



Amaravati Lay Buddhist Association Constitution

2017 version REVISED May 2020

1. The Amaravati Lay Buddhist Association

The Amaravati Lay Buddhist Association hereafter referred to as ALBA do hereby adopt and set forth this "Constitution".

2. The objectives of ALBA are as follows:

- 2.1 To support lay Buddhist practice
- 2.2 To support a community of lay Buddhist practitioners
- 2.3 To develop a framework for lay Buddhist practice
- 2.4 To disseminate Buddhist teaching
- 2.5 To support contact with the monastic Sangha in the Theravada Forest Tradition

3. Membership

- 3.1 There is no formal membership of ALBA.
- 3.2 ALBA events are open to all. In exceptional circumstances the ALBA Committee will have the right to request individuals not to attend ALBA events if agreed by the Committee by simple majority vote provided that 8 (or at least 75%) of the Committee Members are in attendance
- 3.3 A copy of this Constitution will be available for public scrutiny via the ALBA Web Site.

4. Management

- 4.1 The Committee of ALBA, hereafter referred to as "the Committee" will comprise of a maximum of 15 volunteers. Suggested roles are: Chairman; Secretary; Treasurer; Website and Publications Co-ordinator.

4.2 Other roles (e.g. Day of Practice Manager, Retreat Manager, Chief Cook) may be identified subject to offers of help by Committee Members and the need.

4.3 The Committee exists for the purpose of supporting the objectives of ALBA and liaising with the Monastic Sangha on ALBA matters.

4.4 Specific functions are to:

4.4.1 Agree and evolve the objectives of ALBA.

4.4.2 Formulate ideas and organise events such as Days of Practice, Retreats and activities which support the objectives of ALBA.

4.4.3 Canvass opinion informally from ALBA Participants on events; activities and other issues relevant to ALBA.

4.4.4 Maintain an ALBA website, a Participants contact email list and publicise events.

4.5 The Committee may appoint or co-opt volunteer Participants to serve on sub-Committees or undertake specific activities as appropriate. Co-opted Committee Members will not be eligible to vote at Committee meetings and are referred to as 'Associate Committee Members'.

4.6 All Committee and Associate Committee Members will serve for four years.

(see 4.9.4)

4.6.1 Retiring Committee members can request to become Honorary Members with no time limit

4.7 ALBA Committee members will be guided in their words and actions by the 5 Precepts and will not bring ALBA, its events and activities into disrepute.

4.7.1 The Committee may vote by a simple majority to remove any Committee Member (or Associate Member or Honorary Member) from the Committee, provided that 8 (or at least 75%) of the Committee Members are in attendance.

4.8 Recommended Committee Roles

4.8.1 A Chairman may preside at Committee meetings and ensure that rules are impartially observed, oversee activities and attend to other duties which the nature of the post may require.

4.8.2 The Treasurer will be responsible for the financial affairs of ALBA. He or she will keep records of all money transactions and render periodic reports to the Committee as they may require. A bank account will be maintained in the name of Amaravati Lay Buddhist Association (ALBA). The Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary will be signatories (either to sign).

4.8.3 The Secretary will ensure that the ALBA Constitution is maintained, that appropriate information is available about ALBA, that minutes are circulated to all Committee Members and that records are maintained.

4.8.4 Website and Publications Co-ordinators will maintain the website and an email database and send invitations and information to Participants on the ALBA email mailing list in accordance with Committee decisions.

4.8.5 Events Managers will organise events in accordance with decisions made at Committee meetings.

4.8.6 The Committee may appoint an examiner to examine the ALBA financial records.

4.8.7 The Committee Members will try to assist the Committee whenever called to do so and will ensure that the business is conducted impartially in accordance with the Constitution.

4.8.8 Committee Members may resign in writing to the Chairman.

4.8.9 If a Committee Member resigns part way through his or her term, a new Committee Member may be appointed.

4.8.10 A new Committee Member will be identified by the current Committee Members at a Committee meeting.

4.8.11 A replacement Committee Member will be introduced at an ALBA event at which Participants are present.

4.8.12 Committee meetings will be quorate if 6 (or at least 50%) of the Committee Members are in attendance or 8 (or at least 75%) for changes to the Constitution.

4.9 Committee Formation Procedures

4.9.1 At the end of a Committee Member's tenure, the Committee has the responsibility for identifying a new Committee Member. The new Committee Member's name will be published in the ALBA Newsletter/Bulletin

4.9.2 Committee Members and Associate Committee Members will be selected from the ALBA Participants. Full Committee Members will be required to have been Associate Committee Members for at least 1 year unless agreed to otherwise by a simple majority vote, whilst Associate Committee Members will have no ALBA participation time requirement.

4.9.3 ALBA Participants will volunteer their services as an Associate Committee Member or a Committee Member. If there is a vacancy (there are potentially 15 Committee Members positions), then the Committee will discuss and agree giving the position to a Participant. In the absence of a full Committee Member's position Participants may be offered an Associate Committee Member's position.

4.9.4 The tenure of Committee Members and Associate Committee Members is 4 years. Every 4 years, Members will be able to reconfirm that they wish to continue. Should this process have lapsed, Committee Members can offer themselves for a further 4 year term at the next available meeting.

4.9.5 The names of Committee Members and Associate Committee Members for the new committee will be made public.

4.9.6 Any internal structuring of the Committee (selection for various roles) will be agreed to by that Committee, and if thought appropriate be recorded as 'standing orders'. Roles should ideally be kept to a minimum and be adopted when appropriate.

5.0 Teaching

5.1. ALBA events shall be taught and led by Members of the Committee as agreed by the Committee, as well as by members of the Monastic Sangha invited to do so by the Committee. In exceptional circumstances and only when agreed to by a simple majority vote, other teachers may be invited to teach if it is agreed to by a majority vote (75% or the nearest higher proportionate number) that they have something special to offer.

5.2 An ALBA teacher will be authorised to teach and lead ALBA events if she or he has the agreement and support of all the other existing teachers and a majority of Full Committee Members (at least 75% or the nearest higher proportionate number).

5.3 All ALBA teachers will require the approval of the Abbot of Amaravati Buddhist Monastery to teach.

6. Procedures

6.1 If required, procedures defining the conduct of the day to day operation of the Committee will be detailed in the Committee Standing Orders, which will be amended from time to time by the Committee at Committee or Special Committee meetings.

6.2 No existing standing order rule may be amended or a new rule added unless it is approved by a simple majority of Committee Members at a Committee or Special Committee meeting, provided the meeting is quorate.

7. Meetings

7.1 'Special Community Meetings' may be called by the committee from time to time. These may form part of other events which are open to all Participants. They will be advertised using the email database to Participants.

7.2 There will be approximately 4 ALBA Committee Meetings each year on dates to be determined by the Committee. These meetings are open to Participants of ALBA by prior agreement with the Chairman after consultation with the Committee.

8. Finance

8.1 Funds may be raised and donations collected to further the aims of ALBA. Surplus funds may be passed to the English Sangha Trust for the maintenance of the Monastic Sangha or to other good causes subject to agreement by the Committee.

9. Amendment of Constitution

9.1 The Constitution may be amended from time to time by the Committee (see 4.8.12) and will be made available on the ALBA Web Site.