

It has been an exciting and rewarding year for me at the BSWA. With the challenges of COVID-19 and its lockdowns, it has been wonderful to help coordinate and implement the BSWA's responses to the pandemic, which included implementing the Buddhist Care Line and the Care Group and embracing technology to take activities online.

In my first 12 months, I was tasked primarily with implementing the Care Group within the guidelines of the Mental Health Act, ACNC compliance through the creation and implementation of policies and procedures, and the creation of subcommittees with access to budgets and expenditure authority.

As we move into the new year, my focus is now shifting to expanding our potential through grants, fundraising, EFTPOS donation terminals, the potential of online membership, and the continued monitoring of our compliance obligations.

A few of the highlights of the year include:

Care Group

Following the Care Group's Buddhist Care Line launch on 26th May 2020, it has evolved into a broader social movement with a vibrant online WhatsApp community curated by Linda McGuire and a livestreamed meditation program being held every Wednesday night at Dhammaloka. Stephanie Maree kindly offered her professional services and created online advertising and social media for the Buddhist Care Line on Instagram and Facebook, and Louisa Akerina has been instrumental in driving publicity and improvements for the service as a whole, including dedicating her time on Wednesday nights as a skilled meditation instructor.

Project Accord

"Project Accord", the BSWA's team effort to meet ACNC compliance requirements, was launched in June 2020. Over the course of 8 months the team put in a lot of hard work and hours of effort and accomplished a lot in a short period of time, bringing the BSWA up to 98% compliance on the ACNC's compliance self-evaluation. This included many hours by the Treasury team in producing the financial practice management guide, as well as many hours by the Project Accord team in producing subcommittee documents, policies and procedures, committee role descriptions, care group compliance, and general processes.

With heartfelt thanks to all of the members of Project Accord and the Committee, we were able to successfully complete this project in early 2021. My thanks go out to Gah Siong Lam, Linda McGuire, Natalie Mar, Kseniya Abusaif, Venerable Mettaji, Amanda Hunter, Boon Tan, Bill Prins, Geoff Webb, and everyone who contributed to the group effort.

A total of 77 different documents were produced, many of which can be viewed on <https://bswa.org/about/bswa-policies/>

Policies and procedures will be revisited as a matter of process with the new committee as there will continue to be evolving compliance requirements for our organisation, such as changes to child safety and mandatory reporting, and external conduct processes as international travel resumes.

Subcommittees

To encourage trust and share responsibility and authority throughout the BSWA rather than concentrating it only at the Committee level, a number of subcommittees, or "groups" have been established. These include budgets, delegations, and spending authority, whilst ultimately being responsible to the committee.

A new one will be proposed in the next quarter for the BAMBI group.

EFTPOS Donation Terminals

Thanks to James von Funck' efforts, Dhammasara has been using EFTPOS donation terminals successfully since end of rains which have been a huge success. This has been an enormous untapped source of income for the BSWA. Plans have been implemented to install EFTPOS terminals at Jhana Grove, Dhammaloka and Bodhinyana. The purchase order is in progress thanks to the generous contributions of our donors.

Fundraising

I applied for a fundraising licence in WA for the BSWA, which was successfully granted mid-January 2021. The BSWA can now hold fundraising events (including for outside organisations) legally.

Tax Concessions

To support our monastics, tax concessions were sought out for Bodhinyana Monastery which will save roughly \$3200 per year.

Membership Form

An online membership form has been developed with an improved payment portal. The form will be deployed immediately after the AGM (pending the result of the Special Resolution, which impacts several aspects of the form). This will greatly increase accessibility for overseas persons who wish to become members. Automated membership renewals are expected to roll out over the next 6 weeks thanks to the hard work of the Treasury team in implementing MYOB.

The two factors combined has the potential to increase membership revenue significantly.

Social Media

A number of imposter pages for Ajahn Brahm were reported by members and friends. Unfortunately, these pages were scamming followers and soliciting money. I reported and taken down from Facebook, but it will require continuous monitoring to prevent them from appearing in the future.

Soumithra Ramesh kindly volunteered her excellent and professional services in implementing a Facebook presence for Ajahn Brahm and Dhammaloka, which will help prevent imposter pages in the future.

In the next 6 months, an expanded team of volunteers will be sought to help maintain these pages and act as an online source of advertising and publicity for our events.

COVID-19

In response to the WA Government's instructions, the SafeWA app was implemented for all BSWA locations and QR codes generated for visitors to sign in. I will continue to monitor COVID-19 changes as they evolve.

Renovations, Termites, and Lawns at Dhammaloka

With the construction boom in full swing in WA, we found ourselves in the unfortunate position of discovering termites in the Dhamma hall. The termites were treated, and Bill Prins, Nicholas Allott, two volunteers (I do apologise for not having your names!) and I spent a weekend removing all of the plants around the Dhamma hall to prevent future infestations.

Unfortunately due to the construction boom it had been very difficult to find contractors willing to finish the job and install paving. Thanks to Bill Prins and GahSiong Lam's efforts we have now engaged a contractor to finish the job over the next month.

At 37 Milford Way, a contractor has been engaged to install reticulation and lawn over the next several weeks to create a new community area for socialising and enjoying the beautiful trees given to us by the Thai Language Centre of Perth in honour of the King of Thailand's birthday.

With the Dhammaloka Subcommittee's new budget authority, they have also begun engaging cleaners, gardeners, reticulation tradies, and handymen to take care of the many jobs around Dhammaloka.

[Recycling](#)

Containers for change were set up by Chet The to allow anyone visitors and members to turn in recyclable bottles at Dhammaloka. This translates to revenue for Dhammaloka centre for each bottle donated.

[Filing for Trademark of BSWA logo and Membership logo](#)

I filed for trademarks on BSWA logos to help prevent copyright issues in the future. These were granted in Q3 2020.

It is with the continued hard work of all of our amazing volunteers, staff, members, committee members and subcommittee members that the BSWA continues to thrive and has a very bright future ahead of it. I look forward to continuing to help the BSWA spread the teachings of the Buddha and the practice. May we all come to direct realisation of the Buddha's teachings