



The Abhayaratna Trust

Taking care of one another

REVIEW 2021

Relieving hardship in the
Triratna Buddhist Order

Established in 2006 to relieve financial hardship whenever and wherever it arises among individual members of the Triratna Buddhist Order, the Abhayaratna Trust gives practical aid to Order members in the form of grants and advice to support wellbeing and coordinate care.

In 2021 the emphasis was on: cash grants for Order members in India needing to pay for medical aid and cover living costs due to the Covid pandemic; exploring mental wellbeing in the Order; and running appeals for individual Order members with specific needs. More broadly, we exist to facilitate the development of a deeper culture of care in the Order and wider sangha, and have continued to guide the creation of Local Care Networks.





CONTENTS

- 3 **FOREWORD** by the Chair of the Trust, Dharmashura
- 4 **FOUR WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT** The Abhayaratna Trust
- 5 **OVERVIEW OF THE TRUST** by the Director, Mahasraddha
- 7 **LOCAL CARE NETWORK**
- 8 **FINANCIAL REPORT 2021** by Utpalavajri
- 10 **GRANT PROGRAMME in 2021** by Taradakini
- 12 **DONOR REPORT** by Jinavamsa
- 14 **CONTACT US**



SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER IN TIMES OF DIFFICULTY

Dharmashura, Chair of the Abhayaratna Trust



Working in the garden at the Birmingham Buddhist Centre I'm often reminded of Dharmachari Abhayaratna as I pass the tree we planted in his memory. Always keen to help in practical ways, he contributed to the development of that very same garden. And, when I needed to move home some years later, he came along to help. Then, when he died, he left money to help the whole Order, money that was used to establish the charity that today bears his name.

Inspired by his example, the Abhayaratna Trust continues to help members of the Triratna Buddhist Order around the world, offering advice and financial assistance in cases of hardship. This year, as last, our main focus has been helping those affected by the Covid pandemic. The impact on Order members in India has been particularly severe, and we ran our biggest-ever appeal to raise money to meet some of their most pressing needs.

We have also continued to sponsor the development of Local Care Networks to help Order members organise effectively to support one another in times of difficulty. And we have been working to encourage more open discussion in the Order about the important issue of mental health.

In spite of the extraordinary circumstances, 2021 has been another successful year for the Abhayaratna Trust, meaning that we have again been able to support hundreds of people through the challenges they have faced. This would not have been possible without the many people who contributed in various ways to that success. We are grateful to them all. However, there is always more to do, so please help us if you can, by encouraging your friends in the Order to ask for help if they need it, by including the Abhayaratna Trust in your will, or by giving us a donation today.

WILL YOU HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The person who brought the Trust into being was Dharmachari Abhayaratna. He left a legacy to benefit members of the Triratna Buddhist Order. He loved to help people in practical ways, and after he died on 25 December 2005, his legacy was used to establish the Trust in his name.



Dh. Abhayaratna

FOUR WAYS TO SUPPORT ORDER MEMBERS EXPERIENCING FINANCIAL OR HEALTH DIFFICULTIES



1. Become a donor

The day-to-day work of the Trust is only possible because sangha members thoughtfully support us on a regular basis with a direct debit or standing order. Maitrisattva was ordained in 2021 and kindly gives a regular donation to CAF Donate, our ethical online

"I donate to Abhayaratna Trust from a sense of solidarity with Order members who are in need of financial or other support."

Dh. Maitrisattva

2. Remember us

Including the Abhayaratna Trust in your will, as Padmajata has generously done, is a very effective expression of love, gratitude and care for the Order.

"I know the money will be well used, with minimum expenses on running the charity, and my fellow Order members will benefit in various ways. I love our Order and I am very aware of how fortunate I am financially compared to many Order members. Leaving something in my will is a way of supporting the Order as well as particular people, and also giving something back to the universe in general."

Dh. Padmajata



3. Be a Trust rep in your area

Representatives of the Trust are vital for us to reach those in need outside the UK and Ireland Area. Order members such as Satyadevi in New Zealand let their local sangha know about our work.

"Abhayaratna Trust gives us 'Bodhisattva Activity' off the cushion. It's one of the finest jewels in the crown of our Order. Become a rep and you'll see suffering being relieved all around you. You'll never be sorry you took this hat on!"

Dh. Satyadevi

4. Help Order friends to apply for support

As friendly as we are, it's easy to feel awkward about approaching the Trust for money. Why not get to know us and our simple friendly grant system, as Nagapriya in Mexico has done, so you can recommend us to others or apply on their behalf?

"It can be hard for Order members who are in financial difficulty to ask for help, especially when English is not their first language. You could approach the Abhayaratna Trust on behalf of such a friend, like I did."

Dh. Nagapriya



The support from our Trustees

Amoghavajra, Bodhaniya, Danayutta, Dayasara, Dharmashura, Shantisthana, Shraddhalocani; these seven Order members give their skills and energy on a regular basis to the Abhayaratna Trust by being our Trustees. They decide on policies, oversee the Team's activities, and decide on grant requests. They all give their time voluntarily and without them the Trust could not work for the benefit of the Order.

A YEAR OF COVID AND HEARTFELT COLLABORATIONS



Director's Report by Mahasraddha

The Covid pandemic continued to be a significant presence in our lives for the whole of 2021. We all had to adapt, although what that looked like was different for every person.

The year also gave us numerous reminders of the truth of inter-connection, and I am sure that each of us can think of many examples where this was highlighted. For me, it was, and is, very apparent in our work at the Abhayaratna Trust, no more so than in the response to our appeal following the devastating impact of Covid in India. The Order and Movement responded magnificently, raising just over £200,000 in a matter of weeks for Indian Order members and their families placed in desperate need due to Covid, with donations received directly from individuals as well as from special fundraising events held by retreat centres and local sanghas.

I witnessed directly the deep and heartfelt gratitude of Indian Order members at this rapid, compassionate response to their need. I heard the word 'solidarity' mentioned many times by Indian Order members and, indeed, I think that the 2021 India Covid Appeal run by the Abhayaratna Trust has significantly strengthened the bridge between the Order in India and the rest of the world.

I view the Abhayaratna Trust's core function as being to facilitate and enhance the flow of care in the Order, in particular to those facing hardship. Of course, care for one another is a fundamental expression of our interconnected humanity. We respond to suffering by doing what we can to alleviate it.

A vision for care in the Order is laid out in Bhante's lecture, *A Case of Dysentery*. The vision of care in the Order I have is like the Order Metta: it's an ever widening circle, starting with care for immediate friends and family, extending to Order members that I don't know living anywhere in the world.



Please support us

Visit www.abhayaratnatrust.org to see how you can help.

Thank you.

A YEAR OF COVID AND HEARTFELT COLLABORATIONS

...continued from previous page

In 2021 the Abhayaratna Trust continued to respond to immediate needs for support to individual Order members in hardship by giving grants and running appeals, alongside our broader, strategic work developing a culture of care in the Order. This included developing information resources on our website, most recently looking at mental wellbeing by interviewing Order members who have professional or direct experience of mental health issues. A series on degenerative neurological diseases will follow in 2022.

The work of the Abhayaratna Trust is overseen and executed by a very dedicated and capable body of Trustees: Amoghavajra, Bodhaniya, Danayutta, Dayasara, Shraddhalocani and Shantisthana, very ably chaired by Dharmashura, and an operations Team - Jinavamsa, Taradakini, Utpalavajri and myself - who will continue to work effectively together to respond to need as we become aware of it in individual Order members wherever they are in the world.

COLLABORATING WITH TRIRATNA CHARITIES

Working in scientific research as I did for many years, I grew to understand the crucial importance of collaboration to achieve a common goal. This approach has informed my work for the Abhayaratna Trust. I think that, overall, there are three pillars that support a thriving Triratna Buddhist Community: consolidation, sustainability and expansion, and the three of the main support charities in Triratna – the Abhayaratna Trust, FutureDharma Fund and Karuna Trust – can work collaboratively to support these three pillars. The Abhayaratna Trust is well positioned to support the pillars of consolidation and sustainability in particular, without which there is not a strong foundation for expansion, and vice versa.

The three charities came together very effectively in a collaborative effort to respond to the Covid crisis in India, and we produced joint communications to let you know how we were coordinating our respective fundraising efforts to reach as many people in need as possible. I look forward to another year of collaboration.



LOCAL CARE NETWORKS: THE NEXT STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

Many of you reading this will be familiar with the Abhayaratna Trust's Local Care Network (LCN) project, introduced to the Order over two years ago. In a nutshell, the project is designed to help local sanghas form organised and explicit frameworks of care both longer term and in situations where care needs to be mobilised quickly.

The project receives enthusiastic support and resources from a UK charity called Age UK, with whom we enjoy an important and

CREATING INTERNATIONAL CARE CONNECTIONS

LCNs are currently UK-centric as the assessment tool used by LCNs has been developed by Age UK and the NHS in a UK context. However, we are looking at ways of adapting the project so that it can be used in different countries.

Alongside this work, the Trust will be looking at care in our international Order by bringing together a working group with representatives from the UK & Ireland, Europe, the US, South America, Australia & New Zealand, and India to make recommendations to the Order and Movement.

HAVING ORDER HANG-OUT TIME



Tejasvini writes,
"Earlier this year Mahasraddha approached some of us in Cambridge and asked us to consider a local care initiative, focusing initially on Order Members who may be in need of some practical support.

Some of us did a little training in the computer system used, which was developed by Age UK. We started a pilot scheme with a handful of Order members, mostly to practise for ourselves going through some relevant questions and using the computer programme.

One initiative that has come out of it is a monthly event we've started at the Buddhist Centre called 'Order Member Time'. There's no agenda and minimal organisation involved. Order members who would like to, just show up and hang out with other Order members. Especially after lockdowns, this has seemed appreciated.

We've yet to get the Local Care Network up and running, and plugged into local support, but we've made some first steps in establishing it, connecting people with each other and with some resources that are available locally."

mutually beneficial collaboration. Other external agencies have been interested in the LCN project from the perspective of how care operates in a spiritual community such as ours, for example, the role and benefits of friendship in the positive outcomes of care.

Age UK have provided the Abhayaratna Trust free access to a system that they developed in collaboration with the UK's National Health Service (NHS) that provides a comprehensive and holistic assessment of the care needs of a person, including physical and psychological. We have also added a supplementary questionnaire that helps identify gaps in

support for the person's spiritual/Dharma life. LCN projects are being, or are due to be, piloted in several Triratna Centres in the UK. Data collected from these pilots will be used to improve and refine the project. As more Centres develop LCNs, we envisage a national and international network of LCNs, supporting each other, sharing ideas, experiences and inspiration.

The benefits of running LCNs are already clearly apparent, examples including help with living and mobility aids, access to benefits and formation of 'Care Kulas'. In some cases, LCNs have given the wider sangha an opportunity to

engage with each other on the basis of care in the sangha by offering help/knowledge/skills to their LCN.

There are, of course, many fine and deeply moving instances of care in our Order and Movement often found among friends and chapters looking after one other. And LCNs can work alongside these arrangements, such as providing knowledge about how to access government support. LCNs are also designed with the anticipated increase in numbers of those requiring care in light of the ageing demographic of the Order.

OUR 2021 FINANCIAL REPORT



Utpalavajri, Bookkeeper

2021 was a busy year for the Trust, receiving donations for our Covid appeals, and making emergency grants around the world for those financially and physically affected by the pandemic. The tremendous sangha response has had an effect on the Trust's long-term financial strategy in India, allowing us to find new ways of supporting Indian Order members' livelihoods and health.

THE ABHAYARATNA TRUST FINANCIAL FIGURES 2021

<i>Money in</i>	31 Dec	2021	2020
Non-appeal donations		£27,708	£27,595
Covid emergency appeals		£201,966	£26,524
Appeals for individual Order members		£10,705	£13,385
Legacies		£5,354	£14,809
Received grants		£0.00	£5,502
Gift Aid		£23,064	£5,680
Other		£571	£1,056
Total		£269,367	£92,439

<i>Money out</i>	31 Dec	2021	2020
Non-appeal grants		£9,230	£3,338
Covid emergency grants		£35,894	£24,036
Individual appeal grants		£3,781	£13,131
Raising money		£6,827	£6,836
Management of grants		£6,915	£7,899
Developing projects		£7,545	£8,252
General running costs and staff support		£21,932	£19,899
Total		£92,125	£83,391
Surplus		£177,242	£9,048



MONEY RECEIVED

The Abhayaratna Trust's total income for 2021 was £269,367. This was a 191% increase from the previous year due to a highly successful appeal launched in April in response to the Covid crisis in India. The appeal raised £201,966 thanks to the generosity of many members of the sangha across the world.

During the year we also ran appeals for two individual Order members in the UK, both of which went beyond the appeal target, again thanks to the generosity of so many.

The total non-appeal donations were £27,708 of which £22,648 was from 174 regular donors - a similar amount to last year. We received £23,064 in Gift Aid which was a 306% increase from last year due to the success of the Covid appeal for India.

MONEY SPENT

Total expenditure in 2021 was £92,125. This was a 10% increase from the previous year due to increased grant money given for the Covid situation in India. £35,894 was distributed from the Covid India Appeal fund during the year, compared with £24,036 combined total of emergency Covid grants made last year. There was also an increase in the number of non-appeal grants made to individual order members this year. 18 grants totalling £9,230 were made in 2021 compared to 10 totalling £3,338 in the previous year.


As of 31st December 2021 the Trust had a surplus of £177,242 due to the success of the Covid India appeal. Much of this surplus is earmarked for 2022/23 projects supporting Order members in India most affected by the Covid pandemic.



ANSWERING COVID WITH CASH



Taradakini, Grants & Care Coordinator



What a year 2021 was! We responded swiftly and repeatedly to requests for support connected to the Covid pandemic, in particular in India where some Order members exist on daily wages or are self-employed in small businesses that lost their custom during the shutdown. For urgent medical needs we were able to get funds to the affected Order member in less than 24 hours.

Aside from these Covid support grants, to India and other countries, of which we made 175 during the year, and grants unconnected to Covid, the Abhayaratna Trust also focused on mental wellbeing. We launched a series of articles and videos to open up the conversation about mental health in the Order, which encouraged some people to contact us for support, including grants for therapy sessions.

In some cases, discussions led to a 'kula group' being formed, as an effective way to support an Order member who has financial or health needs that are less straightforward. The kula group typically consists of concerned Order friends, local and further afield, and sometimes their private preceptor or family members, coming together to share resources to help the individual and support each other too. The bigger version of this is of course the Local Care Networks which are now developing - see page 7 for more about this.

The other way that we supported people in 2021 was by running

individual appeals for people who needed more than £1,000, which has tended to be our grant limit per request. Sometimes understandably the need is greater than that and we were very glad to organise these appeals and ensure that the money donated was given to the person in need.

During the year there were far fewer requests for retreats apart from some in October from Order members in India, but we did have some new types of requests related to transport, such as part funding of an electric bike and part funding of a secondhand car for two rural Order members living with insufficient public transport to meet their needs.

Looking ahead, in 2022 we are planning to expand our grants programme in India, publish articles on specific health concerns such as degenerative diseases, and launch a bursary scheme for Order members to attend the August UK & Ireland Convention.

TWO WORDS: JUST ASK

"'Just ask' is the simple message from the Abhayaratna Trust to Order members, and I can't emphasise enough how worth doing it is!

Because of ongoing fatigue and living rurally I was struggling to get to our local town or the railway station. Then I had the idea that an electric fold-up bicycle would assist me.

I wondered if the Abhayaratna Trust could help pay for one, and I'm very happy to say that they did. Not only am I now able to get away more easily, my new bike is also helping me increase my exercise levels, taking occasional rides around the lanes where I live.

So I'm slowly getting fitter and gaining a little more energy. I even went to the seaside via bike and train. A few months ago, I wouldn't have even dreamt about doing such a thing, but now it is possible and I'm happy to say it did me the world of good!"

Silajala, Devon, UK



Yashosagar made a video to explain the need for medical grants as part of our Covid India Appeal

SOLIDARITY AND CONFIDENCE

The Abhayaratna Trust was able to support people in India in 2021 because of the tremendous response we received from the sangha to our India Covid Appeal. This expression of solidarity with members of the Order in India in financial hardship gave great confidence as well as practical aid. Karmavajra and a network of Order members in India worked hard to ensure that financial help went to those who needed it.



If you are reading this and need financial or other support, please get in touch with me via taradakini@abhayaratnatrust.org or call/text +44 7857 351818.

GREATLY APPRECIATED GENEROSITY

Report by Jinavamsa, Donor Care



The main source of donations in 2021 was the sangha's generous and immediate response to the effects of Covid on the lives of Order members and their families. We ran an appeal in April to raise money to support the Order in India, where there was a devastating wave of Covid. This appeal drew tremendous support and raised over £200,000. 1,625 people donated to this appeal, which enabled us to give fast grants to Indian Order members for food, household bills and healthcare, as well as make longer term plans to help pay for retraining for those who lost their livelihood.

An appeal for Amoghavamsa raised £3,300 in donations within a few days. This paid for him to go on a three-month retreat at Uttarakala in Spain, with the extra amount raised covering his travel, and initial living costs when he returned to the UK.

At the end of November we ran an appeal to raise £3,000 to support Vishvantara and had such a strong response that we

ended the appeal after a few days, having raised £5,847.

Thank you to everyone who gave to these three appeals; we very much appreciate all your support and I can assure you that the recipients of these appeals have been greatly helped by your generosity.

Thank you also to the 25 people who became regular donors in the year, which means we now have 174 loyal supporters who donate between £1 and £50 per month. These monthly donations are what supports the regular work of the Trust, which is carried out confidentially unlike the appeals. It allows us to offer grants to Order members worldwide who find themselves in financial hardship and also helps support the Abhayaratna Trust team. So thank you, and please consider making a regular monthly donation to support our working caring for Order brothers and sisters worldwide.





Thank you, dear friends...

Vishvantara, who lives in London, had this to say about the response of the sangha to the appeal we ran for her in the autumn:

"I'm so moved! Thank you, dear friends, from the bottom of my heart for your kindness, generosity and support. This gift means that in the future when or if I become ill again I will be able to take a break from work in order to recover, something that being self-employed makes it difficult to do.

The love and support I've received from you changes me. It makes me more deeply long to practise the Dharma more effectively and help others to do so. Thank you again."



CONNECTING TO OUR DONORS

In June 2021 we launched a new style newsletter, which included updates on appeals, embedded videos and messages of gratitude from recipients, as well as a series of articles and interviews on mental wellbeing.

We have received a number of appreciative responses and there has been a notable increase in the number of readers. All newsletters and articles are now available on our blog page, so you can access them anytime at <https://abhayaratnatrust.org/latest>.





The Abhayaratna Trust

Taking care of one another

MAHASRADDHA



Mahasraddha@abhayaratnatrust.org
or +447739 113725 for general and LCN enquiries

UTPALAVAJRI



Utpalavajri@abhayaratnatrust.org
for financial and legacy enquiries

JINAVAMSA



Jinavamsa@abhayaratnatrust.org
or +44 7857 351818 for donation enquiries

TARADAKINI



Taradakini@abhayaratnatrust.org
or +44 7857 351818 for grant enquiries

Registered address: The Abhayaratna Trust, 3 Wydale Low Cottages, Brompton-by-Sawdon, Scarborough YO13 9DF UK

Correspondence address: The Abhayaratna Trust, 37 Amisfield Street (0/3), Glasgow G20 8LB UK

Registered in England & Wales, charity registration number 1126494. Brochure design by Tom Llewellyn - www.tomllewellyn.com