



# Orchard Barn Volunteer Induction Pack



## Welcome to Orchard Barn!

Firstly, thank you for offering your time; Orchard Barn is the place of learning and enjoyment that it is today because of the time and input from people like yourself who have volunteered here since the beginning of the project in 2007.

This document provides you with the following information:-

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## 1. About us

Orchard Barn environmental education centre (OBee) is run by OBee Community Interest Company (CIC). OBee was started by Sarah Partridge and Peta Jane Gulliver and nine members in September 2007. Our registered office is 6 Webb Road, Stowmarket, Suffolk, UK, IP14 2BB, which is also the home of our company secretary Kevin Robinson. The CIC is registered in England and Wales.

### Mission statement:

‘We are a social enterprise specialising in using natural and traditional building projects as ways of bringing people together to learn.’

### Who we are:

Sarah Partridge is the Managing Director and Centre Manager, Nick Cooper became a Director in 2016. Carole Brown joined us as a Director in 2018 and Gemma Sayers in March 2019. Jez Gladwin has been our Treasurer since we started. Kevin Robinson took over being our Company Secretary in 2016 and Dave Finbow kindly takes the Minutes for us. We currently have 32 members. They vary between local people and those who travel further and who volunteer at Orchard Barn on a regular basis. The role of a member is to attend AGMs and confirm that OBee CIC has achieved its objectives for that year.

### Our legal constitution:

As our name indicates our overarching objective is one of Environmental Education. We exist in order to benefit the community of Suffolk and East Anglia. OBee CIC is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. More specifically we set out to provide environmental education through the objectives set out below. The Memorandum and Articles of OBee CIC are available online at Companies House [here](#) We are regulated by the [CIC Regulator](#) Our Company Registration Number is 6379982. Our 2015-17 annual reports are available to read on our website at <http://www.orchardbarn.org.uk/about>

### OBee CIC's objectives are

1. Provide environmentally sustainable indoor and outdoor facilities and structure Increase participation in heritage activities.
2. Increase participation in heritage activities
3. Provide opportunities for learning traditional skills through practical participation.
4. Employ, and encourage the use of, natural resources and organic techniques through education, communication of best practices and practical demonstration of uses.
5. Conserve and enhance the historic features of the local landscape, including traditional orchards.
6. Develop community-supported vegetable plots, orchards, and woodland.
7. Encourage existing wildlife, and aim to increase biodiversity, by improving the habitat of sites within the local community.
8. Provide increased access to, and opportunities for exercise in, green space that is close to the community.
9. Increase, through a holistic educational programme, community awareness and understanding of the effect the individual has on the environment – and the vital interconnectedness between the health of the environment and the health of the individual.

## Demonstrating self-reliance

Our aspiration is to show what can be achieved totally 'off the grid' in terms of water harvesting, energy generation and waste recycling. The site provides us with an ideal opportunity to do this. There are no mains connections. Currently we harvest rainwater off the main roof, and carry all potable water onto the site. We ask you to be mindful about water use and help us collect the 'grey water' for watering the vegetable plot. Our toilet facilities are 'basic by design'. By keeping the solids and liquids of human waste separate we can utilise both. There are 2 urinal areas – one standing, the other is in the accessible toilet where there are two chambers – one for liquids and the other solids. Please put sawdust in the chamber after use. Urine is used to activate compost heaps.

## Volunteer Co-Ordinator contact

Carole Brown [carole.orchardbarn@gmail.com](mailto:carole.orchardbarn@gmail.com) 07860810641

## 2. Volunteering at Orchard Barn

### Why volunteer for OBee? What we can offer you?

- ✧ Discover and/or re-discover traditional and practical skills
- ✧ Become aware and respect the cycle of nature by working outside and alongside the ever-changing elements
- ✧ Learn how to work effectively within a sustainable environment
- ✧ Awaken or discover recycling methods and ideas
- ✧ Improve your health and wellbeing all round – physical, mental and social
- ✧ Become aware of your own abilities and acknowledge your achievements
- ✧ Meet like-minded people and swap and share alternative ideas and methods

### Support, skills development, supervision and appraisal

Before any task is approached as mentioned before, time is given to contemplate and then to be shown and demonstrated the correct and most effective method for approaching and handling of suitable tool or tools needed for set task.

There will be guidance to enhance your skills enabling confidence and improvement as you develop your abilities.

There will always be someone on site in a supervision role to help and encourage you who will be willing to answer questions or any concerns you may have regarding any aspect of task.

We will be carrying out an annual review with our valued volunteers and we hope this will be of benefit to all.

## The role of volunteers within the social enterprise

Our social enterprise is run by volunteers.

Every volunteer will be respected and acknowledged for their individuality and diversities and OBee would ask that you, as the volunteer, would also acknowledge your co- volunteers with equal treatment.

All volunteers are given equal opportunities with acknowledgement of different diversities and abilities.

Most of the projects will be working within and alongside small groups, building on our team working development.

Treat those who we meet as you would like to be treated if you have any grievances or concerns please approach Sarah or one of the Directors - don't let it grow. All concerns will be treated with discretion and confidentially.

## When we meet and what we do

Weekly volunteer working parties are on Tuesdays (Gardening) Wednesdays (Conservation at Orchard Barn and once a month in local woodland) Thursdays (making things – mostly Greenwood). Monthly Saturdays (usually last in the month – please check [web site](#))

### Timing: 10am 4pm

There are breaks mid-morning and mid-afternoon with a lunch break but you can stop for a break in-between for a “breather” or “rest”, being mindful of those around you.

There can be other days or events when a volunteer may be offered the opportunity to take part with demonstrations or help on a stall such as a fete, exhibition or show. There may also be extra days or a change of a day due to a workshop or a demanding project; more information would be given on the role required of you at the time.

There are many routine things to be done, on a regular basis to keep OBee functioning. There are also some odd jobs required from time to time; these can vary week to week. OBee aim to keep you updated on a weekly basis via email or newsletters.

## An overview of the project and the site – Volunteer achievements

The site includes a 17<sup>th</sup> Century barn, traditional orchard, ponds and watercourses. Since the beginning in 2007, volunteers have come together to uncover, re-establish and renovate the building, orchard and large pond. We aim to use traditional techniques as much as possible and work mindfully of the nature surrounding us. During this time, volunteers have:

- ☀️ Stripped back much of the site
- ☀️ Uncovered the barn, replaced timbers and repaired the main timber frame of the barn timber through a series of timber frame repair courses
- ☀️ Constructed large compost heaps
- ☀️ Stomped and built two large cob walls and laid an accessible path to the main barn, also flint cobbles in our green woodworking area
- ☀️ Reconstructed the original C17th pitch roof with a hand-cut oak frame, and clad it with hand-cleft oak shingles (20,000 made on site – that's the work of 70 volunteers – not all at the same time over nine months)
- ☀️ Removed a concrete floor and made and laid a beaten earth floor
- ☀️ Constructed a water-free, composting toilet that is accessible by wheel chair users
- ☀️ Achieved [Permaculture LAND Centre](#). Completed the construction of our new tool shed
- ☀️ Built and planted raised vegetable plots
- ☀️ Completed a bike-powered generator to enable us to run power-point presentations / feed a leisure battery
- ☀️ Completed a rainwater harvesting system on the barn roof and in storage tanks for use in the vegetable garden.
- ☀️ Completed seating for the indoor teaching area using home-grown greenwood
- ☀️ Constructed deadwood screens for both privacy and weather protection
- ☀️ Renovated the pond (removing 150 tons of silt and other treasures)
- ☀️ Almost completed the Volunteer Snug
- ☀️ Constructed accessible pathway from the parking bay to the toilet
- ☀️ Constructed a deadwood screen to provide weather protection for greenwood working area
- ☀️ Re-instated a vernacular cart lodge from Roundwood with a shingle roof – to be used as a Craft Barn

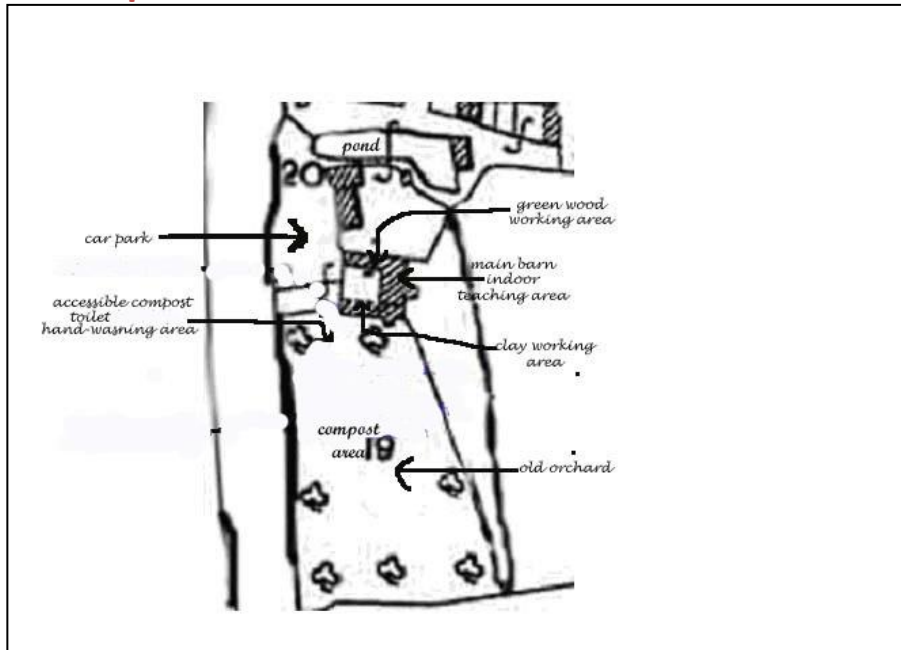
## Future plans

OBee volunteers are always full of new ideas. In the coming year we aim to:

- ☀️ Continue to renovate the old orchard trees (autumn/winter) and let more light in by selective pruning (autumn/winter)

- ☼ General ongoing conservation work
- ☼ Continue with the re-instatement of the 1580 timber frame to the south of the main barn
- ☼ Create a warm, weatherproof Meeting Room in the north end of main barn
- ☼ Develop range of rural craft courses

### 3. Map of the site



### Some health and safety rules

Please work in a mindful way at all times for the safety of yourself and others. Some points to remember:

- ☼ Be careful when lifting. Use your knees. If in doubt - avoid lifting heavy objects.
- ☼ Be aware of potential hazards and do your best to minimise them e.g. do not leave tools lying around, use tools correctly
- ☼ A First Aid kit is available in the back of the barn under the dinner bell
- ☼ No smoking anywhere on site apart from designated smoking area at the paved parking spaces.

## Fire procedure

In the event of an unscheduled fire please raise the alarm by repeatedly blowing the whistle (on the tool shed wall near door to yard) loudly, at least six times. Leave the building and congregate in the disabled parking bay. Appointed Fire Officer to assess the situation and either use sand to put fire out, or if serious call 999. Ensure all volunteers and/or trainees that day are accounted for.

- ☼ Fire buckets containing sand are available near main barn doors
- ☼ Fire practices held monthly

## Personal safety equipment

Please bring and wear the following:

- ☼ Steel toe-cap safety boots or strong boots (we also have spare we can lend you whilst you are volunteering at OBee)
- ☼ Warm clothing
- ☼ Waterproof jacket

We can provide gloves and safety glasses, although you may prefer to bring your own. We also can provide you with a dust mask – which must be used for sheet mulching with sawdust.

## Insurance

All registered volunteers are covered by an insurance policy whilst working as OBee Volunteers. We are insured via Zurich, a reputable company.

**First Aid kit and Accident Report book in back of barn – all accidents must be recorded.**

## In an emergency

First Aiders: **Sarah 07766-054042**

## In case of immediate health care

Ipswich A&E, Heath Road, Ipswich. IP4 5PD

NHS non-emergency service - call 111. It's available from 6.30pm to 8.00am.

**In an emergency dial 999**

## Route to nearest Accident and Emergency Hospital:

Right out of Orchard Barn gate. First right down Mill Road. Right at T junction. Down Battisford Straight. Turn right at end. Down Valley Road till end, turn right. Follow road into Barking. Turn left. Needham Market Health Centre is on left in approx 2 miles. To Ipswich A&E, take 2nd right after Needham HC. At

staggered junction turn right and immediately left. Turn right at next junction, go under low railway bridge. Follow road to A14 and take Ipswich turning. Follow signs to A&E hospital POST CODE IP4 5PD

**Location of teaching venue:**

Orchard Barn, Bildeston Road, Ringshall, Suffolk IP14 2LY (located on the southern outskirts of Battisford, NOT in main part of Ringshall village).

From Battisford, go to end of Mill Road and turn left.

Orchard Barn is on left just after entering the parish of Ringshall.

GPS Latitude 52.141526N - Longitude .949617E



## Guidelines for working on site

Topic	Rationale	Rewards
<b>Water</b> – Use minimum amount for hand washing and put grey water into grey water filtration unit adjacent to outside hand washing area for watering the vegetable garden or newly planted trees. Use a minimum amount for watering plants	Increases our awareness of how we use water, and helps us modify our usage. Vegetables need water. Helps root systems dig deep for water rather than surface water.	Ensure adequacy of future water supply.
<b>Fires</b> – Use small dry sticks and dry shavings in the Kelly Kettle for boiling water.	Makes good use of our small sticks and wood shavings	Generates hot water for tea and hand washing if needed.
<b>Wood burner</b> – when cold, please keep stoked up with small dry logs. Replace with logs from seasoned wood store, split as necessary. Part-fill kettle and place on top of stove. Ensure fire is burnt down before leaving site.	Ensures dry supply of split logs. To provide hot water for drinks/hand washing	Warm place for break times. Hot water from kettle.
<b>Prunings</b> - Thick stuff - trim off side branches and put to one side for green wood project	We construct furniture and other items out of interestingly shaped wood	Giving a second life to trees – embodied carbon
<b>Prunings</b> – Medium sized – remove side growth and stack for future use in deadwood screen.	Uses brash-wood for temporary constructions/screening areas	Useful source of building material
<b>Prunings</b> – twiggy – gather up in bundles and pack into deadwood screens	Makes screen more compact – fill in gaps if privacy is required	Makes creative use of abundant resource
<b>Ground clearing</b> – Put collected weeds straight into compost heap area	Keeps site clear, and saves work later. Teaches us the value of processing stuff as we go along!	Someone doesn't have to collect it later! Provides absorbent material to collect urine for activator for compost heap
<b>Compost heap</b> – Keep heap as squared-off as possible. As far as possible build using layers of greenery, drier twiggy stuff, and urine soaked weeds/sawdust, in sequence.	Keeping it square increases the capacity of the heap. Improves speed and quality of composting.	Great plant food for the future!
<b>Hand tools</b> – Use hand tools rather than power tools wherever possible.	Less noise pollution. No mains energy on site! Experience the journey of “doing” rather than “arriving”. Increased mindfulness.	No need for ear defenders, thereby making it easier to work with others rather than in isolation. Energy saving Less stress Greater accuracy

	Greater connection with the materials you are working.	The discovery that hand tools are very effective. Stronger muscles and increased fitness. Green gym exercise! [same as above reward Increased satisfaction. Development of skills.
<b>Care of hand tools</b> – After use, please clean the tools you have used, and return them to the shed.	Avoids loss of tools, and makes them last longer.	Safety, economy, efficiency. Respect for tools.
<b>Team work</b> - Collaborate with others rather than work alone	We can create much more together than individually. Greater communication. More community spirit. More connection with each other.	Development and recognition of strengths. Opportunities (if wished) to address difficulties. Builds community. Looking after each other (physically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually).
<b>Before starting a task</b> , take a few moments to be quiet. Try and get a sense of the history of the place, the land, and trees and how things would have been undertaken in the past. If you are cutting back trees or shrubs, you might like to explain (silently) to them why you are undertaking the task in hand.	Respects and enhances our interconnectedness with nature and the traditional approach. Increases awareness of all levels of life.	Increased respect for nature, land and place. Increased enjoyment and connection with self and nature.

## 4. Getting to Orchard Barn

### **Bildeston Road, Far Ringshall, (adjacent to Battisford), Suffolk, IP14 2LY**

Leave the A14 at J51 Coddendam junction (the junction where the A140 heads north to Norwich). Follow the B1078 to Needham Market (it won't be signed to Needham, but will tell there's a very low bridge with a height restriction). Before you get into Needham, you'll go past the Vets on your right, then Needham Lakes, then you go under the low bridge.

Turn immediately LEFT, then at staggered crossroads go RIGHT and immediately LEFT.

At T junction, go LEFT. Follow B1078 out of Needham for about 2 miles, just as you come into Barking watch out for Barking Forge on your left. Take the RIGHT opposite the forge (signed Battisford), follow road for another couple of miles and take LEFT down Valley Road.

At end of Valley Road, turn LEFT into Battisford Straight Road and follow the road about a mile till Mill Road is on your left (by pink thatched cottage, just before Punch Bowl pub).

Turn LEFT down Mill Road and continue to T junction. Turn LEFT, and about 200 yards later you'll come into Ringshall. Orchard Barn is a further 200 yards, on the left, opposite the large concrete pad.

Parking is either on the concrete pad opposite (please take care not to block entrances to fields) or in our car park.

Please do not park, or pull into the lane at Nine Elms Farm as this is in constant use by farm machinery.

If you are lost, please call our mobile number 07766 054 042 (it's not great reception)

**Sharing lifts is encouraged**

Please ask Sarah if you need a lift

**Bus stops:**

Battisford and the school side of Ringshall (approx. 3 miles from Orchard Barn)

**Directions:** [Google Maps](#)