



# **Lam Rim Buddhist Centre Wales**

## **Annual Report**

1st August 2022 – 31st July 2023

Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2023.

Registered Charity No. 326675

The Trustees present their annual report and the independently examined financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2023. These have been prepared in the light of the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities, and the Charities Acts.

All information given was correct as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 and has been approved by the Trustees.

### **Reference and Administrative details**

Lam Rim Buddhist Centre  
Pentwyn Manor  
Penrhos, Raglan  
Monmouthshire  
NP15 2LE

Registered Charity No. 326675

### **Patron**

HE Ganden Trisur Rizong Sras Rinpoche until his passing on 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 2022.

### **Trustees**

Jason Briggs (From 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022)  
Judith Anne Hassell  
David William Johnson (Until 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022)  
Gillian Margaret Vaisey  
Geshe Graham Woodhouse (From 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022)

### **Executive Committee**

Malcolm Durham (Advisor and Accountant – until August 2022)  
Adrian Hassell (Advisor)  
David Johnson (Advisor – from 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022)

### **Resident Volunteers**

John McDougall - House Maintenance  
Graham Say – Caretaker and Ground Maintenance  
Anneka Lott (From July 2023) – Social Media and Administration

### **Off-site Administration**

Deb Edwards (Until Dec 2022)  
Jo Nicholls (Secretary)  
Bel Spencer (Until July 2023)

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Charity is a Trust governed by a Trust Deed dated 5<sup>th</sup> August 1983, updated April 2022 that states the Trustees of the Charity shall be no less than three and no more than six in number, with the majority of the Trustees to reside in the UK.

### **Trust Deed**

A revision to the Trust Deed was required to reflect the death of the Centre's Spiritual Director, clarification on the recruitment of Trustees, auditing requirements of the accounts and minor updates on the appointment of a Chair of the Trustees at meetings. The revised Trust Deed was accepted by the Charity Commission (CC) and uploaded to the CC Website on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

### **Spiritual Director**

On Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2017 at Lam Rim Buddhist Centre, Penrhos, Raglan, our Spiritual Director, the Venerable Geshe Damcho Yonten passed away. The current Trustees and/or future Trustees may appoint a new spiritual director in consultation with the Dalai Lama or the Head of the Gelugpa tradition for the time being.

### **Trustees**

The Charity is currently governed by a Board of four Trustees, which is supported by an Executive Committee.

The Trustees are responsible for setting the direction of the development of the Charity. The Trustees manage the charity's resources responsibly and act with reasonable care and skill in the best interest of the charity.

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits.

### **Executive Committee**

All Executive Committee Members give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits for their advice given in this capacity.

### **Staff**

The role of the remote Secretary is an hourly paid position. The role of Administrator was an hourly paid position up to June 2023 after which the role was taken on by an on-site volunteer.

### **Meetings**

The Board of Trustees hold regular meetings, usually every six weeks. A Chairperson is appointed at the start of each meeting. In accordance with the Trust Deed a minimum of two Trustees must be present for a meeting to be quorate. The Secretary records the minutes and the subsequent actions. Minutes are accepted as a true record of each meeting by all Trustees and signed by the Chairperson of that meeting. Each set of minutes is archived and held in an electronic file.

Eight Trustee Board meetings were held during the period of this report. These were supported by additional regular informal meetings, telephone calls and email communications between the Trustees.

### **Objectives**

As stated in the Trust Deed, the objects of the Charity are to promote the Buddhist faith and Buddhist charitable organisations throughout the United Kingdom. The Charity was established to fulfil the desire of many persons to promote the Buddhist faith and to encourage human growth through meditation and spiritual development.

## Executive Summary

- In December 2022, the Trustees of Lam Rim Buddhist Centre Wales marked with great sadness the death of its Patron His Holiness the Gaden Trisur Rizong Sras Rinpoche, Thubten Nyima Lungtok Tenzin Norbu, the former 102nd Gaden throneholder (spiritual head of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism). He died late on the evening of December 8th, 2022, at Drepung Monastery in the southwestern Indian state of Karnataka. He was 94 years old.
- The Centre welcomed two new Trustees, Geshe Graham Woodhouse and Jason Briggs. The appointment of these two additional Trustees commenced in July 2022 and the process was completed on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- David Johnson's resignation was accepted, and his last day of Trusteeship was 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022.
- The Centre opened its doors once again to day course attendees from May 2023. Until this time the Centre had remained closed due to the ongoing issues with residency and the continued preparation with building repairs and maintenance.
- With the support of the two new Trustees the teaching programme was developed and continued to offer online courses. In person day courses were introduced from May 2023.
- The Centre welcomed teaching support both old and new. These included Ben Griffin, Ngakma Shé-zér Khandro, Dechen Rochard, Paul Seagrave, and Irene Turner.
- The Lam Rim team were pleased to see many participants online and delighted to be able to welcome back attendees to the Centre for the in-person day courses in May and July. These successful in person sessions were significant as they were the first on site sessions since the closure of the Centre due to COVID.
- The Trustees continued to support the retired long-term resident in finding suitable new accommodation. The retired long-term resident moved to their new accommodation on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023. The Trustees appreciated the considerable support provided by the resident volunteers with the practical logistics of the move.
- The two resident volunteers continued their roles for the reporting period. Their help with the preparation for the reopening of the Centre was invaluable.
- A new remote working volunteer administrator joined from May – December 2022.
- A new resident volunteer joined the team in July 2023 and their long term residency was subsequently approved in September 2023.
- Considerable ongoing maintenance repairs to the house were conducted including repairs required after a flood in the laundry room, the installation of a hot water supply to the kitchen and upstairs bathrooms.

- Maximising the Centre's assets to support the financial situation is always a consideration. As a result, apartment one was prepared and made available for short term rental in addition to apartment two.
- The Centre benefited from a regular local day Volunteer and additional day Volunteers also joined throughout the year.
- A new [website](#) was designed and launched. It was positively received by the community.

## **Main Operational Activities and Developments**

### **In Memoriam**

In December 2022, the Trustees of Lam Rim Buddhist Centre Wales marked with great sadness the death of our Patron His Holiness the Gaden Trisur Rizong Sras Rinpoche, Thubten Nyima Lungtok Tenzin Norbu, the former 102nd Gaden throne-holder (spiritual head of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism). He died late on the evening of December 8th, 2022, at Drepung Monastery in the southwestern Indian state of Karnataka. He was 94 years old.

Kyabje Rizong Rinpoche had a strong relationship with the Lam Rim Buddhist Centres in light of his long friendship with the Centre's founding teacher, Ven. Geshe Damchö Yonten. During their studies in Tibet, they were roommates and spent much time discussing both Dharma and other issues between them. When the Chinese invaded Tibet, Rinpoche invited Ven. Geshe-la to accompany him to India, and then invited him to reside as the abbot of Samten Ling monastery in Nubra Valley, Ladakh, which he did for three years.

As a result of their close relationship, the Centre benefitted greatly from the kindness and profound teachings given to us by Rizong Rinpoche on the four occasions that he was able to visit Lam Rim Wales.

In 2022 the Centre also lost two long term friends and supporters.

In August 2022 Malcolm Durham, the Centre's accountant and a trusted advisor to the Trustees, passed away. As well as his formal roles at the Centre, Malcolm enjoyed attending the courses, meditation classes, and walking and working in the garden. Malcolm was a great supporter of the Centre and was passionate about enabling its re-opening.

In March 2023 a group of Malcolm's friends and Lam Rim team members undertook a charity walk in his memory. All proceeds were donated to the Centre.

In October 2022, Lam Rim's dear friend Janet Ford passed away. Janet dedicated herself tirelessly to managing the Centre in 2018, selflessly leaving her new home in France to do so for five months when the Centre was in need. Janet had been a former yoga student and developed a great association with Lam Rim over many years, regularly practising and taking daily puja during her time at the Centre. On her return to France, Janet kept in touch with the Centre and enjoyed attending some of the online teachings.

The Lam Rim team are aware of other friends and supporters who have sadly passed away in recent times and are grateful for all they brought to Lam Rim Buddhist Centre. All those who have spent time at the Centre remain treasured and valued as members of the Lam Rim community.

## **Trustees**

The Board of Trustees received David Johnson's resignation and his final date of Trusteeship was 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022. His valuable contribution to the Board of Trustees over many years was recognised and appreciation was extended for his long commitment to steering Lam Rim Buddhist Centre. David remains in support of Lam Rim Buddhist Centre as a member of the Executive Committee.

The process of appointing new Trustees commenced in July 2022. The Trustees met several times with the two new potential Trustees, Geshe Graham Woodhouse and Jason Briggs. From a resolution at a Trustee meeting, the applications were accepted and approved on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

The Trustees have appreciated the value of Geshe Graham Woodhouse's involvement as a Trustee in terms of his position as a Geshe within the Lam Rim tradition and the knowledge, understanding and insight that this brings.

With Jason Briggs' experience and dedication as a Lam Rim practitioner, alongside his experience of Trusteeship of Land of Joy, and his business, IT, social media, marketing and fundraising skills, Jason is of great value to the Board of Lam Rim Trustees.

Geshe Graham Woodhouse and Jason Briggs have visited the Centre on a number of occasions and met the resident volunteers to discuss the future development of the Centre.

## **Executive Committee**

The Trustees continued to be supported by members of the Executive Committee whose practical help and advice is greatly appreciated. Executive Committee members carry out aspects of work on behalf of the Trustees and are invited to advise on particular items at Trustee meetings as appropriate.

The Trustees welcomed David Johnson's offer of continued support as an Executive Committee member.

## **Teachers**

During the year the team welcomed the following teachers:

**Ben Griffin** was brought up in a family of Quakers and Buddhists, Ben was first exposed to the idea of Buddhahood and the path to enlightenment while still very young. Having an innate affection for Tibet and Tibetans, Ben has been a loyal, and close student of Ven. Geshe Damchö Yonten since 1979. Later, while resident at the Centre (and subsequently), Ben received many heart teachings on Lam Rim from Geshe Damchö, His Holiness 14th Dalai Lama, and several legendary visiting teachers. Ben generously offered to continue his weekly online teaching sessions for the Centre.

**Ngakma Shé-zér Khandro** is an experienced teacher of the Aro gTér lineage, Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhist tradition which is principally concerned with transforming our experience of everyday being, emphasising simplicity, clarity, and depth - both of practice and understanding. Shé-zér kindly offered to hold a day session in Yogic Song and later in the year, a Sky Weaving session.

**Dechen Rochard** has been a Buddhist practitioner since 1984 and is a disciple of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. After engaging in several 3-month solitary retreats in the UK, including at Lam Rim Wales, she completed the first ten years of the Geshe degree program, including Madhyamaka, at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics (Dharamsala, India). She continued her studies of Madhyamaka with Geshe Lhundub Sopa for over a decade, translating and editing his oral commentary on the Insight section of Tsongkhapa's *Lamrim Chenmo* (Wisdom Publications, 2017). Dechen kindly conducted an in-person day teaching in July and was part of the team that hosted an open afternoon tea party.

**Paul Seagrave** is classically trained in the Tibetan Buddhist Gelugpa tradition, the lineage of the 14th Dalai Lama. He graduated from Nalanda Monastery in the summer of 2022 having completed the five-year residential programme under the guidance of Geshe Jamphel Gyaltzen and Geshe Graham Woodhouse (Tenzin Losel) concluding ten years of study and over a year of solitary retreat. Paul kindly conducted a 5-week online meditation course (March / April 2023) and two in person teachings (May 2023).

**Irene Turner** was born in Brazil, first met the Dharma in India (Dharamsala) in the mid-seventies and has been a practicing Buddhist ever since. She lived in the UK throughout the 80s and 90s, bringing up her children, where she made a connection with Lam Rim Wales and was part of the community's early years. She went on to work at Jamyang London, eventually studying at The Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa (Italy) from 2004. She took ordination there in 2005 with Geshe Jampa Gyatso. In 2008 she went to live near Nalanda Monastery in France, where she did a second round of the FPMT Basic Program, followed by the seven years of the Master's Program, as taught by Geshe Jamphel. Irene kindly participated in an online Q&A session and joined the team for the weekend of Dechen's teaching and the open afternoon tea party.

## **Staffing and Centre Operating Structure**

Administration staff and the Secretary to the Trustees continue to be a major source of support in managing the Centre. The Secretary prepares agendas in conjunction with one of the Trustees and attends meetings to take the minutes. Administration staff support the Trustees in carrying out particular actions arising from the meetings as well as other administrative tasks necessary for the ongoing running and development of the Centre. The Trustees continued the search for a suitable candidate to take on the onsite managerial role.

## **Residents and Volunteers**

- The two resident volunteers continue to provide valuable support to the Centre. Considerable maintenance work, both in the house and the grounds, was undertaken by the resident volunteers in the preparation to reopening the Centre to day course attendees.
- The remote administrator role continued until July 2023. The Trustees appreciated their work undertaken over the past two years in particular with regards to broadening the Centre's community network.
- There were several residential short stays with volunteers who were applying for residency. One of these, Anneka Lott arrived in June for a trial basis and their



application to join as a resident volunteer was successful and accepted by the Trustees in September 2023.

- Anneka's previous experience in marketing and working with charities has enhanced the team's capabilities. Her continued support in the preparation of the house for the day courses has proved invaluable. The Centre has benefited from Anneka taking on the administrative tasks including the website updates, community mailings and social media updates.
- Ceris Timms, an advisor to the Trustees, with regards to the development of the grounds and its natural environment, and a keen supporter of the Centre, stayed at the Centre to discuss and assess with the team the future requirements for the grounds.
- The new remote volunteer administrator supported the team from May 2022 – December 2022. The Trustees appreciated their help with recording the teaching donations and managing the managers' email account.
- Trustees, Executive Members and day volunteers staff provided periods of onsite volunteering to help maintain the upkeep of the grounds and building.

## **Maintenance and Repairs to the Centre**

- In preparation for the Centre's reopening, considerable repairs to the internal decoration were carried out by the resident volunteer, John McDougall.
- Repairs after a flood in the laundry were carried out by a contracted builder.
- In February 2023, Adrian Hassell, an Executive Committee member who is experienced in the building trade undertook a review of the current condition of the house and the maintenance required. Adrian provided a report to the Trustees with regard to his findings.
- Approximately £4,200 repairs expenses were incurred in 2022 – 2023 and approximately £88,000 has been spent on repairs between 2017 to 2021/22.

## **Internet Connection**

- A limited WIFI facility has been available, but the search continues to find a strong internet connection to allow for full download and upload capabilities.

## **Website**

- Trustee, Jason Briggs created a new design for the Centre's [website](#). This was fully launched in February 2024. Positive feedback was received from the community as to the design and the ease of navigation. The old website was taken down and the content retained.
- The facility to manage online bookings has been a valuable benefit.
- The community mailings are now being sent from the website.

## **Utilising The Centre's Assets**

- Apartment 2 continued to successfully provide short term holiday or retreat rental creating valuable income for the Centre.
- The resident volunteers' hard work has paid off with excellent reviews from guests. As a result, a 'superhost' status from Airbnb has been retained.
- Considerable work was undertaken by the resident volunteers with help from a Trustee and the Secretary to prepare Apartment 1 for rental use and visiting teachers.
- The apartments have proved profitable and a valuable source of income.
- The Centre's teaching room has been promoted for room hire for yoga and other courses in line with Buddhist principles.

## **Main activities undertaken for public benefit and to further the purpose of Lam Rim Buddhist Centre**

The Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

This section of the Annual Report summarises the activities carried out for the benefit of the public during this reporting period.

### **Mailings to the Community**

During the period of the report, nineteen mailings were sent to all those on the community mailing list, providing updates about the Centre and its activities and the various courses being offered. Responses communicating support, encouragement, and an appreciation to see the Centre re-opened have been greatly appreciated. Community members have been thanked for their support.

Through the continued promotion of the teaching programme and via new visitors to the website, the number on the community mailing list increased to over 500. As a result, the Centre's mailing platform, Mailchimp, was no longer offering a free service. Within the subscription package of the new website there is a mailing facility which provided an easy and cost-free solution.

### **Day Visitors**

Due to necessary maintenance and repairs, the Centre was closed to day visitors for much of this annual reporting period, however it was open to day course attendees. Plans are in place to re-open the Centre for general visitors in the next reporting year.

### **Retreats**

Whilst necessary maintenance and repairs continue to be undertaken, the Centre is still working towards being able to offer overnight retreats. Expressions of interest have been received via email for future retreat bookings.

## **Teaching Programme**

The online teaching programme continued and offered live dharma teachings to the community. On site teachings resumed in May 2023.

### **Dharma Online courses**

With Ben Griffin:

- Teaching: *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path of Enlightenment*
- Weekly Monday evening sessions
- 2nd Semester: 9th May 2022 for 14 weeks
- 3rd Semester: 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022 for 15 weeks

With Paul Seagrave:

- Teaching: *Calming the Mind: A Beginners Guide to Cultivating Mental Serenity*
- Weekly sessions
- 18th March to 15th April 2023

These online teachings were enjoyed by those attending with feedback showing that they were greatly appreciated and beneficial. The benefit of an online platform was evident with attendees participating from a wide geographical area.

### **Dharma in person on site courses**

With Paul Seagrave:

- Teaching – Introduction to Buddhism
- Day session
- 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023

With Paul Seagrave:

- Teaching – Introduction to Cultivating Concentration
- Day session
- 21st May 2023

With Dechen Rochard:

- Teaching – Understanding the Mind
- Day session
- 8th July 2023
- 

With Ngakma Shé-zér Khandro:

- Teaching - Yogic Song - meditation using the power of the voice
- Day Session
- 23rd July 2023

During these in person sessions the team welcomed the interaction and conversation with old and new friends of the Centre and the positive atmosphere that was created. The team thoroughly enjoyed hosting the courses and all those who attended showed their appreciation.

### **Online conversations**

With Irene Turner:

- Topic – Conversion with a Buddhist Nun
- Evening session
- 6th June 2023

### **Complementary Courses**

Yoga teachers, who have previously held day sessions at the Centre, scheduled yoga sessions for August and September. These were promoted during this reporting period.

### **Educational Visits**

The Centre usually hosts several school visits per year. We have been pleased to receive communication from schools who are keen to re-connect with the Centre and visit.

### **Other events**

A successful open afternoon tea party was held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The on-site team hosted the two visiting teachers Dechen Rochard and Irene Turner.

The afternoon visitors enjoyed exploring the Centre, learning of its history and discussing Buddhism with the Trustees and Teachers. It was good to welcome old and new friends on this afternoon.

## **Financial Review**

### **Financial Reserves**

Currently £8,000 is kept as financial reserve. This provides a minimum of 6 months' running costs. This reserve allows for an unexpected drop or loss of income. The reserve can be used to cover essential running costs.

### **Accounts**

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with accounting standards and in so doing, meet relevant legal requirements to give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial position and activities and are therefore in accordance with the Charity Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) and FRS 10.

They show that in 2022 / 2023 Lam Rim Buddhist Centre had a surplus of £22,790.

A generous donation of £32,000 was gratefully received. The donation will be used on essential repairs and upgrades required for the Centre's full re-opening.

Exceptional costs included £4,202 legal fees and £2,160 in repairs.

### **Running Costs**

The trust had operating expenses / running costs of £15,038 in this year (£1,253 per month).

### **Income**

The trust received a total income of £45,106 in 2022 / 2023 (£3,758 per month) made up of:

£1,635 teaching donations for online and onsite courses (onsite commenced May 2023)

£6,897 residential accommodation (mainly Airbnb)

£1,177 regular donations

£35,666 one-off donations

£152 sales (onsite shop)

### **Reserves**

At the end of July 2023, the Trust has cash assets of £50,971 (£43,314 building society and £7,657 current account).

### **Discrepancies**

There are no discrepancies in the accounts.

**LAM RIM BUDDHIST CENTRE 2022/23 ACCOUNTS**

		July 2023			July 2023
<b>TRADING ACCOUNT</b>			<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>		
Trading Income			<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Day courses teaching donations		1,625.00	Buildings		
Residential accomodation		6,897.00	Cost	357,944.00	
Retreats		0.00	Dep'n	0.00	
Shop / sales		153.00	W.D.V.	357,944.00	357,944.00
		8,675.00	Plant & equipment		
Cost of sales			Cost		
Food and Household		831.00	Dep'n		
Teacher donations and expenses		497.00	W.D.V.		
		1,328.00			
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>		<b>7,347.00</b>			
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>			<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Donations inc charitable giving		1,177.00	Stock	1,000.00	
One-off donations inc. bequests		35,666.00	Debtors		
Interest/Bank rewards		0.00	Building society 1		
Other inc Covid grant; HMRC Gift Aid		0.00	Building society 2	43,314.00	
		36,843.00	Current account	7,657.00	
<b>CONTRIBUTION</b>		<b>44,190.00</b>			51,971.00
			Net assets		409,915.00
<b>RUNNING COSTS</b>			<b>CAPITAL ACCOUNT</b>		
Energy - coach house		2,355.00	Opening balance	387,743.74	
Energy - main house		3,559.00	Net result for the year	22,790.00	
Council tax & business rates		1,563.00	Capital introduced		
Water rates & septic		337.00	Drawings		
General repairs and upgrades		2,070.00	Closing balance	410,533.74	
Property		9,884.00			
Garden					
Depreciation		0.00			
Phones/Zoom/website		1,032.00			
Insurance		1,969.00			
General Office - Print post stationery		567.00			
Website pre 2021 - 22					
Admin		581.00			
Secretarial		902.00			
Accountancy/legal					
Bank charges		103.00			
Other					
Admin and financial costs		5,154.00			
<b>TOTAL RUNNING COSTS</b>		<b>15,038.00</b>			
<b>Surplus/deficit before exceptional items</b>		<b>29,152.00</b>			
Roofing/ chimeys 2021		0.00			
Heating/boiler work Main House		0.00			
Leak to laundry room ( Jan 2023)		2,160.00			
Lotus Suite (2018)		0.00			
Legal fees (2023)		4,202.00			
Exceptional items		6,362.00			
<b>Surplus/deficit for the year</b>		<b>22,790.00</b>			

## **Declaration**

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Annual Report (August 2022 - July 2023) and accounts (August 2022 - July 2023)

Signed on behalf of the Lam Rim Buddhist Centre, Wales Trustees

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Vaisey', written in a cursive style.

Full name: Gillian Vaisey

Position: Trustee

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024