

## Life at Sturts Farm

### *Welcome to Sturts Community Trust*

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In order for you to consider your application to work at Sturts Community Trust please read the following information about our approach to living and working with each other;



There are many Camphill communities in countries all over the world, and each one is unique. What unites them all is the way people live and work together. The inspiration for this stems from Anthroposophy, a philosophy founded by Rudolf Steiner, which emphasises each human being's potential for personal development and for working towards social goals.

Sturts Community Trust has four distinct activities based at Sturts Farm;

- Social Care Supported Living of Adults with Learning Difficulties
- Social Enterprise Biodynamic Farm and Day Service
- Education Training and Development
- Co-housing An Intentional Community

As a co-worker living separately from the Co-Housing Community sensitivity and respect for the ethos of Camphill ideals and Community Building is essential for the well-being of our organisation. These aspects are taken up in greater detail during Induction.

### *The Companions*

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The adults with learning difficulties in Sturts Farm are known as companions. They need to be able to relate to you as a fellow human being to whom they can look for support, and they have the fundamental right to be treated with equality and respect. Together we strive to create an environment in which each one can achieve their full potential with a high degree of independence and at the same time contribute in a meaningful way to the well-being of the whole community.

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## *The Live-In Co-workers*

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It is important that you are aware of the different lifestyle of a waged co-worker from a trainee or vocational co-worker. In keeping with the original impulse of Camphill, this group of individuals regard their work/life here as the sharing of a *co-operative lifestyle* and not simply as a fixed set of duties with a time limit.

You will work alongside a group of short-term trainee co-workers who arrive at different times during the year and typically stay between half a year and a year. These are usually young people of different nationality on a gap year experience who have chosen to experience life within a Camphill Community. They typically share a home with Companions or are 'attached' to a household. Although they spend part of their experience within the Adult Social Care Supportive Living Service - and will therefore appear on the house staffing list - it is important to understand the holistic nature of their time with us which aren't governed by a normal working week of 37.5hrs. As with the Companions they are part of an overall Time Table which includes opportunities within the Social Enterprise and to participate in the spiritual and cultural life of the Co-Housing. Hence they come to share in a holistic co-operative lifestyle within the working, cultural and social life of the community.

Each Co-Worker has a portion of the day as free time - either a morning, afternoon or evening - and one free day weekly. They receive pocket monies and board and lodging and a holiday allowance. Some chose to stay on and participate in the biodynamic apprenticeship or to complete an NVQ 3. In their second year they receive an allowance and have 2 free days weekly. Should they wish to continue their commitment beyond the 2<sup>nd</sup> year they may be offered a waged position.

We are proud and committed to continue to support young people to experience a traditional Camphill Community Life and it is essential that waged co-workers are interested and respectful of this.

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## *Home Life*

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We all recognise that having a home is central to our lives by giving security, a sense of belonging and companionship. Every member of each household accepts a share of responsibility for keeping the house clean and tidy, yet also warm and welcoming.



Therefore, in your role of supporting companions you will be part of a team which assists them in managing their independence, social and leisure activities, as well as routine homecare and homemaking plus gardening.

In a therapeutic setting like Sturts Farm it is not always what we do,

but the way we do it that counts. The care and joy with which we carry out the smallest task is always 'felt' by the house and all those who live in it.

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### *Social And Cultural Life*

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Our everyday life together is shaped by the wish to be part of a life-sharing Co-housing community on the one hand, and to express ourselves as individuals on the other. The balance between the two is something we all work with and negotiate every day.



The social and cultural life is a very important part of our existence at Sturts Farm. Celebrating social occasions such as birthdays, sharing Festivals, listening to an inspiring talk, taking part in choir practice or play rehearsals or having a wheelbarrow race at a sports day are enriching, community-building experiences, and they also nourish our souls and live in us for a long time.

These occasions enable us to re-ignite the enthusiasm for community living and create the willingness to contribute to it time and everyday encounters fall into this village green, teabreaks together,



time again. But also our category - the chat on the outings with friends.

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### *Work, Rhythms And Routines*

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The structure of Sturts Farm allows us to have order, rhythm and routine in our lives. It is regarded in our model of care as being important for us all to have a healthy rhythm and a distinction between the activities of work, leisure and rest. The pattern of our working day, with the time to stop for tea break, gives us the opportunity to experience this rhythm. By having a programme each week it gives us a routine, with the knowledge and security of what is to come, what is to look forward to and prepare for. It also offers the Companions the opportunity to experience citizenship and responsibility. This is regarded as a necessary step towards an experience of 'self' from which the ability to make choice is formed.

'Work' fulfils our need to be active and 'matter', have something meaningful to do and experience the world through an activity. It brings us together, lets us be creative and enables us to build relationships and community. The principle focuses of our work in Sturts Farm are our homes and the land-based workshops.



The work done in the houses and the 'art of homemaking' aims to create a space which is enjoyable and comfortable for us to live in; places which enhances everyone's health and vitality and aids our social development. It encompasses providing meals, preparing for functions, keeping rooms clean and tidy, washing laundry, but also baking birthday cakes, putting fresh flowers on the table ect.

There are three land-based workshops at with the biodynamic impulse. There is the farm agricultural crops and different animals, which of the year. A lot of food for us and for sale milk, cheese, yogurt and eggs.



Sturts Farm, all three working itself, a mixed farm with need looking after every day comes from the farm - meat,

The garden workshop is a big market garden, where large amounts of vegetables throughout the year and some fruit for us and for sale to our neighbouring communities are produced. A forestry workshop produces firewood for the houses from our own woodland. Our involvement with the land allows us to experience the rhythms of the seasons and of nature.

A food processing workshop enables different companions to practice their cooking skills and become aware of the importance of nutrition. This is done in connection with the biodynamic impulse and is a natural conclusion to the work on the farm. The food we grow ends up on our tables.

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### *A Typical Day*

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Mondays to Fridays are typically structured like this:

- 7.30am Breakfast followed by washing-up
- 8.45am Morning Gathering in the Clubhouse each Monday
- 9.00am Workshop time
- 10.45am Tea break
- 11.00am Workshops continue until 12.45pm
- 1.00pm Lunch in the houses,
- 2pm Work starts again
- 3.45pm Tea break
- 4.00pm Workshops continue until 5.00pm
- 6.00pm Supper in the houses, followed by washing-up
- 7.30pm Various evening activities; friendship groups/study groups/play rehearsals.

The bell on the village green work and is rung just before and lunch time, after rest hour usually rung by one of the



signals the beginning or end of morning gathering, at tea break and at the end of the day. It is companions.

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### *Meal Times And Graces*

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Our three main meals are taken together in our houses each day. They are regarded as important social occasions for everyone, and an opportunity for conversation. Therefore efforts are made to allow one person at a time to speak, and each to take part by encouraging listening and reflection. We start each meal with lighting a candle and singing or saying a grace in appreciation of the food set before us and of the hard work growing and preparing it.

At the end of the meal we say "Thank you for the meal" and put out the candle in a contemplative and quiet manner.

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### *Saturdays*

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Saturday follows a different rhythm than the rest of the working week. For part of the day, most people are involved with cleaning and tidying their homes and gardens. Companions also have the opportunity to practice their independence and life skills by going on foot or by bike to West Moors village and doing their weekly shopping, going to the post office and visiting the café or the pub. Co-workers support these outings as much as necessary. There are also shopping excursions by car to local towns, again with co-worker support.



Some people are involved with the farm routine, milking, feeding and bedding up. There may be a traditional 'Bible Evening' in one of the houses or an outing to a concert, cinema or theatre.

## *Sunday - Day Of Rest*

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in the area.

Some Companions and co-workers go either to a local church or we may have an Offering Service in our Club House. Sunday is also the free day for the companions and a well-deserved day of rest and relaxation. Of course the farm routines including milking still need attending to. It is a good day for outings with all members of the house or on an individual basis, and your initiative in organising excursions and events is welcome. There is a lot to see and discover

## *Festivals*

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The celebration of the Christian Festivals is an important part of life in our community. You are not expected to follow the Christian Faith, but it is essential that you have the openness and goodwill to support and participate in the festivals, which are intended to help us experience the year together in a harmonious and conscious way.



Shepherd's Play

These are the special days and times we celebrate together:

- Michaelmas Time - 29<sup>th</sup> September onwards
- Martinmas - 11<sup>th</sup> November
- Advent - starting fourth Sunday before Christmas
- Christmas & Holy Nights - 24<sup>th</sup> December up to Three Kings' Day on 6th January
- Candlemas - 2<sup>nd</sup> February
- Holy Week & Easter - no fixed dates; depending on first full moon after the Spring Equinox
- Ascension - forty days after Easter Sunday
- Whitsun - fifty days after Easter Sunday
- St. John's Day - 24<sup>th</sup> June