

Othona 2018



Othona

“Really nice to be out with blue skies and fresh air”

Othona Community opened their doors to us for a third time. We spent 3 days in the lovely community retreat. It was the perfect place for a short break, right next to the coast at Bradwell on Sea. Everyone was free to join in the activities or do whatever they felt like at that moment.



Taking time out

“There were some short periods of time where I did actually relax for a while”

The break away was extremely important for many of the group. It gave them the chance to get away from their usual home life and be somewhere else and do something different. For a few days, they did not need to be mother, daughter, friend or worker, they could just be themselves. Just being out in the open breathing in the fresh air was a tonic in itself!



Happy memories

“This is the first time in a long time that I have laughed from my stomach”

The holiday was packed full of happy moments. From relaxing in the sunshine or singing & dancing in the sea to letting go and just having fun! A few of us had makeover's & haircuts, we did arts & crafts, played with the dogs, picked fruits & berries. We munched on fish & chips, cream tea and ice-cream! We enjoyed walks on the beaches, collecting shells and looking at the views.



Opening minds

“I feel refreshed and relaxed from the holiday, I learned a lot about myself”

We learned and experienced lots of new things. For some of us we ate new food, as we enjoyed simple but healthy meals together. We saw new places like St Peters Chapel, an ancient church. We enjoyed Burnham on Sea walking around the harbour watching the boats and sea view. We enjoyed each other's company. We walked, talked, played, laughed and learned.



Night time fun

“Ah wow the stars look so amazing! Is that the milky way? No way!!!”

Sleeping away from home can be a scary time for some people but we all supported each other. We enjoyed seeing the wide open night skies full of stars. We had good fun sharing games, quizzes and watching films together. Some of us even had cosy midnight parties in the tents and dorms! The evening was a time to relax and be together after a day of exciting activities.



All together

“The young group were so great. I thought they would just stay on site and do nothing but they joined in whole heartedly. They were not afraid to give anything a try”

The holiday was a chance for us to bond together as a group. We shared stories and experiences and got to know each other more. New friendships were formed and connections between close friends strengthened. This year we were joined by the youth survivors group too, a welcome addition to the group. We all worked together to make it a wonderful holiday packed with great memories and experiences.

On the shore in Bradwell in September

Annette fry

So, what if,
unsuspected
upon a day of unexpected sun
and white sheep clouds -
the oyster catcher clan
sit all along a bar of sand
exchanging news of seasons
times to come and go
exchanging gossip
sipping salty pints topped with sea foam,
their haunting piping calling those alone
to 'come. Come join us.
Come, now let's fly home."

And what if,
unbidden
in ancient faith built walls
a sudden silence falls
in midday hovering heat
the swallows duck and dive
on cockle spit
perform gymnastic feats
exchanging news of family and friends in flight
so breath taking, they plunge from rocky heights
head first, toward the quilt of shell shocked sand
but like a flying ace
they flirt, but never land.

