

Gardens

There has been a lot of work since the spring on the vegetable and herb gardens. Thanks to the hard work of a lot of volunteers the gardens are looking very good at the moment. We have potatoes, courgettes, strawberries, radish, and much more growing. The Polytunnel is full of cucumbers, tomatoes, mix of lettuces, celeriac, chilies, beans etc..



We can see in the Fruit Cage a lot varieties: Gooseberries, red and white Currant, Tayberries (Rasberry/Blackberry) ... And the Herb Garden is full of Parsley, Mint etc..



We can also see how Debbie's hard work pays off. Wonderful flowers grow around the main building, it has been necessary to protect the plants from the rabbits and the badgers with chicken wire.

Special visits

One benefit from the coronavirus pandemic has been the increase in wildlife sightings. The peace and quiet has encouraged the badgers, young rabbits, pheasant, woodpeckers etc to be more active in the quad area. In recent months we have been able to see seals at sea and many different bird species.



Dear Friends,

Bradwell is beautiful now that summer is here, the season marked by the chattering of swallows in the rafters of the back stoep. The last six months have, as ever seen many changes at Othona. We have a whole new team of ECS volunteers, the major improvement of our energy generation system is near completion, and the garden is looking good thanks to lots of help. This spring was marked by many changes due to the situation we have experienced around the world, the Covid-19. Sadly this has resulted in Othona having to close its doors, for the only time other than when the Motley building was built, to everyone. However, Richard, Tim, Debbie and our volunteers from VAP have continued to work on the Othona site.

Our Staff and Volunteers



We welcomed a new group of ECS volunteers last Winter, Laïd from France, Jana from the Czech Republic, Maria from Spain and Stefano from Italy. We have also been fortunate to have others staying with us during these months. Sam and Euan, who were in charge of making a promotional video for Othona (You can watch this on our youtube channel), Ivor who was volunteering and then during the lockdown period various family members (Sam, Kaz and Will).

The new works

From the November 2019 of until July 2020, we have been able to watch how the works are progressing. We started the year with no heating, kitchen, or hot water and sporadic electricity! Now we have: a new electricity generating system, new fire alarm system, significant improvements to the Men's Hut , a new kitchen (first picture) and major rewiring to bring us in line with modern standards.



Before all this work began we used gas for all the cooking, heating and most of the hot water generation. Our existing solar panels and wind turbine were insufficient for our needs therefore we used a lot of gas, which is very expensive and inefficient. The new System doesn't use gas. It has been replaced by more solar panels, a three phase electrical system, header tank and a diesel generator (this is only for when there is not enough solar or wind power or in an emergency). For heating and hot water we now have a large tank installed, with a 3000 L. capacity for water, which is heated by wood pellets. These pellets are sourced from sustainable British forests. In the future we plan to install a bigger and more efficient wind turbine.



Make the footpath into a drive way for the future windmill

We have just completed the installation of a new fire alarm system to cover the whole site compliant with modern regulations. Dangerous wirings have been replaced and new sockets have been put in.



The improvements in the Men's hut building include installation of a new alarm system, heating and shower, making this much more pleasant to stay in.



Completion of the lower-field-hut

Despite the fact that Othona has remained closed to the public, we have taken this opportunity to do essential maintenance on the site: cleaning of all areas, painting of the lower-field-hut, painting of exterior doors and windows of the Main building, restoration of spaces and furniture, cleaning and training in the new kitchen beach cleaning, Sam has been making a new collage of photos to go on the tables, gardening and weeding jobs ...



What we've been doing

Activities carried out during the Quarantine at Othona

Although there has been none of the community actually here, we have continued with the activities that you would usually see happening at Othona. Such as..

During Easter, our famous "Egg Rolling" could not be missed out. After painting the snooker balls wrapped in tape which was to replace the eggs in these turbulent times, we could enjoy rolling them on the wonderful track that Sam built and Tim organized.



You may have participated in our virtual quiz what was held on zoom on one of the Fridays. Despite the odd technical hick-ups it was a great experience to see everyone joining in.

When the heat and the sun came to stay, the members of the community have taken the opportunity to take a dip in the sea while maintaining social distancing. Once again avoiding the gnarly looking stakes and coming out before the tide turns.

Chapel has been practiced once daily as there are only ten of us here since lockdown. For dedications we have gone to look at the chapel, appreciating having our own moment of tranquillity. Martin Riemer has been hosting virtual dedications, which we are very grateful for, remembering all the members that together make up this wonderful community and asking for the well-being of each of them and their families.