

Cook Co-ordinator

Core Roles and Competences

Each long term Core member has a lead specialist role. The Cook Co-ordinator position is described below. There are also common and additional tasks (see Appendix 1). These may be rotated - some (e.g. hosting, office work 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.

Each lead role requires specific skills and experience. These are listed below the Key Responsibilities. Competences which are general and fundamental for all core members are again described in Appendix 1.

Overall Aim

Your overall aim as Cook Co-ordinator is to manage the provision of balanced, nourishing, tasty food for visitors and core. Food has a central place in the ethos of Othona, its preparation and eating a sacrament that all are encouraged to value and enjoy. Othona has a reputation for good home cooked food and the use of local or home grown produce where possible.

You will be responsible for cooking the two main meals, lunch and supper, for up to five days a week. Other core members will cook from time to time on a rota basis. Help is available in the kitchen from core members, local volunteers and visitors.

Key Responsibilities

1. Renew and improve Othona's menus, within agreed budgets and ethical guidelines.
2. Offer varied menus with a reasonable number of vegetarian main meals and a vegetarian alternative when meat or fish is served.
3. Manage cleaning and hygiene in the kitchen and storage areas, and of the utensils and equipment.
4. Manage stock, ordering and buying according to good practice, health and economy, avoiding wastage.
5. Co-ordinate the cooking and use of the kitchen, encouraging the safe and enjoyable participation of visitors, core colleagues and volunteers in cooking and related activities.
6. Manage the catering operation so that Othona meets its catering budget

Skills and Experience

1. Cooking and Catering

As Cook Co-ordinator you should

- have a love of cooking and of simple wholesome food.
- be a good basic cook able to make meals for small and large groups
- have good cooking skills and the ability to plan, prepare and serve homely meals through co-ordination of staff and volunteers who will help to prepare and cook the food
- be interested in nutrition and able to plan the menus balancing various criteria
- be capable of preparing and cooking for up to 60 adults and children

2. Managing Health, Hygiene and Safety in Kitchen and Storage areas

You will need to

- understand and implement good health, hygiene and safety practices in the kitchen, in your own work and that of other
- be prepared to supplement your qualifications beyond the basics of food hygiene, as agreed with the Warden
- be able to train others in appropriate cooking and cleaning skills and safe systems of work

3. Planning and organising

You will be responsible for planning and organising the work, equipment and systems in kitchen and storage areas, and ensuring the work gets done on time. The way you work will inevitably influence the atmosphere in kitchen and dining room. You must be able to

- identify key tasks, decide priorities and organise your workload
- involve and motivate less experienced people in the life of the kitchen
- create and maintain records to provide accurate information easily accessible to yourself and colleagues, using basic IT skills and acquiring new ones where appropriate
- stay calm and positive

4. Resilience

As the Cook Co-ordinator 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 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

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

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

Additional Tasks

The following tasks are usually allotted to core members for a period of time and then sometimes swapped. They allow you to pursue an area of interest in addition to your lead role:

- garden oversight
- librarian
- art room oversight
- verger (care of chapel and worship resources)

Common Competences for all Core Members

Commitment to the Work and Ethos of Othona

The core members are at the heart of the Othona Community. They need to be committed to the work of the community, its ethos and values. Core members 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 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 who we interact with. 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, 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.