

*Communication from Trustees following the January weekend*

### **Othona 2010: taking stock and moving forward**

Over the weekend of 29 – 31 January 2010 twenty two members of the Othona Community met for 36 hours at Burton Bradstock. This was the culmination of a process of discernment initiated by the trustees in June 2009. The Trustees retained the services of a facilitator and guide called Sharon Usher. During the Autumn Sharon met with the trustees and with the committees of both centres. Over Christmas and New Year she offered the whole community three questions for contemplation. All this preparation meant that the twenty-two of us came together with great seriousness and with Othona written on our hearts. A list of those attending is at the end of this report.

Under Sharon's expert and sensitive guidance we were able, bit by bit, to be more honest and loving with each other. We uncovered, listened to and worked through a number of painful issues regarding the relationships between the two centres and between the centres and the Trustees. Some of these were already known, others took courage to voice. As a result we now feel able to move forward together with renewed energy for both centres and the Community as a whole. We have a firmer foundation for continuing to build more trusting, honest and respectful relationships, releasing our energy outwards to serve the people who come to us.

#### ***Taking stock***

Both centres are in good heart. Trustees recognised more clearly the different characters, strengths and needs of each centre. Going forward trustees will endeavour to be more flexible in the different kind of support and encouragement they give to each centre. Each centre has its own evolving expression of the Othona vision. To clarify and strengthen that expression Bradwell currently needs more support and engagement from Trustees; Burton Bradstock needs more freedom and independence to develop its life and work.

#### ***Moving forward***

Trustees will work with Burton Bradstock over the coming year to consider how best to encourage and facilitate greater autonomy. We will also work with Bradwell in the coming year to help build up its strength in terms of spiritual leadership, forming a stronger 'Core' community, creating more effective working between the Warden and the Committee, and improving external communications particularly through the website.

The significance of this meeting, and this process, cannot easily be captured in words. It will emerge gradually. What is perfectly clear is that Othona is alive and well and on the move.

Sheila Maxey  
Chair of Trustees  
2 February 2010

**Trustees:** Rupert Bragg, Louise Heatley, Margaret Lydamore, Janet Marshall, Sheila Maxey, Phil Melling, Pat Price-Tomes, John Watters, Bob Whorton.

**Bradwell:** Jonney Aldridge, Gail Dell, Matthew Dell, Ann Froggatt, Chris Jones, Rosie Sinden-Evans

**Burton Bradstock:** Mandy Addenbrooke, Andy Davey, Tony Jaques, Elizabeth Sayers, Ali Tebbs, Jan de Vulder

**Community Secretary:** Roo Bull.

