

# OTHONA COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

1. The Othona Community aims for all its communications to be expressed in clear language, honest, respectful, reasonably accessible for those with visual, hearing or other impairment, and in keeping with the mission statement of the charity. It also aims to make its organisational procedures as transparent as possible, while also being consistent with effective administration, appropriate confidentiality and legal compliance. Othona seeks to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Data Protection Act 1998. This policy, its regular review, and any matters relating to legal compliance are the responsibility of the Othona Trustees.
  
2. The principal means of communication at a whole-community level are:
  - Full Circle
  - the [www.othona.org](http://www.othona.org) website (including the chat room)
  - the members email list
  - the members address list (e.g. for special mailings)
  - the MSN group (<http://groups.msn.com/OthonaCommunity>)
  - General Meetings annually and from time to time

Responsibility for all these rests with the trustees, and management is by them or by others to whom they delegate. They may designate one of their number as 'Communications Trustee' who will have a particular brief for these matters and their regular review, and will be a first point of contact for members on questions of communications policy.
  
3. The principal means of communication at a centre-specific level are:
  - the centres' programme brochures
  - the centres' own contact lists (both postal and email)
  - the centres' e-zines
  - the [www.othona-bb.org.uk](http://www.othona-bb.org.uk) and [www.bos.othona.org](http://www.bos.othona.org) websites
  - local meetings from time to time

Responsibility for these rests with the relevant warden/centre manager (subject to his/her accountability to the trustees), and management is by them or by others to whom they delegate.
  
4. The websites mentioned above are currently the only official Othona sites. They need good access from one to another, so that enquirers can easily 'click through'. Published addresses for contacting Othona will normally reflect these domain names and email communications with any official status will originate from them. Recipients should always be given clear information on how to delete, change or add to their contact details on Othona distribution lists.
  
5. In an age of burgeoning electronic communications the community recognises that phenomena may arise which impact on Othona and on its public reputation, but which are not in its control (e.g. Othona groups on social networking sites). The trustees view this as an opportunity as well as a danger. They commend to all Othona members and supporters - who may find themselves acting as the community's eyes, ears and voice on the internet - the communication ethics outlined in paragraph 1 above.

Revised May 2008