

The Othona Community in June 2021.

Written this time by Ruth Bull.

June – and summer lies ahead of us, full of hope, hugs – and maybe even holidays.

Othona has a new 2021 Summer Programme now on the Othona Bradwell website, (<https://www.othonaessex.org.uk/events-listing>) with events running from Monday to Friday, including Music, Art, Olympics and Permaculture – a chance to share in producing and tasting our delicious home grown fruit and vegetables - with the weekends free of a set programme. You are very welcome to book either for meal, a weekend or for the event weeks.

I wonder if you know just how much Othona depends on volunteers. Yes, we have a few paid staff, mainly below minimum wage – a legal privilege extended to us and the few other Intentional Communities where the resident team value an opportunity to serve the Community above financial income. In addition each Othona Centre (Bradwell Essex and Burton Bradstock West Dorset) have a number of regular volunteers to keep Othona alive. At Bradwell – naming no names but you may be one of them – we have practical assistance with maintenance; outdoor work, gardening, tree planting and grounds maintenance. We have a strong group of people willing to step in and help welcome our visitors, as well as supporting the team in cooking, cleaning and administration. And there are those who brighten up the darkest day with music – so often the piano is playing – we have musical opportunities because Othona does not rely on constant TV, radio or modern media for entertainment.

Behind the scenes, do you know who organises the programme, helps keep the books on order – both financial and in our small library – or inspires the spiritual continuity of Othona, linking its earliest days when founded by a C of E Chaplain, to the place of Christian spirituality in our modern diverse and questioning times? And did you know that all Othona's trustees and directors are unpaid volunteers, ensuring the financial survival and thriving of Othona as well as its compliance with all sorts of legislation for health & safety and safeguarding, and the developing ethos of Othona to meet the needs of future generations.

But.....the most important thing about Othona is its people – whether volunteering, visiting or tiptoeing in to find out more, young or older, Christian, other faith or none, all abilities, and with all manner of outlooks on life, whether hoping to volunteer or in need of comfort, company or solitude. Othona is a Community – of the people who live there, volunteer, visit or simply keep in touch by post, Facebook or telephone; and you.... if you would like to share some time with an assorted bunch of friendly people.

To learn more about Othona or to make booking or a donation, do take a look at our website. Tim Fox is Warden/Manager, with Debbie and Richard Sanders. Email bradwell@othona.org. Website: www.othonaessex.org.uk. Telephone 01621 776564. Keep in contact for details of re-opening times – hoping to meet and greet you in 2021.