greenery of the woodlands in the full flush of early summer, surrounded by a great diversity of living beings. Creative rituals from Satyamuni, Satyamanas and Kshantika complemented Paramananda's soulful and embodied meditation teaching.



Songs from Silence (Attendees: 56) Leaders: Joanna Spence, Joe Hill, Ruth Coutino and Shradhadipa



We closed the season with our first ever singing retreat held on our land at Frogmill, with singing skilfully led by Joanna Spence and Joe Hill, Dharma teaching and rituals from Shradhadipa and yoga and movement with Ruth. The event proved very popular - it was our most well-attended adult retreat for many years, and we received much positive feedback.

“All of a high standard. Really helpful, encouraging, educative, poetic, and inspired input across the board, from actual meditation to singing workshops and evening rituals. It all felt very joined up with cross connections being made by the different people teaching each day.”

- Retreatant Feedback

Green Earth Awakening: Routes to Resilience (Attendees: 17) Mandate holder: Nagalila. Event leaders: Amaragita, Nagalila, Sanghasiha, Shantigarba.

We ran this retreat for the second time this year. Routes to Resilience emerges from the themes of the Green Earth Awakening Camp. Bowerwood's beauty held us in the bluebells. A rich programme provided a well-deserved opportunity for those active in community settings to take some time out and reflect and be resourced to continue acting on behalf of their values.

“An excellent retreat. The teaching team were clear and very engaging. The support team were friendly and efficient. Food was excellent. The program was varied, interesting and supportive. I came away feeling nourished and resourced.”

- Retreatant Feedback



Village (attendees: Village 1: 25, Village 2: 137, mandate holder: Ruth Love)

It's impossible to encapsulate the full experience of the Village events. Something about the chaos of family life, intergenerational interaction, full rituals and the powerful land and beings of Frog Mill always come together to make magic. With almost 300 folks in total on the retreat, including more than 100 children, it's a natural rollercoaster that takes people from the Naga shrine up to Oak Henge, across the famous bridge that straddles Blackaton Brook and past the mill to the ancestors on the hill. Together, we make music, eat on the green, play games and make crafts, immerse ourselves in hot tubs under the stars and plan merriment for the cabaret finale. Our children grow up at Village, and our elders pass on their wisdom. This year was no exception.



Buddhafield Southeast Spring & Autumn Family-Friendly Retreats (Attendees: spring – 48, autumn – 34, mandate holder: Sharon Trodd, Leaders: Hannah and Jnanagarbha)

We've had two successful and enjoyable Buddhafield Southeast retreats this year, and that's mostly down to the retreat team, which is small, loyal and experienced. A couple of new, enthusiastic volunteers were also welcomed. It is a lot of work as the retreats are only two and three nights long, yet the set-up is the same. We were lucky to have beautiful weather- particularly in September- which helped a lot.

Sharon needs a strong shoutout for holding the organiser role, including working out food stock, menus, teams for set up/tat down/the event and getting her head around the often-complicated parking situation on the narrow woodland track.

We have built up a good rhythm and routine over the years with a 'less is more' approach. The early morning walking meditation through the woods led by Anna is lovely, and regular sits, pujas directly involving the children, and appropriate talks seem to work well.

Buddhafield Southeast is a little jewel in Buddhafield's crown that takes short, sharp bursts of work from a reliable team. With the goodwill from various folk to be able to put it on, it is going well.



"Our family really enjoyed it and felt very refreshed afterwards. It was a nourishing experience for the mind, body and spirit. It reminded me of the importance of peace and basically doing less And feeling more."
- Spring Retreat Participant



Team Gatherings

Leader: Amaragita, Organiser: Ruth Love. Attendance peaked at 70/80 people during each weekend.

This year, we held the spring team gathering at Bowerwood and the autumn at Mayhill in Gloucestershire.

The spring helped to germinate the season's first retreats at Bowerwood and offered a chance for us to explore topics such as money, the progress of the Buddhafield Base project, and gender diversity on our retreats.

In autumn, we experimented with having the first two and a half days as practice days focussed on the threefold path of Sila (ethics), Samadhi (concentration), and Prajna (wisdom). Upayavira, Jnanakumara and Akashapala offered practice reviews.

It's hard to convey the harmony and enthusiasm present at these events. Volunteers from the different aspects of Buddhafield come together to cross-pollinate and understand how the organism is faring as a whole. We sing, play games, reflect on the coming or passing season and wish each other well for whatever is coming next in our lives.



Resources

Operations Circle (lead link: Muditajina)

Kit (Mandate holder: Trevor Walker, Deputy and kit week organiser: Laura Claffey)

We had two kit weeks in 2023. In March, we stayed in a lovely house on Dartmoor and repaired the compost toilets - even when it snowed! In November, the barn was organised, tidied, and hoovered. All the canvases were checked, first aid kits were sorted, and everything was prepared and ready for the winter work.

The Kit Deputy role is under review to understand what would be most valuable and feasible. We hope to create a stream of regular volunteers/workers in the barn to help Trevor complete the necessary winter work.



Vehicles (Mandate holder: Luke Griffiths)

A new person took on the vehicle's bundle responsibility this year. Huge thanks to Fern for a steadfast holding and handover of the bundle responsibilities!

Alongside a new human, we welcomed a new vehicle to the Buddhafield fleet (that soon garnered the nickname of Marsha), replacing a vehicle that had reached the end of its service life. It now continues as a site vehicle for the festival despite not being road-worthy. With this addition, the vehicles successfully supported a full season of events and allowed other Triratna organisations to hire Buddhafield structures. We have matured in our DVSA HGV operator license compliance and now have a more reliable record of organisational vehicle data. Discussions have begun regarding the impact of Buddhafield Base on the requirements of Buddhafield vehicles and how to ensure this bundle is ready to change alongside the wider organisation when the time comes for our big move.

*All experience is preceded by
mind,
led by mind, made by mind.
Speak or act with a corrupted
mind
And suffering follows
As the van wheel follows the
engine.*

*All experience is preceded by
mind,
led by mind, made by mind.
Speak or act with a peaceful
mind
And happiness follows
Like a suitably hitched trailer.*



Buddhafield vehicles continue to be valuable Dharma teachers. Breakdowns, flat tires and loss of keys are reliable situations to observe our mental states. Our vehicles continue to keep the Buddhafield project on the road.

Land Circle (Lead link: vacant)

Bowerwood (land manager: Pom McFadden)



Mark & Pom met Henry Russell, a top timber framer, on-site some weeks ago and discussed various options for completing the barn. We may look for him to help complete the barn, supported by experienced Buddhafield volunteers, at some work events in April & October.

Pom had the terraces, live-in vehicles area, and the field beyond this cut back in September by a contractor. The latter includes a wet flush area, which he's trying to manage as a valuable habitat.

Pom just had the land and the access lane surveyed by an experienced tree surveyor and is awaiting his report. Initial thoughts are that there's little to be overly concerned about. He also recently

met a contractor on site to discuss various access and parking improvements, including replacing the boardwalk, reprofiling and stoning the live-in vehicles area, widening the access, and reprofiling and re-stoning the turning circle.

There was a beautiful winter workday with five people recently. They checked many of the planted trees, weeded and reset some of the guards. There is an excellent rate of survival so far. Also, they brought down some old timbers and previously felled ash from the higher ground. Pom put out some new rubber matting around the shower area. We had previous work days in June and September, had good turnouts and decent weather, and volunteers completed a fair amount of work.



Frogmill (land manager: Mike Fletcher)



We are grazing some heritage sheep again this winter in exchange for hedge cutting that helps to meet legal requirements set out by the Highways Agency. The hay will be cut as usual next year.

An accessible compost toilet is being designed and planned for the Village retreat. This will be demountable to comply

with planning regulations. It is funded by Cat Powell's successful procurement of a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery for this work and other accessible support at Village.

Conversations are in process around a storage shed to store kit and reduce the carbon demand of transport to and from Frog Mill. Some safety tree work will happen this winter, as well as larger tree protection for the oak circle and a planned work retreat in the early spring. The latter may include upgrading the pipe size on site to improve water pressure during retreats.

Sustenance Circle (lead link: Ruth Love, team holder: Dave Bevan, organiser: Antonia)

The circle continues to meet to discuss issues around sustainability, retreat and crew food, restricted diets, sustenance volunteers, equipment, budget, holding teams and creating inviting spaces. This circle nurtures the sustenance roles at the heart of every event and the teams that hold so much in these areas.

Volunteer Coordination (bundle holder: Dave Bevan)

As always, our volunteers' hard work, creativity and love have been at the heart of Buddhafield's success this year. This is so well-established that it could be easy to take it for granted, so before I say anything else, I invite us to pause, breathe, and acknowledge the remarkable quality and quantity of volunteer time spent on Buddhafield projects, bringing every known skill under the sun, and a shared love of the values that underpin what we do.

- Dave



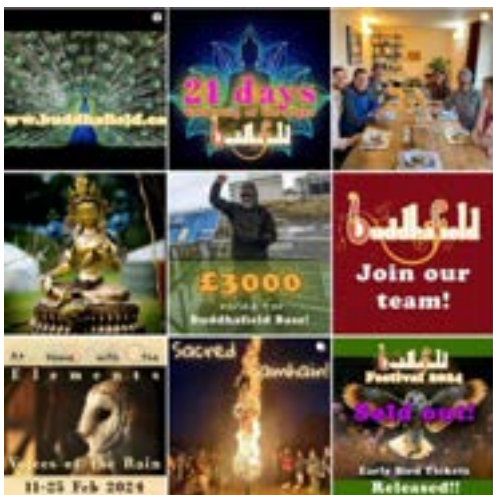
So, what's new in Buddhafield volunteering in 2023? On a practical level, we have reduced one of the biggest problems in volunteer coordination - teams being overstretched because volunteers drop out at the last minute, leading to negative knock-on effects. More intangibly, we have made excellent progress in improving the volunteer experience by ensuring team leaders are better supported when recruiting and leading their teams. There is still plenty more that can be done. Still, Buddhafield has made a step change this year in incorporating more understanding of group dynamics, trauma and identity into the training and support of team leaders. The result has been both higher efficiency and less conflict than in previous years.

Programming Circle (lead link: Muditajina):

In 2023, we had a successful programme of events that flowed well together. We put on new and different retreats, attracting many participants and experiences. We organised a series of events at Bowerwood to start the year before holding the Village retreats and an open singing retreat at Frog Mill.

Connectivity and Communication Circle (lead link: Lotus)

Publicity (mandate holder: Beth Jones)



We sold out 7 of 11 events this year, including having the best year ever for Buddhafield Festival. Our outgoing emails continue to grow in strength and beauty, and we regularly get feedback from people they have touched. Beth shares our publicity in different groups and across various mediums in an inspiring way.

Front of House (mandate holder: Lotus)

The 2024 events went on the website in autumn again this year for several reasons, including responding to changes within the retreat team. The process of gathering information and

putting it online went well. Joe Hill reprised his role as a support person for the emails during the busiest time of the year.

Emails are a continuous flow of love and challenge from our community. Both are welcome and passed on to keep us feeling appreciated and inspired to grow.

IT & Data Management (bundle holder: vacant)

We said goodbye to Buddhasevaka early this year, and the Communication and Connectivity lead has managed the IT role for a few months. We are currently recruiting to fill this position.



Next year, we will see the installation of a new website and the use of Ticketsellers and Eventree for our festival administrative process and some retreat team support. A new role - within the festival - was created to manage some of this, and Ruth Love now holds this.

Buddhafield Base (lead link: Amaragita, project lead: Lotus)



Another extraordinary year in Buddhafield Base with the closing of our first share offer, a renewed presence at our internal events and the rise and fall of our first property offer. Although it would have been a rare coup to have our first property process go all the way to fruition, we're content in the team to have learnt a lot and had a practice run. We said goodbye to the dream of that particular Welsh hill farm in

September after encountering an insurmountable issue with the land and holding our main event. Our property search, as well as our fundraising efforts, will continue in 2024.

We said goodbye to our first Base Comms lead this year - Zara. She passed the role to Beth Jones, who extended her publicity work in Buddhafield to encompass the Base project. Lucy Barber took on the role of Events Coordinator and ensured we had our most successful year at Buddhafield Festival, as well as writing and recording the Love, Play, Work, Grow song with her partner Barney. Lucy also began to develop our ambassador programme, where people raise money for Base through their activities. Our first ambassador was Trevor, who walked over 300 miles and raised £3,000.



The final total for the share offer was just under £100,000; we raised £30,000 at Buddhafield Festival and became the grateful recipients of a £50,000 grant from a



donor-advised trust fund. Maia has taken on the role of grants researcher for the coming year.

Buddhafield Base is a project of faith, effort and imagination. We're constantly juggling the various elements to ensure that we're both proceeding at a good pace, holding lightly, and taking Dharma and beauty with us. The learning curve is steep, but the view gets better and better as we climb higher.

- Lotus

Guardianship Circle (lead link: Kamalanandi)

Staffing (Bundle holder: Nagalila)

We have increased the support budget - what we pay people to do their jobs. We are working towards reflecting the 'real living wage'. This is a big step for us, which has been an aspiration for quite some time. We are confident that all budget holders will be looking after their budgets with care so that this rise is sustainable. We are also taking steps to support safer recruitment practices.

Sangha Harmony (Bundle holder: Nagalila)

Three people from the Sangha Harmony circle took part in a 2-day training at Adhithana around the neuroscience of conflict and harmony, which was very helpful. This year, we have created more space for people to debrief from their roles if they are holding large or complex areas. Next year, this will take the form of offering a regular space for this. We have been responding ad hoc to people's requests, and there have been some mediations.

Safeguarding (Bundle holder: Kamalanandi)

The role of safeguarding in Buddhafield has been evolving for many years under the guidance of Kamalanandi. Our procedures are constantly improving, and our relationship with safeguarding as an organisation is developing. We had more safeguarding cases this year than in any previous year, which does not mean things are worse. Instead, it indicates that we are paying closer attention to what's happening and taking necessary actions to support everyone involved.

Safeguarding can be challenging for those working within it and those who need to interact with it. However, our commitment to taking care of the children and vulnerable adults at our events and meeting the unique challenges of being a Buddhist events organisation that strongly interacts with the broader community of the world is unyielding. Having confidence that safeguarding will support us in these difficulties is invaluable, and we are grateful to those at the core of this process.



Health and Safety (Bundle holder: Alex Post)

Many thanks to Alex Post for their work. After providing invaluable feedback about the role, they put down the health and safety bundle. Alex led a team of eight at Buddhafield Festival and ensured another well-held event. We will be recruiting someone to develop our systems in the new year in anticipation of the start of the season.

Inclusivity (lead link: vacant)

This post has been vacant for a year. Kamalanandi and Cait met ad hoc requirements. A proposal has been suggested to create project work in this area in the coming year. Watch this space.

Mandates Circle (lead link: Cait Crosse)



This is Cait's second year in the role. They feel more established and settled in the rhythm of the Mandates System circle. The circle has a new organiser (Dave Brown) to help us meet more regularly. Cait delivered two workshops at both team gatherings: an 'Introduction to the Mandates System' and a closed session where Mandate holders could update each other on their work. The 'closed' sessions help identify gaps in the system and share information.

The introductory sessions are generally for newcomers and are a valuable introduction to the system and how to get involved in this side of Buddhafield. We're continuing to learn from and evaluate these team gathering sessions.

This year, Cait established a more straightforward system for updating the role information before each team gathering. She also created a new visual representation of the information and an online Notion guide to the mandates system. She's also updated the meeting template and run some inductions for those taking on new roles.



Financial Highlights

We welcomed the wonderful Maia to the team as bookkeeper this year.

	£	£	Notes
Buddhafield Festival			
Ticket sales	460,000		Best ever Ticket sales and Income! Up from £409,000 in 2022.
Traders and other income	20,300		
Total income		480,300	
Forecast Surplus (donated to charity)		198,000	Compared with £153,000 in 2022
Buddhafield Café			
Glastonbury, Buddhafield & Green Gathering takings	80,000		1st stage re-investing the café to upgrade kit etc. New oven... more to come!
Expected surplus		10,000	
GEA			
Ticket sales			Dormant year. New organising team for 2024: David Basak & Jo Spence
Retreats			
Booked places on all retreats	46,500		Compared with 50,000 in 2022. Excellent numbers on songs from silence - £9,200 income with 50+ retreatants. Compared with £37,000 in 2022.
Retreat dana (estimated)	34,000		
Expected contribution to support & overheads		27,000	
Support			
Buddhafield was able to increase support staff and volunteers through bundle system	133,000		Compared with £103,000 in 2022. Further support increases possible in 2024.
Other notable expenditure			
Relaunched Anuruddha programme	4,000		
Support of team on external retreats	6,600		
Gifts to volunteers	6,000		
Donations to other Treatna charities	5,100		
Overall forecast surplus			
Estimated		52,000	Compared with £95,000 in 2022.
Free/contingency reserves forecast at end of 2023		190,000	Compared with £138,000 in 2022.



End of Year Reflections

2023 draws to a close, summer is a distant memory, and the snow is already falling... What a year it's been for Buddhafield! Very successful, but a bit of a rollercoaster as well. The festival as always was a delight and for me personally the spring yatra along the North Wales coast is not a week I'll forget anytime soon: starting in soft spring sunshine, by the time the group reached the summit of Cadair Idris they were facing blow-me-over gales and we were so glad we'd hired Francis as our mountain leader guide. But by the end of the week, almost unbelievably, spring and sunshine had returned...

Perhaps the greatest roller coaster all went on largely behind the scenes as the Base Camp group identified and seriously pursued a hundred-acre farm near Abergavenny, putting in and having accepted an offer, only to discover a significant gas main running right through the centre of the best land rendering the whole place unviable and throwing the project back to square one. Definitely a marathon, not a sprint - but we only need to get lucky once!

As president, I have so appreciated Amaragita's steady and systematic leadership, visionary without being foolhardy, detailed without being lost in the detail, responsible without being stressed. Buddhafield owes her a great deal. Thank you Amaragita! Having said that, Buddhafield really is very little apart from its people: as the sutra says, a Buddhafield is a field of living beings and outside living beings, no Buddhas. So I think we all have a great deal we can be proud of and roll on 2024!

Before signing off, I just want to give a shoutout to Nagalila, who was freshly ordained and welcomed back at our end-of-season team gathering in October. May many more Buddhafielders enter our Order; the Order needs you!

- Lokabandhu
Buddhafield president
December 2023

Coming Up in 2024

The theme for 2024 is **With Arms Wide Open**. We look forward to acquiring a new home for Buddhafield through the Buddhafield Base project and welcoming another group of Anuruddhas. At Home with the Elements will run in February under the theme of 'Voices of the Rain', and the beautiful Green Earth Awakening will return in the autumn to nourish our hearts and minds.



