

Background Information

To tell you a bit about Braziers - the official title is Braziers Park School of Integrative Social Research - it is a non profit organisation set up in 1950 to explore group dynamics and particularly how people can work together in harmony, whilst becoming more aware and more conscious both individually and as a group. This focus arose following two world wars and concerns about the future of humanity. Braziers was set up to do research into human dynamics and act as a kind of 'living experiment' of various theories and influences about how humans interact with each other and the living world. Continuing the ideas of our founder, Norman Glaister, we aspire to develop conscious co-existence, understand our place in nature and take constructive action in the world.

Accountability is to the Committee of Management (CoM), who act on behalf of the Members of the Society in collaboration and consultation with the resident Community.

We are currently working towards environmental sustainability with organic and Permaculture farming, mainly vegetarian food, home reared, organically produced meat & eggs, local and fairtrade provisions, ecological cleaning products and toiletries, renewable energy, sustainably managed woodland and pastures.

Braziers has a legal structure very similar to a charity with an elected Committee of Management (CoM) of 7 people who are effectively the Trustees representing the Membership. Interested people can become Associates and may then be invited to become an Active Associate and eventually a Member of the Society – most of whom do not live in the resident community. We live in a large country house and several cottages set in 55 acres of land in south Oxfordshire that has been owned by the organisation since 1950.

At present there are around 14 people in the community plus volunteers who run the house and grounds. Funds are raised by taking external bookings for courses and for this we use 15 guest bedrooms in the main house, housing up to 28 guests, with bookings most weekends (Friday to Sunday) as well as some midweek visitors and large camping events in summer. Most of the courses fall into the categories of arts and crafts, green/eco issues and human development.

Most people here are working in the community (25 hours per week) and exchange work for bed and board. After a successful trial period, there may also be the option to work additional 3 hours a week for £8/h.

We also have a volunteer programme and volunteers from the UK and overseas stay for periods of between two weeks and two months. Our day to day work covers areas of organic gardening, caring for animals (sheep, chickens and pigs), buildings maintenance, cooking, cleaning, house care, land management and community and bookings administration.

Decision making is currently done through 'Sub-Ex' our Thursday decision making meeting which is also informed by the Wednesday community 'sensory' meeting and the monthly CoM (Committee of management) meetings.

You can find more information about the history, 'sensory executive process' and some of our 'research communications' on our website. There are also archives in the library.

Assessment and selection procedure

- 1) At the first stage, applications will be assessed and a short list drawn up. The assessment will be based on answers to the questions in the application form. You may include your CV separately if you wish to do so, but please complete the application form fully and use the person specification to provide us with some insight as to how you feel you could meet each requirement.
- 2) We endeavour to respond to all applications whether shortlisted or not but it is not always possible with the resources we have. If you don't hear from us within 10 days of submitting an application form then unfortunately, you haven't been successful on this occasion. You may like to apply to volunteer instead (application form from volunteers@braziers.org.uk) or keep an eye on vacancies in the future.
- 3) Applicants will be invited on an initial short visit of 2/3 days to get to know each other a little – up to 3 of these applicants may be invited back on a longer visit of 10-14 days with a chance to work in the role applied for as well as taking part in general community life. When all shortlisted applicants have completed the process, the community will meet to decide which applicant should be offered a 3 month trial.
- 4) If you are offered a place, please be aware that you will be invited to live and work here on an initial three month trial basis. This will involve ongoing assessment by the community of how you respond to community life. You will have the opportunity to learn your job and get to know the community and there will be an induction and training period to take account of this. We currently have the status of employees of the Society.
- 5) Living and working at Braziers as a community member means more than simply doing your job well. You will be expected to take a full part in community life, relevant meetings and to assist in areas of work that are outside the specific duties of your post. In particular, all community members contribute a minimum of 8 hours per week towards general cleaning and upkeep, food preparation and hosting of guests. The hours of work referred to for each post includes these 8 unpaid hours. See below under terms and conditions for details of how this is worked out.
- 6) The remuneration equates to full board and keep. This includes all meals, your own room, all heating and energy costs, laundry, council tax, TV licence and use of the house and grounds.

Terms and Conditions

- 1) The post is 25 hours per week, including the 8 'unpaid' community contribution hours. The nominal rate of pay is £8 per hour. Therefore, if you work for 25 hours per week, you will be paid at a rate of £8/hour for 17 hours. In practice, if you work 25 hours over three and a half days this equates to full bed and board and no cash.
- 2) After 3 months if you are accepted as a resident there may be an option to work an extra 3 hours a week for cash payment (£24) but this is not guaranteed.
- 3) You may take part time outside employment by agreement with the community if it does not impact on your role and responsibilities at Braziers Park.
- 4) There are various policies in place e.g. conduct, grievance, environmental which must be followed.
- 5) You are entitled to 1 weeks' 'paid' holiday during the trial period. Employees are entitled to 6 weeks per annum including all bank holidays which must be booked.
- 6) Residents' Friends & Family (F&F) may be invited to stay when there is space at special rates (see policy).
- 7) Residents may sometimes be able to take up vacant places on courses held at Braziers at reduced rates or free of charge (see events programme on www.braziers.org.uk)

General expectations

Community members accept their part in the collective responsibility for the overall health of the community. This latter includes helping to provide cover (i.e. presence in the Main House and welcoming guests), continuity (i.e. carrying forward agreed plans and directions), and working within agreements.

- Working in collaboration with other community members.
- Sharing in the daily tasks of the resident community (cooking, cleaning, coordinating, etc.)
- Sharing the responsibility for making guests, volunteers and visitors welcome.
- Attending all required meetings and participating in the 'Sensory-Executive Method' that informs decision-taking within the Society.
- Helping to manifest the purposes of Braziers Park School of Integrative Social Research by engaging in study and research, and supporting others to do so.