



# International Order Office Team Annual Report 2019

## Summary of 2019

by Vajrapriya, Co-ordinator, International Order Office Team

"Connecting the Order to deepen the Order". You could say this is the work of the International Order Office Team.

2019 was certainly a year of connecting. Around 50% of the Order attended one of the [five area conventions](#). This was a significant moment in our collective history, as another level of connection comes into maturity.

Our **International Order Convenors** (IOCs), [Aryajaya](#) and [Lokeshvara](#), attended all the area conventions and so you stand a good chance of having encountered them last year. One aspect of their role is as "pollinators" (and we know how important bees are!). They bring the perspective of the larger Order to each situation they visit, and take a sense of that situation away to the next. They are, of course, supported by the International Order Office.

One of their emphases recently has been sadhana, and in April they launched an invitation to engage in "[Sadhana Dialogue](#)".

Another significant development in 2019 was the completion of the [Restorative Process](#) pilot scheme, which aimed to address historical conflict (this is NOT the same thing as Safeguarding, as it aims solely to restore relationship, rather than make ethical judgments).

When I meet an Order member for the first time, and tell them my job, I sometimes ask whether they know [what the International Order Office does](#); the result is frequently a vague look. This is not surprising as I was equally vague when I applied for the job!

It is not a high-profile body, but it is the only overall co-ordinating body the Order has; without it, so much of what we take for granted would be impossible - even knowing who is or is not an Order member.

One little known aspect is the work of "[convening the Order convenors](#)" and hence [strengthening the Order strand](#). A strong network doesn't happen by itself, and it needs constant attention, from Vimalamati and the IOCs.

The [membership of the team](#) was blessedly stable in 2019; but change is coming as both Vimalamati and myself, Vajrapriya, leave in 2020.

All the functions of the International Order Office are funded by your [Order dana](#), and the more we collect, the more we can do to help the Order.

In 2020 we are again asking for £120, with the understanding that you can give more or less depending on your circumstances. In remaining a member of the Order, we hope you'll feel the importance of funding its continuation and flourishing.

### The Triratna Trust

The Triratna Trust oversees the work of the International Order Office Team. The Trustees are the International Order Convenors, plus Sucimani (chair), Achara (treasurer) and Shantigarbha (secretary). They meet quarterly and provide the team with perspective, long term vision and support. So, a big thanks to the Trustees for diligently sharing their expertise and love of the Order.

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# A Year in Review - From the *International Order Convenors*

## Aryajaya

2019 was given its shape by the five Area Conventions around the world and which Lokeshvara and I attended - as well as organising the one for UK & Ireland!

Each one was unique in venue, programme and participants *and* at each convention I noticed a similar quality. I'm reminded of the Buddha's analogy of the Dharma having one taste, that of freedom. My experience of the Order this year was that around the world I **experienced one taste on the conventions - and it's one of harmony**. That was the word that always arose as each convention deepened. I wondered in myself if it was a superficial, surface feeling and concluded it was the quality that emerges as we create conditions collectively for the Bodhicitta to arise. It's not that I haven't experienced it before but seeing it in our community across the world has deepened my faith in the Order practicing together in large numbers.



Aryajaya

The sense of a more abiding harmony has been helpful this year as I joined both the Ethics Kula in January and the Adhithana Kula late July. Both these meetings bought me in to contact more directly with the difficulties of our Order in **addressing the past and present unskillfulness that has and does occur in our community**. A lot of the year I have been challenged to dig deeper in to myself, the spirit of the Order and the precepts to be able to turn towards those aspects of life with more honesty, compassion and care.

It has given me more appreciation for the task of creating Sangha. I often feel that **the Dharma life is not for the faint**

**hearted** and I think, as an Order, we are challenged to take that more seriously. In an increasingly individualistic and alienated culture, Sangha is a gift and balm, but it needs tending.

Attending all the conventions was a great opportunity to meet OM's all over the world and to witness their practice of Sangha on their home soil. This is important to me - seeing the conditions and cultures that we practice in and how the Dharma speaks to those different situations.

I followed through the **Sadhana Dialogue** project with workshops in Auckland, Valencia, Aryaloka, forum space on the UK and Ireland convention and an experiment using it in a reflective way on the Pan American convention. Lokeshvara presented it on the Indian convention. It's been translated into Spanish and Hindi. You can find it [here](#) and we hope the exploration and dialogue around Sadhana will continue.

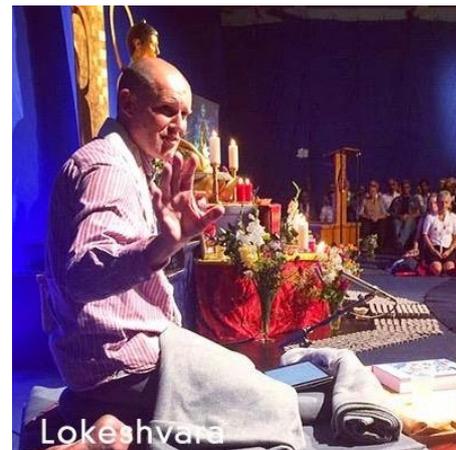
I'd like to finish with a massive **thank you** to everyone who hosted us this year. I'm really grateful for the generosity from the Order in sharing your homes or organising accommodation, cooking for us, inviting us into Chapters, airport pick-ups, driving us around, showing us your town or city, going on pet walks! Thank you for welcoming us.

## Lokeshvara

As order convener one of the questions I most regularly ask people is "**Have you got the conditions you need in order to live a Dharma life?**" 'Dharma life' is shorthand for 'a life based on the teachings of the Buddha for the purpose of awakening and helping others', and in the early discourses the Buddha described this most succinctly as, "I teach dukkha and its cessation".

This year Aryajaya and I have attended all five of the area conventions. I have given talks or short presentations at all of them. Which gives a chance to communicate and share the ideas, questions and answers that I meet while 'on the road' meeting the order.

At the Mainland Europe convention in July, which took place near Berlin in Germany, I was asked to talk about harmony. This is a mysterious concept to me, one that is hard to separate from its counterparts of chaos



Lokeshvara

and dissonance. I described **harmony in terms of the principle of kalyana mitrata** that Bhante chose to place at the heart of the order. I said that although how the order is structured and organised is important, the really necessary work is turning to face our own pain and discomfort in the context of a positive vision of who we can become. One way of describing this is **being able to meet disharmony within ourselves and others with a sense of openness, curiosity and a willingness to 'move towards', rather than to polarise**. And doing that is easiest when we have the conditions of kalyana mitrata that support it. ([you can listen to it on free buddhist audio here](#))

I also spoke of some of the **critiques of the order and how it is important to listen to them**, themes that I touched on in greater detail at the Australia/New Zealand convention in May, and in the introduction to the UK and Ireland convention in August.

The introduction at the UK & Ireland convention is probably the shortest and clearest description I've been able to give as to why any predominant view or paradigm in a community benefits from critique (based on a paper called three myths of the spiritual life from Subhuti), but also why there are important reasons that the Bodhisattva Ideal and the Bodhicitta are at the heart of the Order, and how these can be understood. ([listen here](#))

## Lokeshvara cont...

Towards the years' end, at the Pan American convention in Mexico I described what I think are the **main principles of the Order**, and how understanding and using these is, I feel, a good basis for having discussion about almost any contentious or difficult (or inspirational) area of Order practice. ([listen here](#) or [read the transcript here](#))

They have been evolving through dialogue over a couple of years, here is the most recent and reasonably clear iteration (December 2019):

1. Going for Refuge to the Three Jewels for the sake of Awakening for all beings is the definitive act of a Buddhist life.
2. The principle focus is the historical Buddha, Shakyamuni, but we draw on the whole Buddhist tradition.
3. Open to change and adaptation, assessing new teachings in terms of the Middle Way.
4. Providing a unified and coherent body of teachings that allows for common discussion and clarification.
5. Open to all spiritual temperaments and backgrounds.
6. Recognising the importance of the imagination, art and culture to the project of awakening.
7. Kalyana mitrata (friendship based in the Dharma) as the fundamental mode of communication in the Order.
8. Creating contexts for intensity of engagement.

Finally, in Karnataka at the Indian convention in early December, where the theme was **Transcendental unity**, I described Sadhana (specifically the visualisation and mantra recitation of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas) in terms of the spiral path.

Alongside these five conventions, much of our time as order convenors is still taking up with the Adhithana kula work of reviewing the past and learning from mistakes made, and the ethics kula work; of applying our ethical standards and improved safe guarding processes to the order now. Read the [restorative process report here](#).

This work is often time consuming, it requires a lot of effort and sensitivity trying to apply principles of clarity, impartiality and fairness to help order members deal with ethical breeches and their consequences. We are hoping to recruit another order convenor to work with us in this area in the coming year.

# A Year in Review - From the *other* Team members

## Vimalamati

Despite 2019 being unusual in some ways it was another good year in the International Order Office. The middle part of my year was coloured with my reflecting on and finally deciding that in 2020 I need to move from Adhithana, to be able to practically support my aging parents.

The highlights as always have been the gatherings. The convention at Wymondham was a delightful chance for me, Vajrapriya, Lokeshvara and Aryajaya to work together in the same space and time zone, as well as my chance to work with a great team of organisers that emerged mainly from the UK&I Roc's.



Vimalamati

I enjoyed the International Council where I had chance to spend time with my friends from the area order convenors' network and others I have built up connections with around the Triratna world. I really appreciate the internationality of the meeting, and it is rewarding when Order members from places isolated and distant from the busy order hub of the UK express appreciation for the work we do.

In terms of some of the fine detail of my work - the backroom stuff that most people don't see - here are three things of note for me this year. After 3 years of searching I have finally found a consistent supplier of white kesa fabric; the integrating of the order database and the order dana database is now bearing fruit; and the new provision for engaging volunteers at Wymondham. These have all caused some internal celebration as they make our team

more effective and improve how we able to serve the Order.

I have also enjoyed the year in relationship with the different groups that have made and continue to make kesas, both those who have been regular makers and those who have been able to help for short intervals. Their diligent work is invaluable for those all-important ordinations as well as the replacement and second kesa provision.

## Vajrapriya

A highlight of the year was helping to organise my first convention at Wymondham College, UK, which is the stuff of legends. Working with such a large team of volunteers, as well as members of our team, was an uplifting and full-on experience. It felt like the Order at its best, and enabling OMs be there and participate is one of the most rewarding aspects of my job.



Vajrapriya

I have continued to assist the Coordinating group of the Restorative Process (Jnanasiddhi, Ratnadarini and Shantigarbha, lately joined by Vajraghanta). I've been impressed at their selfless generosity in taking on such intense and time-consuming work, all to enable harmony in the Order. It is unfortunate that their work is necessarily invisible to most people.

Now I am handing over my job to the capable Amaradaya, who has spent 10 years at Clearvision. I will miss the

opportunity to have contact with so many of you in the course of my work; but also anticipate the creative possibilities that the space opens up.

### Sadayasihi

It's now just over a year since I started working with the Order Office. The end of my first month saw the death of Bhante - I vividly remember speaking with Mahamati, who told me the news over the phone, and then, not that much later, pausing before I sent out that Order Information Service email, knowing it was a significant point in our community's history.



Since then my work has been much less momentous but still worthwhile: helping facilitate Order communication, sharing the delightful news of ordinations across the world, as well as illnesses, deaths, resignations and other tasks such as updating the Order Address list, entering new Order members into the database and welcoming them into the Order. One thing I have particularly appreciated is my weekly check-in with Vajrapriya, the Co-ordinator of the Order Office team. Vajrapriya has been consistently good-tempered, appreciative, scrupulous in his work and keen to ensure the best systems are in place for the team. I've enjoyed our Tuesday morning chats on Zoom and I'd just like to wish him all the best wherever life takes him next!

### Prashrabdhi

The finance role has fitted in flexibly with my other work and caring commitments this year and, with help catching up at the end of 2018, I've felt able to complete my workload this year in the allotted 2 days a week.

There are now many ways and currencies that Order dana can be paid and Vajrapriya has done lots of work automating the transfer of records from the various income sources to the Maitrijala database. Order dana is now recorded much more



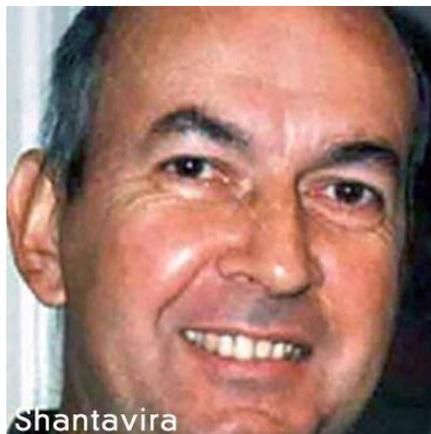
accurately and thank you emails sent in a timely fashion.

Ongoing work – record, reconcile, report. The movement through the bank accounts reveals the activity of the International Order Office. This financial picture describes how Order dana funds the work of the International Order Convenors and team, setting up conventions, compiling and circulating Shabda, ensuring sufficient kesas are made for Ordinations, funding OIS and so much more. There's an incredible amount of detailed work carried out in the background. Meetings can reflect this detail – then suddenly something inspiring is mentioned – something Dharmic, connecting, generous.

The books are currently balancing but looking ahead there will need to be a creative response to the pressures being put on the workload and funds of the International Order Office.

### Shantavira

I continue to enjoy hearing from Order members from around the world, and facilitating the thoughtful and often quite moving communication between us. I've heard no complaints for a while, and received much appreciation, which suggests people are happy with Shabda.



The number of paper Shabdas has remained fairly steady for the past year at 360 copies a month. About 1200 copies are downloaded from the website each month, about 100 less than last year, the PDF

version being the most popular, closely followed by the epub version.

Some more stats: The number of contributors has increased over the past two years following a decline during the previous two years, currently averaging 66 letters per issue. The averages for the previous four years were 63 (2018), 54 (2017), 61 (2016), and 77 (2015). The increased number of obituaries partly accounts for this, with 46 this year (which doesn't include obituaries about Bhante) compared with just six in 2016. (There are also about 385 more order members than there were at the end of 2015.) However, there has been a disappointing decline in the number of threads and articles being submitted to Shabda, with only four threads and just two articles submitted during 2019, compared with 28 threads and 16 articles during 2016.

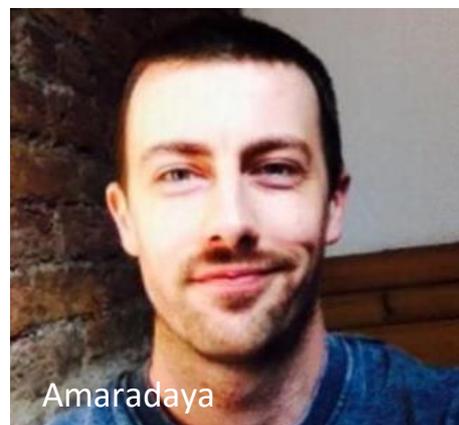
The number of first-time reports remains steady, but only about half the people ordained (not including India) send an introductory letter to Shabda.

### Amaradaya

After 10 years with Clear Vision I am now joining the Order Office and relieving Vajrapriya of his post.

My overriding experience at this time is of gratitude; to Clear Vision for all of the valuable experiences over the last decade, to the Order Office for this new opportunity to serve the Order in new ways, and to Vajrapriya for welcoming me into his home for a few days to start the handover.

The more I learn about the role, the more I am enthused by it. I am very much looking forward to working with all the wonderful people that make up the team.



I will continue to base myself in Manchester and run the educational visits service for the Centre. So my gratitude extends to MBC as well. It's certainly a full and varied Triratna life I am entering into now, and potentially challenging, but there's no spiritual life without challenge!

# A snapshot of the five Area conventions from 2019

*In the sequence in which they occurred*

## South Pacific, May 2019

By Cārunākā

The Oceania Order Convention held in May, 2019 at Vijayaloka Retreat Centre was a tonic that fed my connection to the Order. Our region is small in numbers and very widespread across Australia and New Zealand. With over sixty of us coming together, we are reminded that we're not alone although many live and practise outside the context of a concentrated sangha. The theme of Moving to Real Going for Refuge with a focus on Avalokiteshvara and Bodhicitta as a direct expression of our Order as practice inspired many of us, yet again, to be a hand in whatever way presents itself.

The morning of meditation followed by an afternoon of intensive input worked better for some than others. As a small Convention, people tended to 'turn up' so there was little time for walks, exercise or longer catch-ups. However the richness of the programme provided great stimulation for meal time conversations. Cutting edge topics around Conflict, Gender Diversity, Race and Climate Change nudged us all closer to a reality that is challenging, engaging and immediately apparent. There was a broad sense of appreciation that these issues are being discussed and met within our Order.

Many thanks to the team of people that brought this Convention to fruition. The speakers and presenters were outstanding and the organisation appeared seamless although it was evident that much hard work made it look that way. It takes great skill and excellent communication to make things seem so straightforward and this was acknowledged and valued by many of us. Sadhu to all involved!

## Mainland Europe, July 2019

By Akasasuri

It was wonderful to have 98 Order Members from 11 different countries gathered for our Mainland European Convention at Seminar House, Schlusshof, 2 hours North of Berlin. That's nearly half of the Order in our region. People came from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Poland, Germany, Spain, France, Malta and

the Netherlands. Our two International Order Convenors joined us too. The quiet and beautiful surroundings added to the quality of our convention on the theme of 'Living in the Dharma: imagining, practising and realizing Dharmacarya'.

Many people contributed to this successful event through giving talks, leading pujas, leading old-style sadhanas, offering workshops during the Open Spaces and in general by being friendly and connecting.

## UK and Ireland, August 2019

By Vimalamati

In August 2019 the UK and Ireland Area Convention was held at Wymondham College in Norfolk. Over 450 order members attended across the six day gathering, which offered many ways to engage, from the making of sand mandalas to attending the many forums. The main input was Prakasha leading through four days of talks and practice on four figures - Green Tara, Manjughosha, Padmasambhava and Vajrasattva - comprising "The mandala of awakening".

Here are four comments direct from our feedback posters:

- Great convention, the Dharmic theme and depth of teaching and practice was very inspiring.
- As someone who normally does not respond to a wide variety of unfamiliar pujas, I was very pleasantly surprised at how engaging I found them. The underlying theme and unity of the stages of the pujas opened a window into a deeper understanding of the elements of sadhana for me. I am not the only one who has said this - in fact an inveterate disliker of 'fancy pujas' of my acquaintance owned up that he really enjoyed the pujas. As well as these, overall it was beautifully put together.
- Really good to have a UK and Ireland convention. And one of the most inspiring, enjoyable and harmonious for me for years of conventions. I liked the congruent strong and simple programme. Talks and meditation linked. Such clear, powerful talks. Well done all.

- Fabulous having a strong Dharmic theme with input from one teacher: it gave a strong current from which one could engage in the fringe or discussions without getting too dispersed.

## Pan American, October 2019

By Upekshamati

The event took place in Chintamani retreat centre in the state of Morelos just 2 hours away from Mexico City. It was a week-long event attended by 82 people at its two-day peak, and on average by 70 Order members throughout the week.

The attendance was mainly from West and east coast USA and Mexican Order members, though we had both international Order convenors as well Order members from Brazil, Venezuela and the UK. The event that marked the "beginning" of the convention was the Public Ordinations at the Mexico City Buddhist centre of 6 women from Mexico, USA and Venezuela. Sadhu!

As the convention was taking place on the first anniversary of the death Bhante, we took the opportunity to reconnect with him by looking afresh at the message of his talk to the 1999 Order convention "looking ahead a little way", in which he spoke about the importance of Stream entry and the Arising of the Bodhicitta as two clear markers of where to take our practice as Order members looking to the future. Highlights of the convention were the talks by Lokeshvara and Parami, the meditation silence day we had in the middle of it, and the afternoons of "Voices of the Americas" where we heard what was happening in each of our areas around the continent.

Overall it was a happy and joyful convention where, among many things, Order Members from North America who lived so apart from one another could all meet for a week, and Mexican and Venezuelan Order members could take part in the internationality of our order. We hope to have another one in 3 or 4 years and perhaps have a Pan American Order practice retreat in between now and the next convention.

## India, November 2019

By Karmavajra

In the last week of November 2019 we had a very good Indian Order convention at Siddharth Vihar Kalburgi, which is located in Karnataka state. Around 350 order members were present from all over India. For last few years we are trying to adopt the theme "From effective to real going for refuge" and to carry forward this theme we decided to have "Transcendental Unity" subject for this convention. In this convention we were trying to get flash of transcendental unity through our collective efforts, and we feel that many order members were very engaged and making effort to experience that.

In the morning section, four Order members shared their experience and thought on following topics: Dharmachari Kumarvajra gave a talk on how we can attain higher states through Puja and ritual; Dharmachari Lokeshavara gave a talk on developing Sadhana practice through 9 key elements; Dharmacharini Vidhyavardhini shared her experience how she is getting benefit through the practice of building Sangha, and how we can go to an unconditional world through effective chapter meetings; and on the topic of Kalyanmitrata, Dharmachari Amoghasiddhi shared his beautiful experience. Also Chandrasila and Aryajaya led the separate men and women days, together with some cultural activities.

It was first convention after Bhante's passing away, so we decided to remember him every day through chanting. We started every morning with one of the five Mantras, and every evening we invited one member who met with Bhante to share their experience. It was very wonderful experience, and feels that we achieved much more than our own efforts. It was wonderful to have the presence of Aryajaya and Lokeshvara for the Indian convention.



Indian Order Convention

## New Convention Pattern

The new sequence of conventions will be a four yearly International Convention alternating between the UK and India, with Area Conventions also every 4 years between the International Conventions. So potentially all Order Members can attend a large convention gathering, at least every 4 years, if not every 2 years.

The new pattern, which we hope will be easier to follow, starts with a special convention in the UK in 2020.

### International Convention 2020

Women's: 8 - 14 August, Adhithana  
Combined: 14 - 19 August, Wymondham  
Men's: 19 - 25 August, Adhithana

(Note the slightly amended dates)

This will begin a new sequence that follows the pattern in the table below. When in the UK, conventions are most likely to be in August. So far Indian International Conventions have been in February in Both Gaya, but the Indian Order Convenors are considering both the location and the time of year. It may be possible to have future conventions in November, for example.

2020	International Convention UK
2021	
2022	Area Conventions
2023	
2024	International Convention India
2025	
2026	Area Conventions
2027	
2028	International Convention UK

Meeting together as the Order in large numbers from all over the Triratna world is a strong value and we hope inspiring to our community. So we invite you to join in the launch convention of this new pattern in 2020 for the prospering and deepening of the Order.

[Read more](#) about the process that led to this new sequence.



UK & Ireland Convention 2019, Wymondham UK

# Financial Report 2018

Simplified figures for year ending 31 Dec 2018

## INCOME

Order Dana	£111,902
Gift Aid	£6,478
Miscellaneous	£804
	<u>£119,183</u>

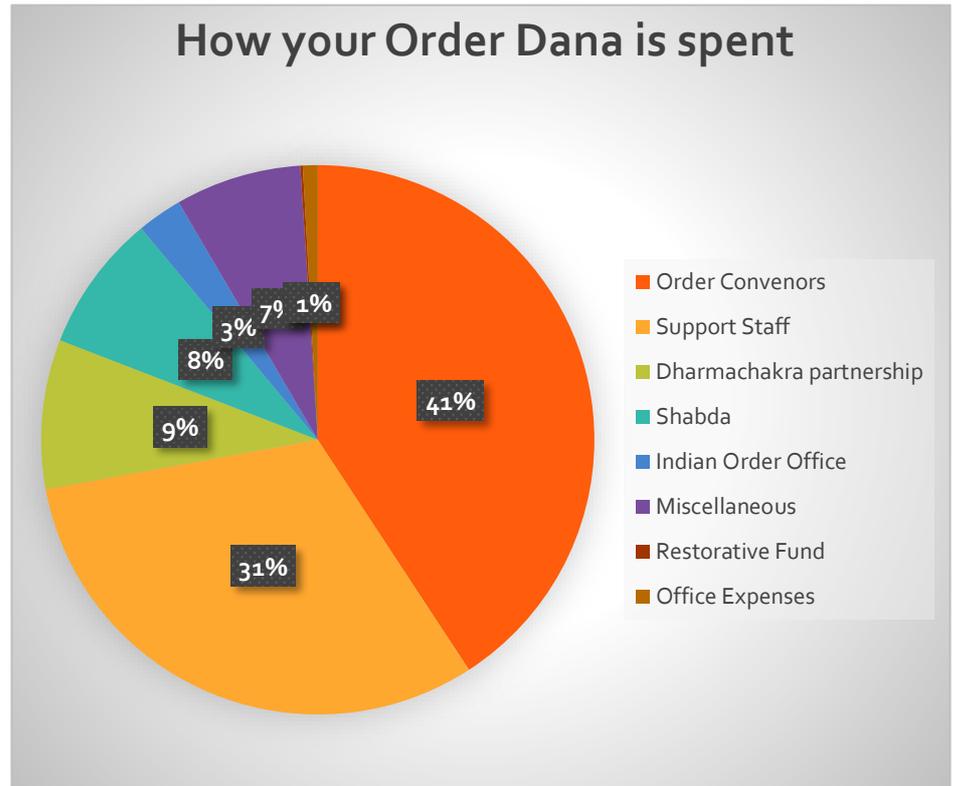
## EXPENSES

International Order Convenors	£46,425
Support Staff	£35,645
Dharmachakra partnership	£10,000
Shabda	£9,195
Indian Order Office	£3,000
Miscellaneous	£8,390
Restorative Fund	£163
Office Expenses	£986
	<u>£113,804</u>

## SURPLUS

£5,379

## How your Order Dana is spent



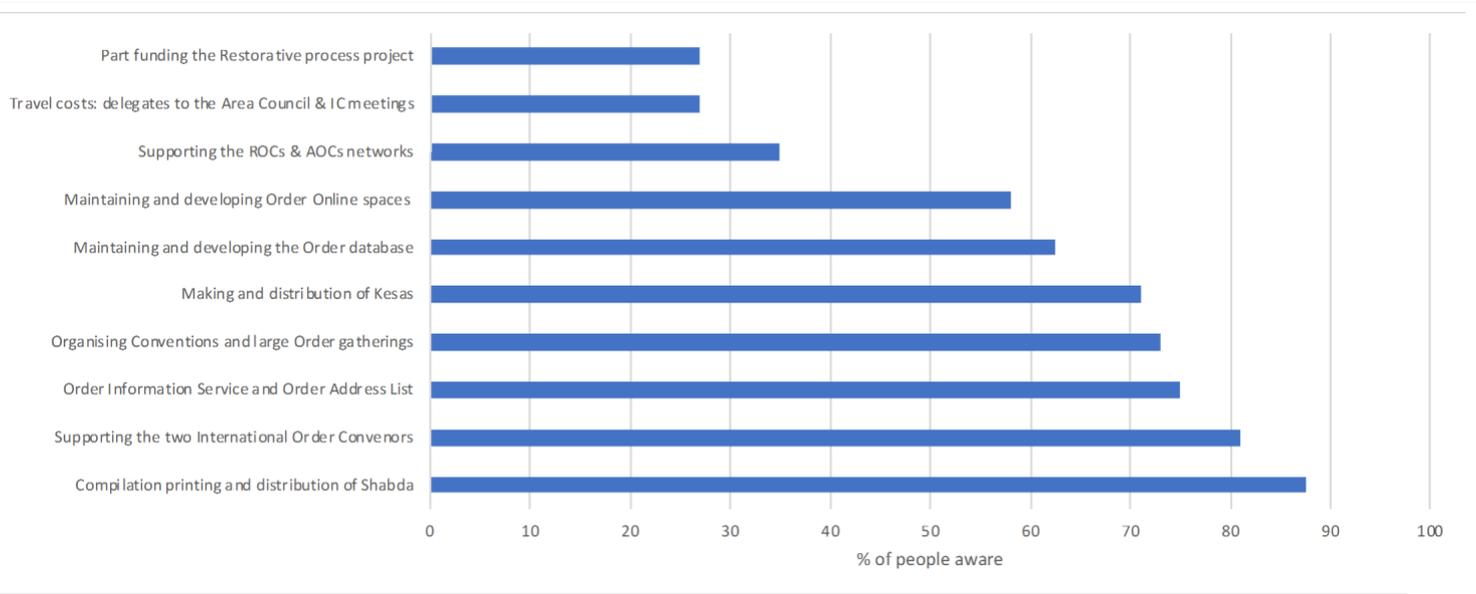
The figures shown exclude the 2018 International Convention in India, which made a small surplus.

This year the cost of supporting the International Order Convenors was slightly increased, due to the overlap of Parami and Aryajaya, and the costs of their relocations.

If you wish to see more detailed accounts, contact [orderoffice@triratnaorder.org](mailto:orderoffice@triratnaorder.org)

## Do you know what we do?

A sample of OMs were asked whether they knew what their Order dana finances. Below are the results. How many do you know?



# Order Dana

Figures for the 10 months to end of **October 2019**

No Order dana is collected in India, as they have their own Order Office and sources of funding. The International Order office contributed £3000 to the Indian Order Office in 2019. This will be halved in 2020.

## % of OMs Giving



In the first 10 months of 2019, 58% of OMs have given Order dana, (of any amount) totalling to £91,346. This is 2% up on this time last year.

## % of OMs giving by Country



Maybe most remarkable is the variation between countries, ranging from 18% of OMs giving in Finland to 78% in France. Countries with fewer than 6 OMs were excluded.

## OMs giving by Gender

65% of Dharmacharinis are giving compared to 53% of Dharmacharis.

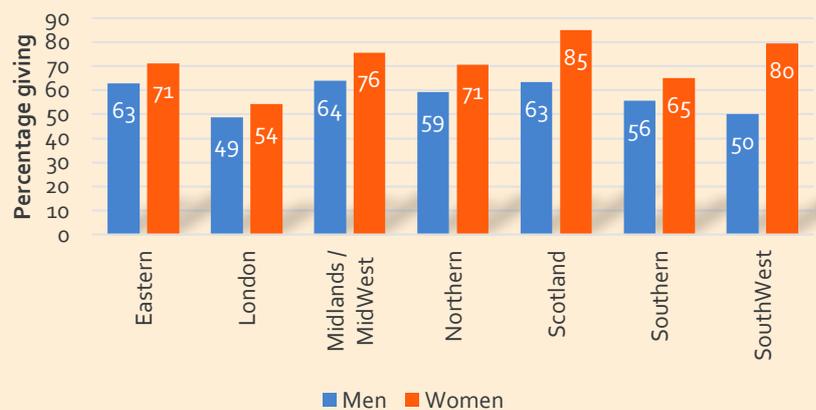
## Can't afford to give?

A recent survey of OMs who hadn't given Order dana showed that 56% of them didn't give due to financial constraints. Half of those said they would give if they could give less than the recommended amount. **Please give whatever amount you can!** We welcome donations of all amounts: many people give less than recommended, and many also give more. This is one reason we maintain Order dana on a donation basis.

If you are troubled by receiving reminder emails, you can ask not to receive them.

The UK & Ireland area is by far the biggest contributor to Order dana, due to the number of OMs in the area. Here is a breakdown by region and gender.

## % OMs giving by UK regions



The geographical extent of men's and women's regions are not always identical.

## ORDER DANA 2020 REQUEST

For 2020 we are still asking for the same:

**GBP 120 per year, EUR 135 per year, or equivalent in USD or AUD to the appropriate currency account.**

## GIVING ORDER DANA

It is quick and easy to give online at: <https://thebuddhistcentre.com/stories/order/>

You will find options for all currencies (including paying directly into bank accounts in EUR, USD and AUD).

You are encouraged to sign up for a regular giving method: direct debit if you are in UK or the Eurozone, or regular payments with Paypal.

Any enquiries to Prashrabdhi at [triratnaorderdana@gmail.com](mailto:triratnaorderdana@gmail.com)

# Evaluation of the Restorative Pilot Project

By [Jnanasiddhi, Shantigarbha, Ratnadarini and Vajrapriya](#) (members of the Restorative Coordinating Group)

The Restorative pilot project - supported by the three strands of the Order, Movement and College - has been at work since the summer of 2017. Their most recent and detailed report of the project can be [read in full here](#). Below are the report headings and the final section on 'moving forward' which provides a snapshot of the document.

- What is a restorative approach?
- Restorative and Triratna
- The formation of the Restorative Pilot Project
- The components of the pilot project
- Evaluating the restorative process offered to men with whom Sangharakshita had sexual contact
- Evaluating the other restorative conferences that have taken place within Triratna
- The emergence of an Indian Restorative Pilot Project
- Moving Forward

## Moving Forward

We have a few conclusions emerging from our experience to date, from the feedback from participants of restorative conferences evaluated above, from conversations with others in the Sangha who work in conflict resolution or similar, with conversations with Order Members (including at a forum on the convention)

- There is a lot of conflict in Triratna which is resolved skilfully, using our many tools of communication, the precepts, friendship etc. We are in the main, in this paper, talking about conflicts or harm that have been unresolved, are of a more serious nature, become stuck or resistant to change.
- Many Order Members do want methods of resolving conflict that

reflect our values and culture and many feel restorative approaches do that.

- Many people, even those who have done the 3 day restorative training, don't feel equipped to resolve conflicts they may know of or be asked to help with, because they may be stuck or complex or too close to home.
- There are other people with other creative approaches to conflict resolution in the Order (and no doubt wider Sangha), such as NVC, mediation, facilitating group discussions.
- Some participants in conflicts may come with expectations/attitudes that don't easily mesh with a restorative approach e.g. they may want external adjudication for their issue/case, consequences or sanctions, or a different methodology.
- Restorative process is happening 'ad hoc'. In Triratna, there has been no one particular culture or method for resolving conflict, so there is a lack of clarity about when what might method be used when.

**What we would like to see happen** next in relation to the above thoughts.

1. Go beyond using restorative practice as a one-off response to certain issues, done by a few people in the Order, to building a creative culture around conflict within the Order and Movement.
2. Get together a group of Order Members with a range of skills in resolving conflict and widen the discussion from Restorative Approaches in Triratna to explore in more depth:
  - What values might underpin a Triratna culture around resolving conflict?

- How can conflict resolution/transformation be a spiritual practice?
  - What works in Triratna? What type of conflicts do we see/know of and what might be put in place to support different types of conflict?
3. Work with one 'volunteer' Centre, as one context to put into practice the learning from above and equip people with the necessary skills and information.
  4. To continue to offer a restorative process to Triratna Centres and situations and individuals where appropriate and to merge this with the Order Mediation service.
  5. To build local restorative cultures locally in the movement and order, as we see conflict and process as belonging to the community in which it emerged. Therefore, we believe that it will be more sustainable to develop this kind of local resource, rather than an 'expert' however well-trained, 'parachuting' in from elsewhere.
  6. To continue building a group of volunteer trained facilitators who are available to help with their local situations with conflicts and can support others when local situations do need help.
  7. For others in the Order to consider if different processes are needed in Triratna, such as complaints, grievances, disciplinary etc. that would be more adjudicated than restorative approaches.

The current Coordinating Group are all volunteers. For this work to happen and go deeper, we think some funding is needed in order to support someone (part time) to develop more time to the work.

[Read the full report](#)

# Report from the Indian Order Office

By Dhammacharini Ratnashree,  
Dhammachari Karmavajra, India  
Order convenors

Now two national order convenors (Men and Women representatives) have been appointed for India. With the help of regional chapter convenors and chapter convenors, we try to create harmony and unity of Sangha and try to support & inspire order member in their spiritual development, in their journey from effective to real going for refuge. We use our regional order convenor network to give strength to chapter meetings, and make sure that chapter meetings are running on a regular basis and effective, and try to give support to every chapter convenor.

## 1. Monthly chapter convenor meeting in each region

Every regional order convenor organizes monthly chapter convenor meeting in their region. I rejoice the merit of all regional order convenors for their effort in there region. It helps us to build connection with every chapter convenor and support them on regular basis, as well as we study together and explore our Dhamma practice and get clarity in principles. In this monthly meeting we take review of every chapter and try to understand the situation of the order member so if needed we can identify



the difficulty and overcome it.

As a part of this meeting this year all the chapter convenors from Nagpur region meeting organized one day tour, it was very

delight to see that all chapter convenor build connection and enjoyed time with each other.

## 2. Yearly Chapter convenor meeting and retreat

As per every year we had a very successful chapter convenor retreat and meeting at Bordharn. In the first week of Aug 2019 from all over India nearly 45 chapter convenors were present. In the morning section of this retreat we study on Kalyamitrata principle, we discuss and try to understand the role of chapter convenor as a Kalaynmitra. Afternoon section was reserved to understand the working principle of order where we discuss on the order manual & safe guarding the order paper. The entire regional order convenors played a very important role to organize this retreat, I express my gratitude for their contribution.

## 3. Order Day and Order weekend

Now Order Day is become the regular part of our order activity. Regional order convenor organizes order Day on the first Sunday of every month. In every region we start order day with Sangha Metta at 10.30 am. In Order Day order members in big cities come together every month to enjoy and feel the relationship of Sangha as an order member. For order day Nagpur regional team introduce the theme "25 years of my ordination", where they invite to senior order to express the gratitude and get chance to interact and listen to them.

In 2018 order weekend has been organized in Vidharbha, West Maharashtra and North India, regional order convenor from both side, organized this event very successfully.



## 4. Study Workshop

From this year we have started order study workshops on the weekends. We have workshops with Achala in Wardha as well Khemadhamma also led workshop in Nagpur, recently in Pune regional team organized workshop on 'Sadhana practice' nearly 45 order member was present. In future we have planning to have regular study workshop in local situation.

### REGIONAL ORDER CONVENORS

Meeting 3 times in a year in their region.

**Western region:** Gujrat, Goa, Kokan, Mumbai, Pune, Marathwad:

1. Dhammacharini Ratnashri
2. Dhammachari Karmavajra
3. Dhammachari Achaladhamma
4. Dhammachari Ratnavajra
5. Dhammacharini Abhayajyoti
6. Dhammachari Padmagarbha
7. Dhammacharini Kushalprabha.
8. Dhammacahri Prajnyaditya

**Central region:** Vidharbha, North India, Chattisgarh, Orisa:

1. Dhammachari Kumarvajra
2. Dhammacharini Sugatadharini
3. Dhammacharini Amitsatya
4. Dhammachari Supadma
5. Dhammachari Mahastam.
6. Dhammachari Mitrodaya

## 5. Order Retreat



Order retreat is a main source of inspiration for many order members, and we appreciate the contribution of Subhuti in this area. Twice a year he led the retreat for order and big number of order member participate in those retreat. As well as Chandrasil led one month order retreat every year and many order member get benefit from that. Women order member get a good support from Dhammachrini Karunamaya and Srimala's retreat. This year Indian public preceptor Kula took initiative to lead retreat for men order member, in the future we are keen to organize more order retreats with them.

## 6. National Order Convention at Kalaburgi 2019.

The main highlight of this year will be the National order convention at Kalaburgi, Where we are expecting more than 300 order members to come together and share their practice.

Now the order convening manual is ready for India, last few years we were working on that and this year in chapter convenor meeting after final discussion we publish it. It will be helpful to establish order system and get guideline in future.

As well as we are working with the safeguarding the order paper. As an order convening network we have major responsibility to take a review of ethical practice and 'safeguarding the order' paper is the will be useful document for all chapter convenor. Still we are working on that, with the help of Indian Public preceptor Kula and hopefully by next year we will able to get revise document.

With Metta,

*Dhammacharini Ratnashree*  
*Dhammachari Karmavajra*

India Order convenors



# Order Convenors' Network

One important (but less visible) function of the International Order Office Team, is to support the growing network of Order convenors. Of course, we financially support the International Order Convenors: but there are other significant aspects too:

- Convening the network of Area Order Convenors
- Liaising with Regional Order Convenors
- Financially supporting the travel of Order representatives to the International Council, and Area Councils

The Area Order Convenors meet monthly by video link; the International Council tends to meet face to face every 18 months. Below you can read the full list of Order Convenor Teams and representatives.

Note: In 2019 the original Hispanic Area evolved into Latin America, and Spain joined Mainland Europe

Order Convening Teams		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MAINLAND EUROPE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mainland</b></p> <p>Akasasuri and team Guhyadeepti, Gunabhadri</p> <p><b>Nordic region:</b> Shraddhamanas</p> <p><b>Spain:</b> Dharmakirti and Dhivasini</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>AMERICAS</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>North America</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Amala and Sravaniya</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Latin America</b></p> <p>Mexico: Jnanadakini and team Upeksamati, Dayacandra, Medhavin</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PACIFIC AREA</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Australia</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dhiramani and Khemadhamma</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>New Zealand</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Purna and Prajnalila</p>
<b>INDIA</b>		
<p><b>Area Convenors</b></p> <p>(and also in Western India Team)</p> <p>Ratnashri (W)</p> <p>Karmavajra (M)</p>	<p><b>Central Region Vidharbha</b></p> <p>Amitsatya (W)</p> <p>Sugatadharini (W)</p> <p>Mahasthama (M)</p> <p>Supadma (M)</p> <p>Kumarvajra (M)</p> <p>Mitrodaya (M)</p>	<p><b>Western Region</b></p> <p>Achaladhamma (M)</p> <p>Kushalprabha (W)</p> <p>Pranaditya (M)</p> <p>Abhayajyoti (W)</p> <p>Ratnavajra (M)</p> <p>Padmagarbha (M)</p>

### UK & IRELAND TEAMS



### Order Convenors and Area Representatives on the International Council

