

Core Member – Housekeeper

Core Roles and Competences

Each long term Core member has a **lead specialist role**. The housekeeper's is described below. This is a job with a range of responsibilities, covering all aspects of housekeeping. If you feel you do not have all the skills described below, we are happy to support a successful applicant and help them to grow in and into the job.

There are also some **competences**, which are fundamental for all core members and some **common and additional tasks** (see below). These tasks may be rotated – some (e.g. hosting and cooking) on a regular rota, others (e.g. merchandising) on a longer term basis. All core members contribute to tasks such as cleaning, answering the phone and, most importantly, being with the visitors.

Overview

The role of housekeeper at Othona could be described as 'low visibility but high impact'. Your work may be less obvious than that of some other core members, but is no less important or potentially fulfilling. For our visitors, the state of the house and their bedrooms – both in practical and aesthetic terms – has a strong subliminal effect.

You'll need an interest in household management from furnishing design to cleaning regimes and competence in the areas of safety and hygiene. But just as important, you need the personal qualities to be well organised without being inflexible, to cope in changing circumstances without flapping, to work cheerfully in an unusual team. So emotional intelligence and an interest in people will need to underpin your technical skills.

Othona is not a place of lavish facilities. We aim to combine simple comfort with an atmosphere that is more like a family home than a hotel. You'll not just be managing housekeeping tasks but doing them, though you will not be coping with all this single-handed! Planning can be done in dialogue with the warden and other colleagues; help with practical tasks comes from colleagues and from volunteers whose contribution to Othona is a vital element of the community. In housekeeping, as much as any other area, there is a crucial balance to be struck between efficient work by the core community and scope for involvement of other visitors and volunteers. Part of your role will be to champion that balance.

The current vacancy is available as from Easter 2023 and is initially for 6 months only. The salary offered is £8,997.08 per annum plus full board and lodging. You can expect two days off a week (on a variable rota) and 28 days annual leave allowance.

To summarise, our housekeeper has four main aims of equal importance:

- to manage house cleaning, laundry and related tasks so as to sustain and improve the facilities offered to our visitors
- to play a big part in the cleaning routine, with the help of other core members, visitors and volunteers
- to supervise purchase of relevant household goods and materials within agreed budgetary guidelines
- to build community with core colleagues, volunteers and visitors – where appropriate by encouraging and helping them to participate in housekeeping tasks.

Key Responsibilities

1. Plan and carry out the routines of 'everyday', 'weekly' and 'spring' cleaning of rooms, linens and soft furnishings.
2. Carry out laundry activities, both in-house and off-site.
3. Ensure safe and effective functioning of furnishings and equipment (including showers, loos, lamps, furniture etc) reporting maintenance needs to the Warden.
4. Carry out purchasing and storage of linens, cleaning materials and other household consumables.
5. Plan continuing renewal and refurbishment of rooms in ways appropriate to Othona within the budgetary and time constraints.
6. Create and maintain records of housekeeping procedures, schedules and activities.
7. Manage the budget for this area.
8. Encourage and co-ordinate the safe and enjoyable participation of visitors, core colleagues and volunteers in household upkeep activities.

Skills and Experience

Housekeeping Skills

You will be someone who takes pleasure in keeping things clean, well looked after and in good order, generating enthusiasm among those who work with you. You will be able to demonstrate a practical approach to making good use of space, facilities and resources available.

Housekeeping needs skills in cleaning, and keeping things in order, attention to detail. You may also on occasion, have the opportunity to exercise skills in interior design and soft furnishings, decorating etc. Othona will sponsor you in some basic training e.g. Health and Hygiene, so as to equip you to manage health and safety.

Managing Health and Safety

As Housekeeper you will:

- understand the principles of Health and Safety and hygiene as they apply to Housekeeping
- be careful and systematic in adhering to legal and safety requirements
- maintain an orderly, safe, hygienic environment
- be able to train others in appropriate housekeeping skills and safe systems of work where necessary

Planning and organising

You will be responsible for planning and organising the work, equipment and systems for Housekeeping and ensuring the work gets done on time and with good use of resources. This involves doing the majority of the cleaning yourself, coordinating activities carried out by others: colleagues and volunteers. The way you work will inevitably influence the atmosphere around the house. You must be able to:

- identify key tasks, decide priorities and organise the workload
- coordinate the work carried out by others, so that everyone can enjoy participating, and get the work done
- create and maintain records to provide accurate information easily accessible to yourself and colleagues, using Othona's TAM recording system where appropriate. You will have basic IT skills and acquire new ones where appropriate

- purchase equipment and services to achieve the budgeted cost
- stay calm and positive

Resilience

As Housekeeper in a community setting you will need to be comfortable taking responsibility, with an appropriate level of supervision and guidance. Sharing your life with colleagues and visitors as well as carrying out the work needs physical, mental and emotional resilience. Even when under stress, you should aim to take a positive view and keep a sense of perspective.

Appendix 1 – Tasks and Competences

The following common tasks are all essential to the running of the Centre and will be carried out by a combination of long and short term core members and local volunteers. They offer variety and sometimes the opportunity to use (or develop) special skills or pursue a personal interest.

Common Tasks

These tasks are shared between core members, often on a rota basis:

- cooking
- cleaning
- worship leading (with support/training as appropriate)
- hosting (event liaison with facilitators and visitors)
- rubbish and recycling

Other tasks related to the running of the Centre may arise, which by agreement the core member may wish to pursue in addition to their lead role.

Common Competences for all Core Members

Commitment to the Work and Ethos of Othona West Dorset (OWD)

The core members are at the heart of the Othona Community at Burton Bradstock, along with the Local Committee which supports the core in their work. Core members need to be committed to the work of the community, its ethos and values. They work actively to live these out in their everyday life, and to further them. The competences below provide good examples of what this means in practice. The programme explains what Othona is about. Our policy statements show how the Othona Community at OWD seeks to realise these values in the way it manages people, its policies of equal opportunities and the green policies for house and grounds, and in its open Christianity.

Interest in and Skill with People

The heart of Othona is people – core colleagues, visitors and all those with whom we interact. People come because they know they will be welcomed, accepted and valued for who they are. Our role is not to be therapists or counsellors, but we do need to be interested in people and willing to listen and share. We also need to be aware of our own responses and feelings, and especially of the impact of our own behaviour on other people.

Flexibility

Othona core members live and work together, and are host to an ever-changing number of visitors. Core members have to be flexible, able to adapt to varied and changing circumstances and people.

Responsible Teamwork

The main purpose of Othona is to provide visitors with a taste of life in community. The core members need to be able to live and work together co-operatively, and provide support (and challenge). This is important not only to carry out our work but equally so we can enjoy our life together, relax and have fun.

Spiritual Practice

Othona is a Christian community of a very open sort:: based in our Christian heritage and open to a wider future. It is an approach to spirituality where you may experience the fellowship of the spirit in everyday life. Although core members do not have to be Christian, and may be of any faith tradition or none, we expect that they will respect the importance of Christian tradition and the values that are at the heart of Othona. They adopt the Othona 'Rule of Life' as a framework for shared life, and participate actively in the spiritual aspects of community life including leading and joining in chapel services.