

Being Peace Centre Director

Position Overview

Location: Being Peace Centre, Abenhall, Gloucestershire

Employment Type: Full-time, 5 days/week

Salary: £43,000 to £49,140 per annum, based on experience

Contract & Duration: 2 years initial contract, with possibility of extension

Start Date: November 2025 to start of January 2026 according to candidate availability (earlier preferred)

Application Deadline: 21st October 2025 (12 noon)

About Being Peace Centre

Being Peace Centre is a new mindfulness practice centre founded by Plum Village UK in the tradition of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh. Located on a beautiful historic farm in Abenhall, Gloucestershire, the centre will provide a peaceful environment for retreats and mindfulness practice throughout the year.

The centre will accommodate:

- 30+ residential guests year round
- Visiting teachers throughout the year
- The potential to grow this number to 60+ guests over the coming years
- A resident lay community of 6-8 people
- Working volunteers and regular local volunteers
- A sustainable "Happy Farm" mindful organic growing space, developing over the coming years.
- Walking meditation paths and dedicated practice spaces

Our vision is to create a vibrant, inclusive community where people from all backgrounds can experience the transformative power of mindfulness practice in the Plum Village tradition.

Role Purpose

As Centre Director, you will provide leadership and operational management for this exciting new project during its critical establishment phase. Working collaboratively with the Plum Village UK Trustees, resident community, dharma teachers and visiting monastics, you will help bring this vision to life and ensure the centre's long-term sustainability.

This is a unique opportunity to help shape the foundation and culture of a significant new Buddhist centre in the UK, combining practical management skills with deep alignment to mindfulness principles.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Work with Plum Village UK Trustees to establish and implement the strategic vision for the centre
- Develop operational plans and policies to support the centre's mission and values
- Provide regular reporting to trustees on centre operations, finances and development
- Identify opportunities for growth and sustainability while maintaining alignment with Plum Village traditions

Operational Management

- Oversee day-to-day centre operations including accommodation, catering, programming, and facilities
- Develop and manage annual budgets and financial reporting systems
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation including health and safety, safeguarding, employment law, and data protection
- Oversee procurement processes and supplier relationships
- Implement environmentally sustainable practices across all centre operations
- Oversee the maintenance and development of buildings and grounds
- Oversee retreat registration and booking systems

Team Leadership

- Recruit, manage, and develop the core centre team including paid staff and regular volunteers with support of the Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator
- Work in close partnership with the Community Practice Mentor to support the wellbeing of the Resident Community
- Support the Community Practice Mentor's stewardship of the community and practice environment in-between visiting teacher-led retreats
- Create a harmonious working environment that embodies Plum Village practices
- Establish clear roles, responsibilities, and communication channels
- Oversee staff schedules, training, and performance development
- Lead by example in integrating mindfulness practice into daily work

Community Building

- Serve as an ambassador for the centre within the local community
- Work with the Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator to build relationships with diverse communities and to develop positive relationships with neighbours, local businesses, and relevant organisations
- Support the integration of visiting monastics during their stay
- Handle sensitive situations with diplomacy and compassion

Program Development

- Work with the Program Coordinator to develop and deliver a balanced retreat schedule

Person Specification

Essential Qualifications and Experience

- Experience successfully leading and developing diverse teams
- Excellent organisational and project management skills
- Strong interpersonal and communication abilities
- Familiarity with Plum Village tradition or other Buddhist tradition
- Demonstrable commitment to the values and practices of Plum Village
- Proven track record in management and/or hospitality
- Financial management experience including budget preparation and monitoring
- Experience working with volunteers and community groups
- Adaptability and resilience in a startup environment

Essential Personal Qualities

- Ability to embody mindfulness in daily actions and interactions
- Commitment to inclusive leadership and community building, knowledge and commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion principles
- Excellent problem-solving skills and practical approach
- Capacity to work collaboratively and make decisions by consensus
- Strong emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills
- Resilience and capacity to manage multiple priorities
- Personal alignment with ecological and sustainable living principles
- Willingness to relocate to the centre or its locality

Desirable Qualifications and Experience

- Previous experience in a spiritual community context
- Experience with sustainable building and land management
- Experience with mindfulness teaching or facilitation
- Relevant professional qualifications in management, hospitality, or community development
- Knowledge of UK regulatory requirements for residential facilities

Working Arrangements

Compensation and Benefits

- Salary: £43,000-£49,140 per annum
- Accommodation: Option to live on site for up to one year at start of role (with commensurate salary reduction of £1000 per month in exchange for accommodation in a single room and board) or to live locally
- Pension: Real Living Pension scheme (7% employer contribution, 5% employee contribution)
- Sick Pay: 4 weeks per year at full pay, then statutory sick pay

- Annual Leave: 25 days paid holiday plus bank holidays
- Meals: Provided when working during meal times (full-board if resident on site)
- Practice: Dedicated time for mindfulness practice within work schedule and monthly sessions with Community Practice Mentor and expectation to join in the rhythm of centre practice.

Working Pattern

- 5 days per week (37.5 hours)
- Occasional flexibility required for evening and weekend work during retreats
- Core hours to be agreed based on centre needs

Reporting Structure

- Reports to: Plum Village UK Trustees
- Direct reports: Assistant Centre Director, Maintenance Contractor, Kitchen Contractors, Programme Coordinator, Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator.
- Works closely with: Community Practice Mentor, visiting Dharma Teachers, Monastics, Resident Community, Work Retreatants

Application Process

How to Apply

Please submit the following to roles@plumvillage.uk by 12 noon on 21st October 2025:

1. Comprehensive CV highlighting relevant experience
2. Cover letter (maximum 2 pages) explaining your interest in the role and how your experience and values align with the position, in particular referencing each of the Person Specification criteria and how you meet them.
3. Names and contact details of two professional references

Selection Timeline

- Application deadline: 21 Oct 2025 (12 noon)
- Interview dates: TBC
- Start date: November 2025 to start of January 2026 (earlier preferred)

Plum Village UK is committed to being a diverse and inclusive community. We welcome inquiries and applications from all suitably experienced individuals regardless of age, disability, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, relationship status and neurodiversity. An enhanced DBS check will be applied.

For further information about the Being Peace Centre please visit www.beingpeace.uk. If you need any clarification, support, or alternative methods to complete your application, please don't hesitate to contact us at roles@plumvillage.uk. We're here to help.