



Essential Information for prospective short stay/residential volunteers for 2012-13 season

Background to the project

Volunteer work forms an integral part of the Felin Uchaf project (pronounced *Veleen Uchav* and is Welsh for *Higher Mill*) and since the centre was established 7 years ago hundreds of volunteers of all ages, abilities and backgrounds from all parts of the world have come to help with the various building, land and conservation projects. We manage 23 acres of small fields and new woodland as a local nature reserve. At the moment it is **not a working farm** and we do not have any of our own animals on the land. There are 2 full time staff who tutor the skills training workshops and several local volunteers who coordinate the gardening projects. Only the short term volunteers live at the centre, the staff all live within the surrounding communities on the Peninsula.

We are looking for volunteers who are: dynamic, hard-working and motivated, physically fit and good at working in a team with other people from different countries. We need people who are willing to do heavy eco-building work as well as the organic gardening work. If you think you fit this description then you are welcome to apply via the attached application form.

During the summer it gets quite busy with occasionally up to 14 people staying at the Centre at any one time. **It is important to note for those of you who are also coming to learn/practice English that there are often other French or Spanish volunteers staying here.**

This year we are going to focus our energy into the community garden, building a new eco-visitor centre, building a herb drying house and finishing the timber framed & thatched workshop. **We are especially keen to involve volunteers who may already have some prior skills in the kind of work we'll be doing.** The oak workshop project especially, is an opportunity for already skilled volunteers to gain valuable carpentry experience rarely come by and we are looking for a few **skilled** people who would like to commit themselves to longer periods to learn to carry out this work proficiently. Volunteers may stay at the Centre for anything between a couple of days to a maximum of 3 months, *pending a regular review of progress*. **College students on work placement/experience will be asked to contribute £5 a day towards their keep and the extra staff supervision required**

IMPORTANT:

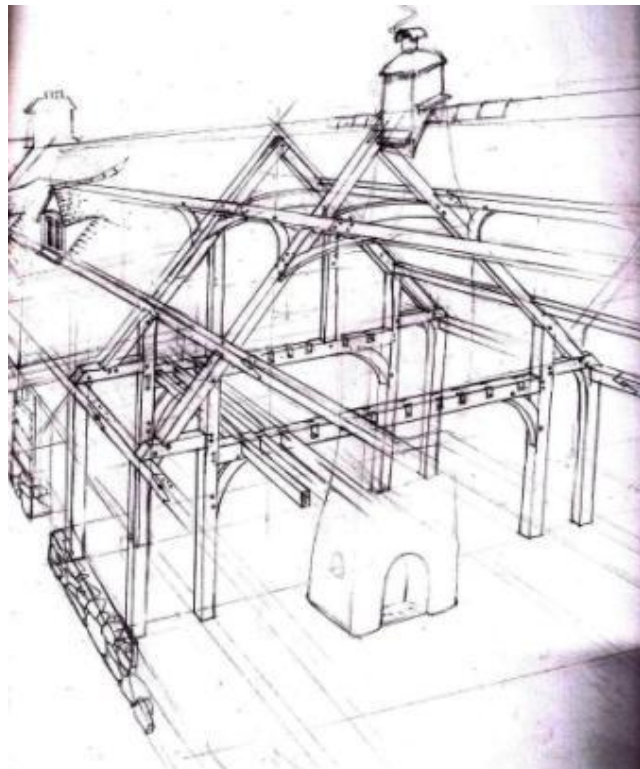
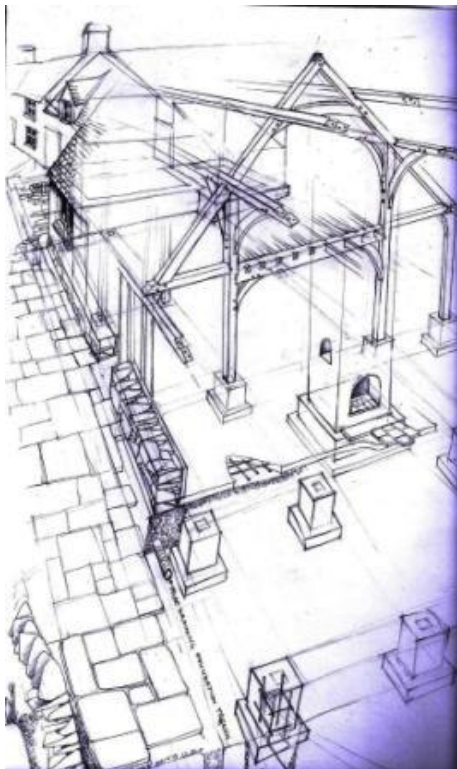
All the work is physically demanding and you need to have a good strong back!

Some of this year's projects are

Priority 1: The building of a New Eco - Visitor Centre.

This is a substantial oak framed , stone & straw bale walled building and is being built of 70 locally sourced oak trees by volunteers and trainees on heritage building skills courses.

We are especially keen on recruiting volunteers with previous practical building experience. The work is mainly outdoors this winter and you are advised to bring warm clothes as winters out here on the peninsula can be cold and windy.



sketches of the New Visitor Centre showing the green oak frames, stone & straw bale walls



Building an Oak-Framed Boatbuilding Workshop- for *already skilled* volunteers



Four years ago we were able to source some 50 tons of oak and larch trees from a woodland management project at a nearby nature reserve. Over this year we will be raising, thatching & cladding the second phase of the workshop. We are now raising funds for the capital costs of constructing the second phase of the project and we'll be running the work as an opportunity for learning:

- oak timber framing- using a range of traditional and modern tools and methods.
- reed thatching techniques
- window joinery and furniture making skills for furnishing the interior.

You can get an idea of what's involved in the different stages of construction through going to the *Workshops* page on our website www.felinuchaf.org

The construction will be run as skills workshops for both volunteers & bursaried trainees and through a programme of fee paying 3-5 day courses. The fee paying courses differ from the ongoing volunteering in as much as there will be much more focused teaching of the range of techniques and use of tools.

Other ongoing projects

The Organic Community Garden and herb garden



There's always plenty to do in the gardens from hoeing to harvesting for meals, making raised beds and cutting the grass. The ambience and earthiness of the garden work can be a replenishing change from the building work. Some people may focus their efforts on the building only and some on a bit of both. We aim to farm biodynamically where possible it reflects the centre's ethos and approach to all the work, if you're interested to find out more about biodynamics you can visit www.biodynamic.org.uk . A volunteer coordinator will direct and oversee the garden project.

The following are lower priority projects but still need doing..

- building new surfaced access paths around the land
- clay and then lime plastering over the wattle and daubed interior of the new roundhouse
- building a timber porch/balcony& stairs for the new roundhouse
- slating the new notice board conical roof frame
- building a thatched shower room- roundhouse



Accommodation and Volunteer Facilities at the Centre

- The Old Farmhouse



There's a 19th century stone built farmhouse where we have our offices, an exhibition room ,one small kitchen and bathroom, a small dining/ living room with open fire and two small shared bedrooms with bunk beds to sleep 2 plus 2/3. **It's very basic** but quite homely and in the summer there's a lot of coming and going through the house. The same goes for the entire Centre – those wishing more privacy and quiet will need to bring their own tents to pitch away from the main activity areas. **Please be aware that winters can be cold, wet and windy out here on the peninsula and you will need to have warm clothes and a good quality warm sleeping bag – (we provide the pillows & blankets)**

The small kitchen has a sink, an electric cooker, fridge, storage cupboards and worktops with plenty of pots and pans and plates and cutlery etc. and large sealed tubs for further food storage

The bathroom has a washbasin and bath (with hot water via an emersion heater) with a detachable shower hose. There are 2 additional outside compost toilets.

There is a washing machine at the centre & outside clothes line



- **The Volunteer Roundhouses –Bunkhouse Accommodation**



There are two thatched, 18 feet internal diameter, Celtic -style roundhouses in a sheltered part of the fields by the stream. There are raised wooden benches all around the inside with storage for rucksacks etc beneath and mattresses to sleep up to 6 volunteers .

There's ***no heating*** so you'll need a very warm sleeping bag especially in early autumn/winter– but it is quite warm under the thick thatched roof and within the wattle and daubed, limewashed walls. We provide pillows & woollen blankets. It's about 5 minutes walk to the farmhouse for the bathroom and kitchen. there's a timber deck/balcony just outside with benches for sitting. (***this winter we shall be installing woodburning stoves in the roundhouses to extend the season***)

There is a *state of the art* Cob built -compost toilet next to the roundhouses and we are currently constructing a simple shower/wash room nearby.

- **Camping**

Volunteers are welcome to pitch their own tents in the stock free field or in the newly planted woodland area.

As were creating new habitats to attract more wildlife

we do not allow volunteers to bring dogs.

What you should bring

warm clothes (especially during the windy & wet winter months), waterproofs, clothes for work & sturdy boots, warm sleeping bag, towel & toiletries, hat & sun –cream & swimming stuff if you want to take an evening swim in the nearby bays. There's good sea fishing nearby too during April - September.

Work gloves and protective clothing/ goggles etc are provided.

Telephone & Internet

There is limited mobile reception on site, the office telephone is to be used for essential calls only

Office's internet access by arrangement only and is locked out of office working hours. There is free Wi-Fi at the farmhouse for volunteers with their own laptops.

Timetable

We expect residential volunteers to help with whatever jobs need doing at the centre from Monday to Friday. Weekends are free unless you'd like to join in with one of the community events on *the Spring-Autumn Activities & Events Programme* (no charge for residential volunteers for most events)

9.00am start work

11.30 20 minute tea break

1.00 1 hour for shared lunch (volunteers take turns to prepare meals)

4.30pm put away tools.

There will be a rota drawn up for tea making, cooking lunch and washing-up (1 or 2 different people each day) and **everyone** shares in a whole-house clean first thing on Monday morning

Volunteers arrange their own breakfast and supper times and out of hours cooking arrangements
food provided)

Food



We provide basic vegetarian food requirements. The **nearest shop is 4 miles away** at the small village of Aberdaron where there's a Spar and nice bakery. From May onward there'll be fresh organic vegetables and salads from the garden to supplement meals and there's good mackerel fishing off the nearby rocks from May to the end of August. **If volunteers wish to have meat and more speciality foods such as vegan food- they will need to purchase these items themselves.** We usually do a weekly main shopping trip to Pwllheli 12 miles/30 minutes drive away and several runs a week into Aberdaron for fresh bread and milk.

The nearest cash point and banks are at Abersoch 8 miles away and at Pwllheli 12 miles away

There are 2 great pubs-restaurants and small cafes at the seaside village of Aberdaron 4 miles west.

Traveling to Felin Uchaf

The Centre is in a remote rural location on the Llyn Peninsula, on the North Western coast of Gwynedd it's what makes it such a special place . The journey here will take you through some of the most varied and beautiful scenery in the UK – with the best saved till last!



- **Train**

By train you'll need to come along the Cambrian Coast line from **Birmingham New Street Station** to Machynlleth then onward to **Pwllheli**. For information about Cambrian Coast train times & routes go to: <http://ojp.nationalrail.co.uk/service/pockettimetable/search> and type in **Pwllheli** Station as our nearest rail destination (Birmingham to Pwllheli – allow 5 hours train travelling)

for a full bus & rail route timetable planner you can go to: <http://planner.traveline-cymru.info/journeyplanner/enterJourneyPlan.do?hss=Qrb6X18174912>

- type in **Felin Uchaf LL539HS** as your destination

Then: either arrange with the centre for a pick-up from the station **only if its out of bus hours** or

- **Bus**

From Pwllheli take the No 17 or 17B Aberdaron bound bus and ask to stop at Rhoshirwaun, at the Felin Uchaf Centre signpost. The bus trip from Pwllheli to Rhoshirwaun is around 30 minutes. From this stop it's a 10 minute walk following the brown and white road signs to the centre. For bus times go to

http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/1078/17_17B_Aberdaron_Pwllheli_Aberdaron_Llun_i_SadMon_to_Fri.pdf

- **By Car**

Make your way to Pwllheli either via the A55 to Bangor if you're coming from the North or Midlands then south west along the A487 or, if you're coming from the South come via the A470 to join the Pwllheli bound A487. From Pwllheli it's a 30 minute drive along the westbound A499 to Llanbedrog then right along the B4415 and 4413 all the way to the village of Rhoshirwaun where you'll see a sign for the Felin Uchaf Centre directing you to take a left (at the yellow chapel) then follow the signs a mile down the lane to the centre. You can see the map if you Google the Centre's postcode LL538HS (<http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?hl=en&tab=w1>) though the postcode is common to several nearby properties – but you should see the big brown **Felin Uchaf Centre** signs on the main road at Rhoshirwaun by then.

All the other information that ***you'll need to look at before deciding to come here***, is on the **Volunteer Policy Statement** attached or downloadable from our website page <http://212.67.202.77/~waenllyneu/felinuchaf/1/contribute.htm>



We look forward to welcoming you here !