

### **The Othona Community – September 2023.**

On August 12<sup>th</sup> the Othona Community Essex held its annual Open Bradwell Centre Committee meeting. Chaired by Revd. Steve Barnes, Trustee Chair at Bradwell, alongside Christopher Jones, Trustee, and Debbie and Richard Sanders, Warden/Managers and resident team member Phil Martin, this was an opportunity for everyone to participate in the essential business that keeps Othona ticking at Bradwell. We were introduced to the resident team members, including current volunteers; and told of vacancies for a volunteer trustee, and the important role of resident Intentional Community team member with a lead in Housekeeping, as advertised on the Othona Bradwell website. We heard of the ongoing survey on Membership of the Othona Community – again available for all, on the website. It would not be a formal Committee meeting without an update on Governance, the legal framework that underpins Othona as a registered Charity, and we were pleased to hear that, once again, Othona Bradwell has achieved a Five Star rating for food hygiene, thanks to the Core Community and volunteers who help keep our kitchen spotless. Communication is also vital for Othona, and the Community is embarking on a Website Revamp to keep us relevant, informative and easily accessible. There was a call to anyone with relevant skills and experience to join the Communications Working Party, as we were reminded how work behind the scenes includes not only hands-on tasks but participation in working groups. **To readers of Village View, these calls for involvement in the nuts and bolts of community are for all, whether a longstanding member or a local resident with a little time to give.**

Those present at the meeting were given brief updates on improvements in hand, including the renovation of the accessible shower room at a cost of some £15,000 (and how do we finance it?) and the major works necessary to keep our site in good condition including the septic tank replacement, and wind turbine options following the refusal of planning consent for the second turbine. Our Committee asked for comments and observations on this year's programme and ideas for the future; and options for a lively local event at the time when we have traditionally hosted a fireworks display. Finally, we heard an update on our finances – that Othona Bradwell, part of the Othona Charitable Company, is making a small surplus but still owes our umbrella body The Othona Community Trust for the financial advance for recent major, essential electrical upgrades; and money will be needed for any other site upgrades, as well as the essential bursary support for those who could not otherwise afford to stay. The trustees, committee, wardens and resident team members received warm applause and appreciation for all they do to keep Othona alive at Bradwell; with a reminder that we are all part of the one Community and all do our best to help out where we can. And of course, Othona here in Essex and over in West Dorset are great places for a very special "holiday with a difference." You may already have enjoyed Bradwell's August programme, joining in the Environment week, Music week with a wonderful concert and refreshments in St Thomas' Church; Art week, Survival week and A Time to Simply Be, with a great atmosphere, friends reunited and newly arrived people soon becoming part of the "Othona Family." September may give the team a chance for a bit of a well-earned break, but there is still a lively programme including the Harvest Working Weekend Fri 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September.

**All are welcome, as resident or day visitors.** For more details of all these events, and activities taking place throughout the autumn too, do phone, email, take a look at our website or pick up a leaflet locally. Debbie and Richard Sanders are our Warden/Managers, Othona is accessed through East Hall Farm, East End Rd, Bradwell on Sea (electric entry gate, collect free exit token from the office.) **If you would like to contribute your time, or your financial donation or legacy, please contact Othona -** [www.othonaessex.org.uk](http://www.othonaessex.org.uk), [bradwell@othona.org](mailto:bradwell@othona.org), tel: 01621 776564.