

Resident Community Member

Location: Being Peace Centre, Abenhall, Gloucestershire

Start Date: W/c 5th of January 2026

Application Deadline: 7 November 2025 (midnight)

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, varying week-to-week
- 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.

Volunteer Role Overview

The resident community is a selected group of Plum Village practitioners living at Being Peace Centre and providing a continuous collective energy of practice on the site, while helping with the running of the centre. Community Members will join retreats as well as create a harmonious community together. The onsite Community will be made of six people initially, staying for a duration of up to two years. New intake will occur three times a year once the Community is up and running (in January, May and September). The next intake is expected to be in September 2026 with some community members for this first intake only staying 8 months.

Community Members will undertake four-month work rotations, each spending time in the following areas: resident household, office, kitchen and maintenance roles. We are seeking expertise in gardening for one role which will focus on gardening for a year. All applicants (except for those applying for the garden role) need to be able and willing to do each of the

work rotation roles. Every four months there will be a rotation of roles based on the preference, skills and needs of the community. Each resident will have a week off from their work every six weeks, and will have various supports, including spiritual guidance, in place during their time at Being Peace (see below).

The roles are as follows:

- Garden (one person)
- Household and office (two people) - supporting the office team and taking care of household
- Kitchen (one person) - supporting the part-time chefs in the kitchen, and making breakfast
- Maintenance (one person) - supporting the part-time maintenance coordinator in caring for the physical spaces in the Centre
- Flexible role (one person) - covering other roles while people are on leave

A Community Practice Mentor will support the Resident Community and help hold the practice energy of Being Peace Practice Centre.

Key Responsibilities

- Participate in daily practice life at the Being Peace Centre
- Rota of working in the house, office or kitchen, rotating every four months (with the exception of one community member specifically working in the garden)
- Supporting retreats and retreatants
- Together with other retreat coordinators and staff in creating an environment of emotional safety and meditative inquiry for all
- Assist in whatever tasks need to be done to achieve harmonious living for all
- Offering a quality of presence and your practice of mindfulness

Resident Community Member Support

Living in community comes with its joys and challenges for even the most seasoned practitioner. We are committed to putting in support mechanisms to help all on site and are taking much learning from our friends at other Plum Village Centres around the world and other retreat centres in the UK with a residential community. However these are new roles, within a new Practice Centre, and we will be operating under an atmosphere of continuous learning and improvement.

Some of the benefits of being a Resident Community Member include:

- Training in a variety of areas including first aid, food hygiene, racial awareness, Plum Village practice and facilitation skills
- A retreat in January 2025 with Michael Schwammberger to open their stay. This will help foster practice alignment, build strong relationships, and develop a shared understanding of how the site will function.
- Weekly sangha meetings to support the connect and harmony of the community
- Monthly Beginning Anew sessions
- Bi-weekly 1:1 with Community Practice Mentor
- Monthly Dharma teachings to deepen Buddhist practice and understanding
- Support in conflict resolution from Community Practice Mentor
- Access to the land and estate for walks / nature connection
- Opportunity to attend retreats onsite during any weeks off

Person Specification

Essential Qualifications and Experience

- Skills at living in community (such as exceptional communication, empathy, ability to let go of opinions, emotional intelligence, teamwork, adaptability, conflict resolution, cultural awareness, sense of responsibility and leadership skills)
- Commitment to, and experience in, Plum Village practice
- Commitment to ecologically sustainable ways of living
- As a group, representative of the diversity of the UK practice community
- Ability to do the work necessary, including office admin, house cleaning, supporting retreatants, working in the kitchen and a willingness to turn their hand to other jobs that need to be done to support harmonious living
- For the garden lead, strong skills in gardening
- Experience of mindfulness or Buddhist retreats
- Can work harmoniously in a team
- Good physical and mental health

Essential Personal Qualities

- Self-awareness and emotional intelligence, particularly in terms of recognising one's own emotions and how these emotions may affect others
- Calm, problem-solving and able to apply own initiative
- Basic skills in either gardening, DIY/maintenance, administration or IT
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Teamwork skills and a willingness to live in community and practice equanimity towards others

- An interest in people, including skills in active listening and empathy, in addition to a sense of curiosity and open-mindedness
- Willingness to learn and ability to self-reflect
- Appreciation of nature
- Respect for diversity and commitment to volunteering with diverse populations

Desirable Qualifications and Experience

- Experience working with volunteers and community groups
- Experience living in community
- A UK/EU driving licence for manual transmission with fewer than three points

Volunteer Commitment

This is a voluntary role and as such there is no contract between the Being Peace Centre and the individual Resident Community Members. The Being Peace Centre asks prospective volunteers to make a commitment to the role for at least 8 months but the individual is free at any time to end their volunteering.

Accommodation and support

- Free accommodation: Onsite, typically in gender-separated shared rooms (3-4 people per room) in a private area of the Retreat Centre. Alternative accommodation may be requested for those with essential needs related to gender identity, health, or safety. We can not accommodate personal preference alone. Sharing a room is an essential part of the Plum Village practice, living together lets us learn from others and support each other on the path of practice, it helps us to build sangha and practice ‘interbeing’.
- The facilities do not allow for pets of any kind.
- A weekly stipend of £50 (to be used as you wish)
- Meals: Free full board (food will be prepared during retreats and provided for self-cooking in-between retreat times)

Retreat Pattern

- Once up and running, the Centre will host retreats most weekends and some weekdays.
- The week will follow a practice schedule led by the Community Practice Mentor, with scheduled time for working meditation.
- There will generally be one lazy day each week.

- Week off rota-ed in every six weeks, during this time you are welcome to stay in the community and continue your practice, or leave to connect with loved ones or take care of needs not met while living at Being Peace.

Application Process

The recruitment process for these volunteer roles will focus on **mutual discernment**: helping candidates explore whether the commitment is right for you, and whether you are well-suited to the rhythms of life at the centre.

Volunteer application process:

1. Fill in an [application form](#) as thoroughly as possible and send it along with a CV, detailing relevant work and life experiences to roles@plumvillage.uk by 7 November (midnight).
2. We will hold an informational webinar on 28th October at 7pm to share more about the role. Please keep in touch via our newsletter to find out more.
3. A limited number of applicants will be invited to join a discernment weekend in person, likely to be the weekend from 28th-30th November. This is an opportunity for you to visit the site, to spend two nights there alongside other potential residents to explore whether this really is something you want to commit to.
4. If your application is successful, we'll agree dates and invite you to join the resident community, with the aim that the team will start on the w/c 5th January 2026 with a team retreat. It may also be that due to seeking a balance and diversity in the team that we invite you to join us at a later intake date.
 - We recognise that the start date is sooner than will be ideal for some on this occasion. As this volunteer role follows an annual cycle, we will be recruiting Resident Community Members several times each year, so there will be future opportunities to apply if the timing isn't right this time.
5. Because this role may engage with vulnerable adults, any offer of volunteering is conditional on receipt of a satisfactory enhanced DBS check.
6. There will be an 8-week probationary period, after which your period of service is confirmed. We will offer support and feedback throughout this period through 1:1 meetings

Plum Village UK is committed to building a diverse and inclusive community. We encourage applications from all qualified individuals regardless of age, disability, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.

For further information about the Being Peace Centre and this role, please visit www.beingpeace.uk or contact roles@plumvillage.uk.