

Othona Bulletin

Bradwell News December 2018

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our new Othona Bradwell Newsletter. The last six months here at Bradwell have been very busy with big staff changes, groundworks, garden updating and the usual busy programme of community and group events. We have had fantastic contributions from many volunteers over this time including the three sets of VAP camps over the summer and really appreciate of all their hard work.

Fond Farewells

We bid farewell to Dave and Sandra who had been part of the core team for nearly three years and have left a big legacy behind. We also said goodbye to our three EVS volunteers, Tosca, Anouk and Yannis, who had been working here for a year. We miss having these lovely young people around and really appreciated all their work over their time here.



New arrivals

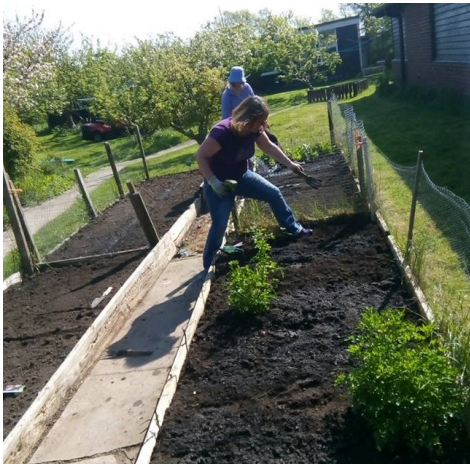


We now have two beautiful European Eagle owls (named Dave and Sandra), they are captive bred birds that required rehoming and we were able to offer them some space in a lovely new aviary in the woods. Richard and Debbie Sanders joined the core team in March taking over the office and general maintenance.



Gardens

There has been a lot of work since the spring on the vegetable and herb gardens. This was started at the spring working weekend and continued at more recent working weekends. We also have a new fantastic volunteer garden, Steve, who has transformed the polytunnel and the raised beds. Many thanks to all those who have contributed to this work. We have increased food production from the gardens so far this year mostly notably with tomatoes, cucumbers, courgettes and radishes and plan to build on this for next year.



Coming up

We were recently awarded funding for four new EVS volunteers for a year from October 2018 to 2019. All four have now arrived and started work here, they are; Enrique, who is Spanish, Jana from the Czech republic, Enoc, from France and the latest arrival is Lorenzo from Italy. It will be great bonus for the community to have another set of young people working here and we want it to be a rewarding experience for them as well. If you would like to contribute any articles, photographs, poems or other Othona related information to include on our website or facebook page please send them to office@othonaessex.org.uk.

Community Events

We have had a varied programme of events so far this year, from the peace and tranquility of A time to simply be to the busy Half term activity week in May. One highlight was International Week in July with themed continental days supported by our wonderful VAPs and other volunteers. The music and singing events were very popular as ever and we finished Music week in August with a concert in the Bradwell Church with wonderful singers of all ages performing. Astronomy was very busy and fortunately we had clear skies to do some star gazing, Salt and Clay was great for bring out creativity and some wonderful creations were made.



The Harvest working weekend was really popular and lots of fun was had making juice from our grapes, apples and pears as well as gardening, path laying, cleaning and many other tasks. The recent October Half term Activity week was enjoyed by all the families that came along, there



Group Events

We have had a wonderfully diverse number of groups joining us at Othona over the last six months. These have included children from local cubs and primary schools, they have had a chance to do bread making, pond dipping, orienteering, rocket building and enjoy the wonderful wildlife here. Other groups include those from different Church's, Buddhists, Art and Yoga groups. We have had YMCA residents here and saw the real benefit they gained from the peaceful surroundings here and this was also appreciated by the recent group, Survivors together. We had a fantastic vegetarian mezze for the Buddhist retreat prepared by Susanne and John.



New developments on site



Our new accessible parking spaces and paths are finished following a lot of hard work from Pete, the VAPS and many from community payback amongst others. We had an official opening ceremony here on September



20th, with the Reverend Steven Poss giving a blessing of the facilities. This was followed by a buffet lunch for all those attending with representatives from the local PCC, Down Hall, the grants committee, Essex wildlife trust and the Maldon and Burnham Standard. Other projects include replastering the end of the solar building, laying new paths behind the Motley building.