



Othona

WEST DORSET

Programme of Events **Feb 2018 to Feb 2019**



- **Retreats**
- **Workshops**
- **Family holidays**
- **A welcoming community**
- **A spirituality open to all faiths and none**



“Othona is such a precious and crucial part of our family life. I’ve had the joy of watching my children flourish and grow here.”

“A balance of solitude, companionship and beauty – grounded once more!”



“It’s different from anywhere else... the vibe, the feeling in the air, the sense of peace emanating from the walls.”

Mission Statement: Othona is an open and inclusive Community rooted in the Christian tradition and drawing on a wealth of other inspirations. We welcome people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and beliefs to our two centres on the quiet coasts of Essex and Dorset. Through sharing in a daily rhythm of work, learning, worship and play, we seek personal renewal and glimpses of the sacred. In community we explore the relationship between faith and life and encourage one another in caring for the world and its people. Founded in 1946, Othona is registered charity number 1154204.

Rooted in the Christian heritage... open to the widening future

this centre is one of two operated by the Othona Community

A PLACE

West Dorset is rich in history, wildlife and culture – a joy to visit, but not ruined by tourism. We occupy 7 acres of gloriously untamed grounds on an unspoilt stretch of coast.

In Community House you’ll find simple but comfortable accommodation, with wide sea views and a homely log fire. The beach is 15 minutes walk away through National Trust meadows.

A PLACE TO BE

Othona is a great place just to be. Leave the stress of your daily life behind. Let go of a few responsibilities. Relax in surroundings that lift your spirit.

Wake each morning to birdsong from the woods that surround us. Fall asleep to the rhythm of waves on the beach below.

A PLACE TO BE REAL

In this beautiful setting many people find a surprising quality of acceptance. When image and status don’t matter, we’re free to be who we are, without judgment or expectations. Free to look within and recognise, perhaps, parts of ourselves that have lain dormant.

A PLACE TO BE REAL TOGETHER

So you relax. The real you finds breathing space. And maybe you will also discover a rare depth of connection with other people.

Othona’s a place with lots of unforced laughter, easy sharing of each other’s life stories, and not a few unembarrassed tears. This is a taste of community – something so often missing in today’s world. (All spiritual traditions recognise this. One Christian name for it is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.)

Our hope is that this experience carries over as a practical blessing in your everyday life.

For some **Frequently Asked Questions** see page 13

An Experience of Living Community

We welcome people of all faiths and outlooks. Only together can we hope to build a sustainable future of justice and peace. Down-to-earth and open-hearted, Othona has its roots in the inclusive Christian tradition, and now draws on a wealth of other inspirations too.

Othona West Dorset is a centre dedicated to human wellbeing – of body, mind and spirit. We have found that individual wellbeing grows through an experience of community with others and of connection with Spirit/God.

Prices down, up – and different!

This year we are adjusting some prices downwards – especially for families with two or more children aged between 3 and 18, whose eldest child will come free of charge. Some prices are going up, not least because we've held them steady for the last two years while inflation has been rising.

And from 2018 we have reluctantly decided to charge a Single Supplement (based on £10 a night) if you require a room on your own and can't consider sharing. We do this to keep Othona viable as the demand for single rooms grows.

If you need help to afford our prices we have a Bursary Fund for just that purpose. You are welcome to apply for it, whether you have asked for a single room or not. We handle your request confidentially. You can indicate your request for a bursary on the enclosed booking form (or use our online booking form).

If you arrive late or leave early we usually charge for the full event – unless explicitly agreed otherwise in advance.

The Divine Heart of Darkness

26-29 Jan (Fri-Mon am)

Why are we so hard on darkness – especially in Christian and other religious traditions? This retreat helps us explore how both the dark and the light can be affirming and healing. **Cathy Bird**, a Methodist minister in London, is a devoted lover of the dark. Her new book *The Divine Heart of Darkness* draws on, among other things, her visits to Svalbard where the sun doesn't rise for months on end.

£158 (£119 CONCESSION)

Quiet Week: Living More Deeply

2-8 Feb (Fri-Thurs am)

Our Quiet Weeks give you plenty of unprogrammed space to use as you wish. But within the welcoming context of community meals, shared times in chapel and interesting company. This is not a silent retreat, but certain times and places will be kept talk-free. Quiet Weeks are gently led by experienced guides – on this occasion counsellor and former Othona trustee **Janet Aldridge** who will offer input and meditations on how we may live more deeply.

£351 (£274 CONCESSION)

Roll Up Your Sleeves

5-11 Mar (Mon-Sun pm)

If you've never tried one of these weeks you may not realise how special they are. Ideal for practical people who like to lend a hand and do something worthwhile. Sharing umpteen jobs round the house and grounds we all get a real sense of achievement and camaraderie – working hard (up to 6 hours a day) but enjoying ourselves too with plenty of laughs and diversions. We aim to vary the jobs to suit all abilities. (See also 8-14 Sept).
£80 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £20)

Honouring Our Sacred Self

17 Mar (Sat 10.00-5.00)

A wholistic retreat day to revive body, heart and soul with yoga teacher **Sian Alcock**.
www.sacredshores.net £50, LUNCH INCLUDED, OR £55 IF BOOKING IN FINAL 2 WEEKS.
ALL BOOKINGS THROUGH SIAN ON 07527 052273 OR SIAN.SACREDSHORES@GMAIL.COM

Mindfulness and Creative Writing Workshop

19 Mar (Mon 10.00-4.00)

A day of contemplative practice and creative writing with author and creative writing teacher **Joanna Smith**. No particular previous experience is necessary, just a wish to explore writing as a path of discovery and spiritual practice.

www.blackdogwriting.co.uk

£55, LUNCH INCLUDED.

ALL BOOKINGS THROUGH JOANNA ON 07824 617453 OR JOATLYME@GMAIL.COM

Easter Retreat: Creation and Creativity

29 Mar – 2 Apr (Thurs-Mon am)

Spend this Easter with two Davids. **David Buck** offers us some different perspectives on the Easter story, creative thinking that draws on historical research, world spirituality and his own visits to Israel/Palestine, while **David Talbot** leads sessions of tai chi, qigong and shiatsu.

Former financial analyst David Buck has applied his researcher's eye to making sense of Jesus beyond the familiar formulae of traditional theology, as a positive and mystical teacher. He has written two books that can shed a fresh light on the gospel accounts: *Through the Eye of a Needle* and *The I, Jesus Scrolls*. He writes "I believe that Jesus was on a fully human journey towards his destiny of becoming what I call 'At One with the Father'." www.ijscrolls.com

David Talbot, known for his tai chi and qigong sessions at Othona, will show us a simple shiatsu massage and will also offer a birdwatching walk. There will be time during the weekend to meet new friends, explore the grounds and the coast, and just relax in community together.
£200 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £40)

Families Bargain Break

4-8 Apr (Wed-Sun am)

Our much-loved short break for families (and others) always offers fun and creative opportunities: walks, games, music-making etc. But you'll find chances to rest too – quality time with your own family and a mixed bunch of new friends. Othona gives a glorious break from the usual pressures of life, from digital distractions and from deadlines. And to make it all easier, the eldest child in each family with two or more 3-18 year olds comes free of charge! What's not to like?
(See also 24-28 Oct.) £200 11-18: £130 3-10: £90 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £40)

Discover the Enneagram 12-15 Apr (Thurs-Sun pm)

Learning about the Enneagram can help us understand ourselves and others better. The Enneagram is a dynamic, ancient, spiritual and psychological model of humanity. It describes nine basic personality types, how they vary and interact, and the direct link between the psychological and spiritual aspects of each.

Giving extraordinarily accurate insight into our day-to-day behaviour, preoccupations, strengths and weaknesses and those of our friends, colleagues and lovers, it also indicates each person's most fruitful approach to personal growth.

With **Karen Webb**, author of *Principles of the Enneagram*, and probably the UK's foremost Enneagram teacher.

www.theenneagram.co.uk

£234 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £30)

Walking Week: The High Road or the Low Road 16-22 Apr (Mon-Sun am)

A week of led community walks, with an option each day of a shorter or longer ramble. Short walks will typically be 3 or 4 miles, longer ones up to 10 miles, through the gloriously varied landscapes of countryside and coast in Dorset and East Devon. Couples with one non-walking partner welcome. Each morning we set out with packed lunches to enjoy a led walk, sharing cars to the starting points. With a choice of short and long walk each day you can shape the week to your level of fitness and walking enthusiasm. Stunning cliffpaths, hidden valleys, ancient earthworks, remote woodlands, beautiful villages, atmospheric churches... and inviting tearooms.

Tony Jaques has been leading walks here for more than 20 years but still manages to vary his routes and discover new delights. **Mark James'** former work with the Dorset Wildlife Trust means he's a great guide to our natural surroundings. These are hilly landscapes so you need to be relatively fit – especially for the longer walk options. Back at Othona we'll enjoy scrumptious home-cooked food, reflective 'seedtime' each morning and evening relaxation by the community log fire.

£270 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £60)

Yoga Retreat: a chance to delve more deeply 27-29 Apr (Fri-Sun pm)

A yoga retreat with **Debs Albon** - not for the total beginner but good for anyone with experience of regular yoga practice. Debs is an experienced Hatha yoga teacher and also a pregnancy yoga teacher. She will explore the more subtle inner aspects of yoga by use of two of the three bandhas (bandha meaning 'lock') that help us to promote strength, energy, greater flexibility, relaxation and an awareness of deeper inner opening/purification. Also included will be the use of mudras (mudra meaning 'seal') during pranayama practices and meditation.

£140 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £20)

"Surely the greatest service station on life's motorway. I leave refreshed, refuelled and ready for my journey to tomorrow. I shall hold for a long time the love and care of a very special group."

Meetings with Mystics: an Appleseed Retreat 2-6 May (Wed-Sun pm)

This Appleseed retreat draws on inspiring writings of mystics from various times and traditions; some of these you may already know, and we hope some will be completely new to you. Appleseed, a process originated in the Quaker tradition, involves silent listening to talks on the theme, followed by simple and enjoyable creative response activities, and the option to share our experiences with each other. It has proved to be an accessible and rewarding process that opens the heart, feeds the mind and lets the spirit soar.

Jennie Barnsley and **Roy Bayfield** have facilitated Appleseed courses at Othona for over 10 years. Jennie is an active Quaker and avid crafter; Roy is a published writer with experience of meditation in the western wisdom tradition.

£240 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £40)

Annual Quiet Day: The Wisdom Way of Knowing 10 May (Thurs 10.00-4.00)

The Quiet Day is led this year by **Janet Lake** who has roots in the Christian mystical tradition and is nourished by the wisdom of other faiths too. She will offer inputs about being fully human and divine.

PLEASE BRING PACKED LUNCH – SOUP, TEA AND COFFEE ARE PROVIDED. £8 – PAY CASH ON ARRIVAL

Not a Digital Detox: How To Feel Better Without Logging Off 11-13 May (Fri-Sun pm)

"What we need is more nature, not less technology." Most of us sense that contact with the natural world is good for us; science confirms it. But we also benefit in all sorts of ways from our digital connections. This short retreat offers a chance to reflect on our online lives and our place in nature. What practices make for wellbeing in our digital age? **Sue Thomas**, an expert and author in this field, is convinced that nature and technology are not the polar opposites they're sometimes made out to be. The retreat will draw on her 2017 book *Nature and Wellbeing in the Digital Age*. www.suethomas.net

£140 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £20)

A New Economy? – a weekend for non-economists 18-20 May (Fri-Sun pm)

How are we to understand the economic forces that are so influential across the world but so opaque to most people? Almost all economic theory assumes 'growth' can go on forever. But inequality and exhaustion of the earth's resources challenge that orthodoxy. Gross inequality, is approaching levels last seen in the nineteenth century. It seems built into the way the system operates. Is a more sustainable economy really possible? One in which spiritual values could also take their place?

Steve Mandel – a Quaker who used to work at the New Economics Foundation – offers a workshop weekend for us non-experts. After all, he says: "economics is too important to be left to economists". Not an academic conference but a weekend for those who care and want to understand.

£135 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £20)

Dorset Art Weeks 26 May – 10 June (Sat-Sun)

Every other year Othona West Dorset is a *Dorset Art Weeks* venue. We welcome almost 1,000 visitors each time and look forward to a similar experience this year. Othona artists **Mart Tebbs**, **Emma C Tabor**, **Robin Shaw**, **Elizabeth Sayers** and **Ali Tebbs** display their work in the spacious simplicity and stillness of Othona's chapel.

Open daily 11.00am – 5.00pm

Refreshments/cream teas daily 2.30 – 4.30pm.

Meet the Artists evening on Tuesday 5 June, 7.30 for 8.00pm.

See below for two residential events running during Dorset Art Weeks.

Pictures Making Words 29 May – 2 June (Tues-Sat pm)

Do you yearn to write creatively, in whatever form? Do you already write but want new inspiration and encouragement? This short course will present you with digital images of great artworks from many times and cultures – a stimulus to any writer. **Graham Fawcett**, renowned poetry expert and perceptive teacher, will encourage you whether you are a confident writer or a beginner and in whatever form – poetry, prose, fiction, journal, diary, letter. There will be no pressure to finish writing anything or to read out what you have written. www.grahamfawcett.co.uk

“Pictures Making Words” runs alongside Othona's Dorset Art Weeks exhibition. The study sessions with Graham will by no means fill your day - leaving plenty of time to relax, explore the Dorset-wide festival that is Dorset Art Weeks, or help out on the Cream Tea Team.

Some 50% discount places as part of our Cream Tea Team. Help to bake, serve customers, clear and wash up. Graham's sessions will not clash with cream tea duties!

£270 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £40)

Reading Allowed/Aloud 4-8 June (Mon-Fri pm)

While our Dorset Art Weeks exhibition continues, we invite you to join us for a time when reading is not only allowed but positively encouraged. What and for how long is up to you! Maybe settle with one of those books you keep meaning to delve into? You'll be in community with other keen readers, with chances to exchange 'good read' recommendations. Also, **Tony Jaques**, Othona warden and former Radio 4 broadcaster, loves to read aloud. He will offer us some engrossing listening in a session of mixed poetry and prose each afternoon or evening. Plus, for those who wish, a coaching session to improve our own reading aloud skills.

“Reading Allowed/Aloud” runs alongside our Dorset Art Weeks exhibition.

As with the previous event, you'll have time to relax, explore, or help out.

Some 50% discount places this week for Cream Tea Team helpers.

Terms and conditions as for “Pictures Making Words” above.

£210 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £40)

Mindfulness for Men 15-17 June (Fri-Sun pm)

A course for men, a compact introduction to the meditation-based practice which many people find can change their approach to life for the better. The weekend is designed for total beginners, though you're equally welcome with some previous mindfulness experience.

Tim Stead is an accredited teacher with the Oxford Mindfulness Centre and has a particular interest in mindfulness and spiritual growth. He writes “Many of us men are a bit shy of groups and personal stuff especially in mixed groups. But the good news is that: a) you are being taught by a man who understands this and b) we will not at any stage be delving into ‘group therapy’! The sessions are about learning a skill and that is what we will concentrate on.”

Tim's frame of reference is an inclusive Christian faith, but he is used to teaching groups that include people of various faiths - and none. He is the author of *Mindfulness and Christian Spirituality* (SPCK) and a regular speaker at the Greenbelt Festival.

£160 (SINGLE ROOMS FOR ALL – COUPLES APPLYING CONTACT US FOR QUOTATION)

Weaving the Threads of Creativity and Mindfulness – Honouring the Creative Soul 21-24 June (Thurs-Sun pm)

A retreat combining mindfulness meditation with the practice of weaving. How can mindfulness and self-compassion help you to develop your creativity, to overcome blocks and lack of confidence? Led by mindfulness teachers **Sue Howse** and **Jo Gosling** with artist and teacher **Sue Lansbury**, this is a retreat for all comers, whether you have previous creative, weaving or mindfulness experience, or not.

£210 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £30)

Community Essentials – Special Bargain Event

25 June – 1 July (Mon-Sun pm)

The essence of the Othona experience of community, all in a few days. With activity and rest, spirituality and fun, shared ideas and shared tasks, both indoors and outdoors. Led by warden **Tony Jaques** and members of the resident core community. (An ideal introduction to Othona if you are interested in applying to live and work with us.) Bargain event: 6 days for the price of 3! £150 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £30)

Honouring Our Sacred Self 30 June (Sat 10.00-5.00)

A wholistic retreat day to revive body, heart and soul with yoga teacher **Sian Alcock**.

www.sacredshores.net

(See also 17 Mar & 6 Oct) £50, LUNCH INCLUDED, OR £55 IF BOOKING IN FINAL 2 WEEKS.

ALL BOOKINGS THROUGH SIAN ON 07527 052273 OR SIAN.SACREDSHORES@GMAIL.COM

“What an inspiring, thought-provoking time. And Othona home from home as usual.”

Summer Sizzler – Weekend of Singing

6-8 July (Fri-Sun pm)

Harmony singing from sacred chants to pop anthems, with renowned singing teachers and choir leaders **Nick Petts** and **Jon Conway**. We learn by ear so you don't need to read music. The uplifting experience of vibrant harmonies making the many, one. A great mixture of songs, plus Saturday evening cabaret where everyone's a star.

£195 (£40 SINGLE ROOM SUPPLEMENT)

FOR MORE DETAILS AND FOR ALL BOOKINGS: JONCONWAY.CO.UK/RETREATS

The Singer and the Song

15-20 July (Sun-Fri pm)

A five day course of intense music making, designed to support Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award candidates with a love of singing and/or songwriting. **Joanna Eden** is a singer-pianist/songwriter and mentor to Sam Smith. **Steve Watts** is a vocal and performance coach. Together they lead group workshops and individual sessions on singing and songwriting, culminating in performance and the opportunity to go home with a demo-quality recording of one song. 16-24 year olds only.

For more details and price see www.othonawestdorset.org.uk

Fun With Science

28 July – 3 Aug (Sat-Fri am)

A relaxing family holiday in community, with the bonus of interesting science for children exploring some of the secrets of nature and the cosmos. Lifelong friendships often begin on a week like this. All within the inclusive and caring atmosphere of the Othona Community. This very popular week tends to fill up quickly, so early booking is a good idea! **Satnam Jhalley** and **Alex Hough** are teachers who love science so much that they keep sharing it when they're on holiday.

£290 11-18: £200 3-10: £140 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £60)

Picturing Our World

4-10 Aug (Sat-Fri am)

What images grab your attention - on your phone, on TV, in a book? How often is it great shots of the natural world? It's time to improve your own photos – get some drop-dead gorgeous pictures. Join this family-friendly week and drink in the spectacular sights of Dorset – distant views or close-ups. Learn how to take and edit photos that capture wildlife and the countryside at their very best, with **Eleanor Corney**, former Othona core member, and her brother **George Corney** who can give expert tuition on Photoshop. Particularly good for photography beginners, but of course if you're more experienced you're welcome too.

This isn't an intensive course – there'll be time for the beach and all the other pleasures of a relaxing holiday in community. Although technology is crucial to the photography, otherwise being at Othona will still mean you can take a rest from ever-present digital media.

£270 11-18: £180 3-10: £120 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £60)

“A very special time, special moments with people in love with life and generous in their sharing.”

All bookings are non-transferable. We suggest you consider taking out insurance against loss due to cancellation.

BURSARY

I'm requesting a bursary. I will await your invoice before making a payment (please tick).

MAKING YOUR PAYMENT

Please fill in about payment below (unless you ticked above for a bursary), then sign over-page and return this form to us.

Either I am paying my deposit (non-transferable & non-refundable) of

Or I am paying the full charge (with or without single supplement) of

I enclose a donation (to help fund bursaries) of

I am making my payment by (tick whichever applies):

Bank Transfer (BACS) to The Othona Community, Account No. 20680303, Sort code 20-26-62

Please give the start date of the event as Reference Code (to link your payment to your booking)

Paypal. Please email bookings@othona-bb.org.uk with the amount you wish to pay and we will send you a Paypal money request by email (payable by card or Paypal account)

Cheque made out to The Othona Community

Other (please give details).....

£
£
£
£

TOTAL:

NOW post this to: Bookings, Othona West Dorset, Coast Road, Burton Bradstock, Bridport DT6 4RN

OR scan and email to bookings@othona-bb.org.uk

You can print more copies of this form at www.othonawestdorset.org.uk/downloads

Othona reserves the right to change or cancel events as necessary.

Othona is registered charity number 1154204

BOOKING FORM

Please use a separate booking form for each person, unless you are applying as a couple or a family and paying together.



Othona
WEST DORSET

Event Title:

Arrival date:

Departure date:

Please tick if booking a **non-residential** place:

Your name(s):

Your date of birth:
(required for all please)

Gender:

- | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. | 1. | M / F / |
| 2. | 2. | M / F / |
| 3. | 3. | M / F / |
| 4. | 4. | M / F / |
| 5. | 5. | M / F / |

Postal address:

Postcode:

Email:

Landline:

Mobile:

Emergency contact – who do we phone *in an emergency*? Landline and mobile if possible please.

Name:

Landline:

Mobile:

Are you willing to share?

Yes

Only if necessary

No, I will pay the single supplement

For two booking together: Tick if you prefer

A double bed (if available)

Twin beds

We offer a limited number of single rooms for certain events. Early booking is always advisable if you're unable to share.

Do you have any special needs?

(physical, dietary, health-related, need/prefer ground floor room)

Please say if you eat no meat, no red meat, no fish etc. We cater at all times for vegetarians. Let us know about any allergy or other serious dietary restrictions. Community grows from the joy of shared meals prepared with love.

Is this your first time at Othona West Dorset?

No

Yes **If Yes, how did you hear of us?**

Personal recommendation

via Retreats.org site

Retreat Guide or other publication

via Othona publicity/leaflet

Google etc search

Other:

We send occasional emails with news to those on our database. Please tick if you prefer **not** to receive any

DECLARATION

I am over 18 and agree to Othona's Terms and Conditions (cancellation details plus health and safety considerations) as in the brochure and at www.othonawestdorset.org.uk/booking/terms-and-conditions. I have filled in payment details overleaf.

Sign:

Date:

By ticking this box you agree to the booking conditions.

OUR CHARGES

Othona is a not-for-profit charity and is known as very affordable. Our standard adult rates reflect the real cost of your stay. They include accommodation, usually three home cooked meals a day and other refreshments, use of all our facilities, and all the input from speakers and facilitators. We think that's brilliant value. But if our prices are beyond you, please feel free to ask for help from our bursary funds.

As an inclusive Christian charity we welcome people who can't afford our usual charges. A bursary will reduce the cost to you – whether you need a single room or are prepared to share – typically by 25%. We handle all bursary requests confidentially. And (unlike many organisations) you don't need to prove anything to us. You don't have to be receiving state benefits, for instance. See page 2 for more about price rises, price drops and single supplements.

HOW TO PAY

To find the full cost of any event, look on the website or in our printed brochure. The charge rates for each event are listed below the event description. **For each event booked, we require a standard non-refundable deposit of £30 per person (excluding eldest child and 0-2 years old – who come free of charge).**

Are you booking more than 1 month ahead?

You need only send the non-refundable deposit. When we confirm your booking, we will tell you the amount still owing and when to pay it by. Alternatively, we welcome payment in full at the time of booking – it cuts down the paperwork all round.

Are you booking less than 1 month ahead?

Please send full payment now with your booking.

If you have to cancel we will refund a varying proportion of your payment:

More than 1 month ahead of the event start date:	all but the deposit
Less than 1 month, more than 1 week ahead:	50%
Less than 1 week ahead:	10%
On or after the start date:	nil

All Together Now! (1)

11-17 Aug (Sat-Fri am)

All Together Now weeks at Othona give families the space to create together their own ideas of fun and shared activities, without any pre-determined theme. Who'd like to design the pizzas, or build the bonfire, or organise the talent evening? Or maybe we'll do something entirely different?! Light-touch facilitation, by family members who already know Othona, gives us all maximum flexibility. Lifelong friendships often begin on a week like this.

All this within the inclusive and caring atmosphere of the community, with its anchor points of lovingly prepared meals, simple shared jobs where everyone can contribute and quiet reflective times in chapel. By keeping the *virtual* world of phones and internet to a minimum, we give ourselves more space for real world encounter and understanding. £270 11-18: £180 3-10: £120 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £60)

Circle Dance Delights

20-24 Aug (Mon-Fri am)

Gorgeous music and spirited group dances from all round the world, some slow and meditative, others more energetic. **Kathryn Penny** is a brilliant dance teacher for beginner or aficionado alike. Join the circle and enjoy the palpable sense of oneness. Non-dancing room-sharers also welcome. £220 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £40)

All Together Now! (2)

25-31 Aug (Sat-Fri am)

All Together Now weeks at Othona give families the space to create together their own ideas of fun and shared activities, without any pre-determined theme. Who'd like to design the pizzas, or build the bonfire, or organise the talent evening? Or maybe we'll do something entirely different?! Light-touch facilitation, by two families who already know Othona, gives us all maximum flexibility. Lifelong friendships often begin on a week like this. All within the inclusive and caring atmosphere of the community, with its anchor points of lovingly prepared meals, simple shared jobs where everyone can contribute and quiet reflective times in chapel. By keeping the *virtual* world of phones and internet to a minimum, we give ourselves more space for *real* world encounter and understanding.

£270 11-18: £180 3-10: £120 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £60)

Roll Up Your Sleeves

8-14 Sept (Sat-Fri am)

If you've never tried one of these weeks you may not realise how special they are. Ideal for practical people who like to lend a hand and do something worthwhile. Sharing umpteen jobs round the house and grounds we all get a real sense of achievement and camaraderie – working hard (up to 6 hours a day) but enjoying ourselves too with plenty of laughs and diversions. We aim to vary the jobs to suit all abilities. (See also 5-11 March) £80 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £20)

"Amazing people, amazing games, and a few too many late nights!"

Quiet Week with a Green Heartbeat

15-21 Sept (Sat-Fri am)

Are you longing for space, stillness and quiet, but not wanting to engage in a completely silent retreat? Do you relish the idea of time to yourself outside amidst the stunning natural surroundings of fields, beach, sea, but without being totally alone? Ecologist and psychotherapist **Julie Walker** offers a particular focus on discovering the ways in which the rhythms and living presence in Nature can touch our souls, inspire our hearts and help connect us to a deeper wisdom within ourselves.

With gatherings in chapel to draw on wisdom from many sources and guided opportunities outdoors each morning to individually explore different ways of relating to and being with Nature. There'll be plenty of time to yourself, as well as in supportive community, with delicious meals, some shared in silence.

£350 (SINGLE ROOMS FOR ALL – COUPLES APPLYING CONTACT US FOR QUOTATION)

Living with Dying

27-30 Sept (Thurs-Sun pm)

Death is the one certainty in life that we all share. But when do we talk about it in any depth? This long weekend, in a supportive community setting, we'll see what death means to us individually and collectively. Accepting the fragility and transience of life can be uniquely liberating, helping to put into perspective our everyday worries and preoccupations, and – ultimately – may enable us to live more freely and bravely.

Kym Winter and **Peter Berry** are well qualified facilitators, by personal experience and professional expertise – both being therapists who have also faced relatively young family members coping with life-threatening illnesses. They will help us create a space in which we can face this great taboo, explore some of our fears and fantasies about it... and even have some fun along the way. A long weekend of discussions, film, contemplation, art-making, a bonfire and our own Othona 'Death Café'.

£200 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £30)

"Little did I know that what actually awaited me was a carefully structured, deeply rejuvenating gentle programme of physical and spiritual nourishment that would touch and restore the mind, body and heart. Hilarious and nurturing company of sensitive, thoughtful people from all different places. The accepting, caring welcome of the core community."

Silence by the Sea – Exploring the Wisdom Traditions

1-4 Oct (Mon-Thurs pm)

There is a real hunger for an authentic and living spirituality, emerging anew from its roots in the mystical heart of all faith traditions, but reawakened and revitalised to be accessible and relevant for today. This retreat, whilst largely silent, will include inputs and mutual sharing as we explore the Wisdom traditions, along with daily periods of meditation and chants, mindful work, and time to appreciate the beautiful setting. Given that Wisdom *"is not about knowing more, but about knowing with more of oneself... about increasing our capacity for spiritual perception from an awakened heart"* (Cynthia Bourgeault), the format of the retreat will engage us with different aspects of our being and be reasonably intensive. You would need already a regular meditation practice and a wish to deepen your spiritual life.

Leaders are **Janet Lake** and **Jayne MacGregor** (both members of CANA www.christiansawakening.org) and **Richard Sloan** (RC priest committed to the transformative and healing value of contemplative listening) who have attended and been inspired by the Wisdom Schools and teachings of Revd. Dr Cynthia Bourgeault (www.contemplative.org).

N.B. arrivals for this retreat 12.00 – 1.00pm.

£220 (SINGLE ROOMS FOR ALL – COUPLES APPLYING CONTACT US FOR QUOTATION)

Honouring Our Sacred Self

6 Oct (Sat 10.00-5.00)

A wholistic retreat day to revive body, heart and soul with yoga teacher **Sian Alcock**. www.sacredshores.net

(See also 17 Mar & 30 June) £50, LUNCH INCLUDED, OR £55 IF BOOKING IN FINAL 2 WEEKS.

ALL BOOKINGS THROUGH SIAN ON 07527 052273 OR SIAN.SACREDSHORES@GMAIL.COM

Community Essentials – Special Bargain Event

9-14 Oct (Tues-Sun pm)

The essence of the Othona experience of community, all in a few days. With activity and rest, spirituality and fun, shared ideas and shared tasks. Led by warden **Tony Jaques** and members of the resident core community. (An ideal introduction to Othona if you are interested in applying to live and work with us.)

Bargain event: 5 days for the price of 3! £150 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £30)

Families Bargain Break

24-28 Oct (Wed-Sun am)

Our much-loved short break for families (and others) always offers fun and creative opportunities: walks, games, music-making etc. But you'll find chances to rest too – quality time with your own family and a mixed bunch of new friends. Othona gives a glorious break from the usual pressures of life, from digital distractions and from deadlines. And to make it all easier, the eldest child in each family with two or more 3-18 year olds comes free of charge! What's not to like?

(See also 4-8 Apr.) £200 11-18: £130 3-10: £90 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £40)

"Feel we have been bathing in TLC! Thank You."

November 2018 to February 2019

The community is open to visitors less than usual during the winter (a time when we catch up with maintenance, training and other development work). For details of other opportunities during these months please watch our website or ring us.

Community Essentials – Special Bargain Event 8-14 Dec (Sat-Fri pm)

The essence of the Othona experience of community, all in a few days. With activity and rest, spirituality and fun, shared ideas and shared tasks. Led by warden **Tony Jaques** and members of the resident core community. (An ideal introduction to Othona if you are interested in applying to live and work with us.)

Bargain event: 6 days for the price of 3! £150 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £30)

Christmas in Community 23-27 Dec (Sun-Thurs am)

Christmas at Othona is always rather special, with less of the things you want less of (television, bingeing, bickering, maybe loneliness?) and more of a spirit of peace and goodwill within a temporary 'family' that isn't your own but where you have a real contribution to make.

Feasting, presents, prayers – all are in the mix, but not to excess. On Christmas Eve we visit a local organic farm for carol singing among the straw bales. On Boxing Day you can watch hardy souls take a chilly dip in a local harbour for charity (or even join them). Equally suited to families, couples or individuals.

£210 11-18: £130 3-10: £90 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £40)

The Drama of the New 29 Dec – 2 Jan 2019 (Sat-Wed am)

Othona always greets the New Year in a warm-hearted community fashion, with both relaxation and stimulation. This year we return to an old community tradition – performing a scratch play with entertaining and unpredictable results. But we'll also be guided in looking at some of the most dramatic innovations – whether new ideas or things – that may shape our lives in years to come. Be prepared to find your mind well and truly boggled and your heart stirred. Weather permitting we like to share a country walk on New Year's Day. Equally suited to families, couples or individuals.

£210 11-18: £130 3-10: £90 (SINGLE SUPPLEMENT £40)

Quiet Week 2-8 Feb 2019 (Sat-Fri am)

How about some space for reflection as we pass Candlemas/Imbolc/Brigid's Day and taste the early onset of spring? This week is not a completely silent retreat, but offers a depth of tranquillity, a quality of presence which will rest parts of you that need rest... and awaken parts that have dozed off! Facilitator to be confirmed.

£330 (SINGLE ROOMS FOR ALL – COUPLES APPLYING CONTACT US FOR QUOTATION)

"A wonderful opportunity to experience wisdom, spirituality and friendship."

FAQs

How many people can you accommodate?

We have 14 visitor bedrooms. In our busiest family weeks we can fit in up to 35. At other times anything between 12 and 24 is normal. The 7 members of the core community live in separate accommodation on site.

Do you have single rooms?

Yes - and twins, doubles and family rooms (but no en-suites). Just tell us your preference on the booking form. From 2018 we are charging a **modest single supplement** if you require a room on your own and can't consider sharing (if necessary). For certain types of retreat, a single room is the norm and in these cases there is no extra charge quoted. There is nothing wrong in requesting a single room and asking for a bursary to offset the expense! (See '**How do I qualify for a bursary**' below.)

Is everything provided in the bedrooms?

Duvet, pillows and blankets are provided. You can bring your own duvet cover, bottom sheet, pillowcases and towels if you wish to save money. Or you can hire them from us at a one-off cost of £6 per person.

What time of day do events begin and end?

Residential events usually begin with supper at 6.30p.m. It helps us if you arrive after 4.00p.m. Departure times are mid-morning unless otherwise indicated (e.g. Sunday p.m.).

Can I arrive a day early or stay over an extra night?

This kind of extension is sometimes possible, particularly to bridge from one event to the next. Please ask us about the specific dates you have in mind.

Can I reach you by public transport?

Yes. There is more information, with maps and transport links, on the website.

Can I take part in an event as a non-resident?

This is sometimes possible. Please contact us to ask with reference to specific events.

How do I qualify for a bursary?

You don't have to. Our bursaries are there for anyone who feels they need one. We handle all requests confidentially. And (unlike many organisations) you don't need to prove anything to us. You don't have to be receiving state benefits, for instance. So if you need financial support to visit us please don't be embarrassed about asking – Othona is a charity! Just indicate (online or when you phone/write to our Bookings team) that you'd like bursary assistance. Typically this will mean a reduction of 25%. If your situation means you need more help than that, please tell us. *We no longer quote 'concession' prices. But bursaries are there for whoever needs them.*

Do you offer discounts for children?

From 2018 we offer a special deal for **all** family-friendly events. If your family has two or more 3-18 year olds, the eldest one stays **free of charge**. Infants from 0-2 have always stayed free too.

Can I book online?

Yes – please visit www.othonawestdorset.org.uk and when we invoice you there are also options to pay online, by bank transfer or Paypal (even without a Paypal account). The first time you book online you'll have to 'create an account' with your own password, but after that the process for subsequent bookings is even easier.

How can I tell if you have room for me?

If you have access to our website, each event page there has the level of availability (**Space Available, Almost Full, Full**) under the event dates. This is a good guide but for various reasons cannot be 100% accurate, especially when we are nearing fully booked. That's why we look at every Booking Form and respond to you personally. We also start a **Waiting List** for full events. If you can't visit the website please call us on **01308 897130** to check about availability.

Can I pay online?

Yes! Online payment is our preferred payment method (by bank transfer or Paypal). See Can I book online? above. If you have questions about payment, do please contact us.

Do you offer individually guided retreats?

This is a service we don't offer. You can find places which do through www.retreats.org.uk

Do you offer private retreats, within or outside advertised events?

This is sometimes possible; please email (bookings@othona-bb.org.uk) or phone (01308 897130) to enquire about specific dates. Many people looking for an informal retreat experience find our Quiet Weeks and Open Spaces, with a balance of chill out and community, meet their needs.

Can I stay for a longer period?

Our 'Sabbatical Stays' can be anything from a fortnight to a month. Please contact us if you wish to explore possibilities. Use of our library and/or the art room could be just the thing for your sabbatical or career break. The library is particularly rich in spirituality of many faiths and radical Christian theology. The art room has a range of materials you are welcome to use – or bring your own. We cannot offer prolonged stays where your main needs are therapeutic. Othona only has living space for those who work as part of the core community.

Do you hire out the centre for group use?

Yes, occasionally. We have a few openings each year for 'outside group' bookings not advertised in our own Programme. We find this works where you are not looking for 'just another venue' but want the special ethos of a community. Please contact the warden (tony@othona-bb.org.uk or 01308 897130) to discuss possibilities.

How do you cater for people with disabilities?

All our communal rooms and two downstairs bedrooms are wheelchair-accessible. There is a hearing loop in the chapel. Assistance dogs are an exception to Othona's general no dogs rule.

What's your food like? Will my special diet be a problem?

We always try to provide home-cooked, healthy, scrumptious meals. We grow some of our own food and use a lot of produce which is local (West Dorset is a bit of a foodie heaven), organic or fairly traded. We cater at all times for vegetarians as well as meat-eaters.

To share the same food is a potent symbol of our shared humanity. But if you have a serious medical intolerance to any foodstuffs please notify us when booking – then we will clarify whether we can exclude them from the menu.

With our small kitchen we cannot provide special meals for those on other dietary regimes. Please do bring any supplementary food you are likely to need; ask for fridge space if you need it; but realise that you won't usually be able to cook it at Othona. We always stock soya milk, gluten-free bread and rice cakes and our local town, Bridport, has various specialist food shops.

Will I have to do the washing up?

Yes! Community life means we share a few simple tasks such as washing up and preparing vegetables, usually one each per day. Approached in a spirit of care and co-operation they can be more like gifts than chores.

Will I have access to media?

All mobile networks now have coverage at Othona, if sometimes a bit patchy. Urgent messages can be left for you if necessary on our office phone 01308 897130. Wifi is available but we urge you not to use this more than you really need and as far as possible in private. After all, most people visit places like Othona for a rest from the chatter of media; of course there are exceptions where e.g. we use online resources in a discussion session. If you listen to radio or music in your room we trust you'll keep it quiet and not disturb others. (Please bring earphones.)

Will my children like it?

Who can ever predict? But seriously, we usually design events during school holidays to be family-friendly. Most children adjust quickly to community life and love its freedoms. Visit our public Facebook group and our photo galleries. These will literally give you a picture of how other children and young people experience Othona West Dorset. Except when needed for the event in question we suggest that tablets, phones etc are left at home or restricted to certain times and places, so as to leave room for interaction and creative play. We have an established child protection policy.

How inclusive are you?

Othona values diversity and aims to break down barriers of age, sex, race, ability and background. We were pioneers among Christian centres in actively welcoming people regardless of sexual orientation. Learn more about Othona's beginnings and our values and beliefs.

What if I'm not Christian, or not even religious?

You don't have to be Christian to enjoy Othona or to be welcome here. Many Othona people are Christian, but some are of other faiths. And many others are reluctant to be identified with any one religion, seeing themselves on a spiritual search. Only if you were indifferent or hostile to any such search would we suggest you think again about visiting Othona.

How 'holy' is the atmosphere in your community?

Spiritual health is about being fully human – which may or may not include being religious. Othona supports anybody who takes spiritual health seriously – by which we don't mean solemnly! ('Wholey' rather than 'Holy'?) You won't encounter a lot of pious talk, nor pressure to share other people's beliefs.

We hope you'll find 'soul nourishment' in our chapel – as well as on the beach, in the art room, round the dinner table. We have two pianos and an extensive collection of recorded music created for us by Fiona Heyes. Our library is a treasure house of books to stir the heart and feed the mind, particularly strong in progressive theology and multi-faith spirituality.

So in what sense is Othona Christian?

In a profoundly open sense – open-hearted and open-minded – which we believe Christianity at its best is. Here at Othona West Dorset we speak of being "rooted in the Christian heritage... open to the widening future". We honour the revolutionary heart of Jesus' teaching, when Othona embraces and learns from people of all faiths and none. Could a Christianity evolving in the 21st century settle for less? How crucial it is that the world's great faiths should relax their defensiveness and explore common ground. Othona is one tiny step in that direction.

What's next for Othona?

The key project for 2018 is to replace our old art and craft building with a **Four Seasons Studio**. The new building will provide more space, better facilities and be adaptable to uses ranging from a variety of arts and crafts to bodywork, from seminars to recreation. We have planning permission and aim to start building in Spring 2018. This means part of our grounds will be a building site for much of the year. We are still raising funds – all **donations** welcome! :-)

What does the name Othona mean?

We're not sure, but it quite possibly means "home". It was the Romans' name for a fort they built on the Essex coast. The garrison there may well have been conscripted from Sarmatia (modern Hungary) and "otthon" in the Magyar language later came to mean home, as 'Otthona' does in modern Hungarian. Out of the ruins of that fort rose a Christian church in AD654. Close by that church is the other (and first) Othona centre at Bradwell-on-Sea in Essex. Today the Othona Community is a far-flung network of people with a love for one or both centres. Newcomers and non-members are just as welcome as long-established Othona members.

Terms and Conditions

Please read this page carefully. It relates to your financial security and personal safety. Without your agreement to these terms (by signing the booking form) we cannot accept your booking.

Cancellation Costs

If I have to cancel I accept that Othona returns a varying proportion of my payment:

More than 1 month ahead of the event start date: all but the deposit

Less than 1 month, more than 1 week ahead: 50%

Less than 1 week ahead: 10%

On or after start date: nil

I am aware I could take out insurance against loss due to cancellation.

I accept that Othona reserves the right to change or cancel events as necessary.

Recreation at Othona

One of the delights of Othona is its relatively 'wild' outdoor environment. We want to keep this open to all and safe for all. Please read this carefully as it constitutes part of your terms and conditions for booking.

By booking to stay at Othona West Dorset I am agreeing to all of the following:

Any or all of the members of my family or party listed on the booking form may want to play and engage in other recreational activities in the grounds of the Othona Community, including use of the equipment known as the Treehouse.

I understand that:

- The grounds include varied terrain on which care is needed to avoid accidental injury. They are largely 'undomesticated' for the sake of wildlife and bio-diversity. There may be plants growing wild which are poisonous if eaten.
- As in any wild environment, common sense is needed to enjoy the surroundings and avoid danger.
- The possibility of injury to myself and others will always exist.

I confirm that:

- I am aware and accept that there are potential risks to myself and others and I will not deliberately endanger myself or others.
- I acknowledge and accept the responsibility for the supervision of any child of mine who plays in the grounds, including use of the Treehouse.
- I will comply – and ensure any child of mine complies – with the Othona Community guidelines as to use of the Treehouse or any other play equipment.
- I will only allow my child(ren) to use the Treehouse when I have satisfied myself that it is safe for them to do so.

I hereby release, remise and forever discharge from any claims and liabilities whatsoever without limitation the Othona Community, its employees and volunteer helpers and any other person playing in the grounds who might injure me or my child(ren) howsoever arising, and I make this release on behalf of myself, my heirs, executors and administrators.

If you need extra booking forms and cannot photocopy, call us on 01308 897130 or visit the booking section of our website.

In this chapel our guiding light is the example of Jesus. He offered a welcome to all regardless of status or preference of sex, race or religion. We seek to honour all faiths as responses to the divine as paths to liberation. We look for the Christian tradition to evolve with new understandings and to join hands with all who hunger for justice and peace.



We call our morning and evening gatherings in chapel Seedtime and Harvest. The formats are flexible, with room for the sharing of experience, thoughts and feelings, for music, chants and songs, prayers, poems, and plenty of companionable silence.



Othona is about a mile east of Burton Bradstock village on the coastal side of the B3157. You can reach us by train (or coach) and bus. We send further travel details in the month before your visit.

Othona Community
Coast Road
Burton Bradstock
Bridport
Dorset DT6 4RN

Office: **01308 897130**

Email: **mail@othona-bb.org.uk**

Website: **www.othonawestdorset.org.uk**

Find out much more about Othona on our website: www.othonawestdorset.org.uk

Community House is in the care of a small resident group, the Core Community. Day to day management rests with the warden, Tony Jaques, backed by a Committee and Trustees drawn from the Othona Community at large.



“All my friends commented that my sparkle had returned after a very long absence. I’m still glowing a week on.”