



**encompass** TRAINING



## Great Potheridge House

Information booklet  
for  
Teachers and Leaders  
Great Potheridge House, Merton,  
Okehampton, Devon, EX20 3DN

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## **(1) Welcome to Encompass Training**

Welcome to Encompass Training, based at the grade 1 Great Potheridge House, in the heart of rural Devon. Set in 6 acres of land, with no near neighbours, Great Potheridge is a fantastic location for a truly amazing and rewarding outdoor educational experience. This booklet is aimed at helping with information you may need for your residential.

At this centre it is our mission to provide a quality programme that offers a rewarding adventure activity experience for both children and adults, with an aim of providing a challenging, safe, fun and educational experience in the outdoors.

We positively encourage everyone to have ago at all of the activities, allowing them to test themselves and their limits.

We also aim to help children and young people in the development of both their individual and team working skills, thus improving their ability to communicate their own ideas and listen to the ideas of others. We believe that these are important personal and social life skills, valuable to every individual.

It is very important that the Party Leader passes on all information to the parents so as to alleviate any concerns that they may have about the safety and well being of their children



## **(2) The Staff at the Centre**

The staff at the centre are keen to ensure that you have an excellent time, full of adventure and fun, whilst at the same time ensuring that activities are safe for everyone.

Some of the people who will be helping you during your stay are:



### **The Site Owner**

**Alastair Rice** - In overall charge of the programme for your school or group and the day-to-day running of the centre. He will always be on hand to assist you in any way.



### **The Centre Manager**

**Claire Waghorn** - Second in charge. Claire is responsible for the safe and effective running of all of the activities. She is there to make sure things run smoothly, keen to hear how things are going and to answer any questions you may have.

### **The Activity Instructors**

Each instructor works with the same group throughout the week. This allows the children to build up a trusting relationship, which gives them the confidence to try new challenges.

Most staff stay on site during the programmes so they will also be available to assist you should the need arise.

### (3) Site Facilities

#### Accommodation

- Accommodation is bunkhouse style divided between the main house and the barn complex.
- Leaders accommodation is in separate rooms in the main house and the barns.
- Showers and toilets are sited in the barn complex and main house.
- Duvets and bedding provided for all groups other than campers.
- Separate staff showers and toilets

#### Rooming

- Details of the rooming for your group will be requested from you prior to your stay.
- You will be able to indicate which rooms you will be using and how many people will be sleeping in each.

#### Telephones

- There is no public telephone on site, however, a telephone will be available in the office for the use of teachers or leaders.
- Mobile phone signals are a bit hit and miss here!
- We advise against children contacting their families by phone as it can lead to homesickness.
- Mail can be given to the centre staff who will ensure it is posted.
- Parents/families are welcome to write to their children during their stay at the centre. Mail that arrives for your school will be handed to the Party Leader for distribution each day.

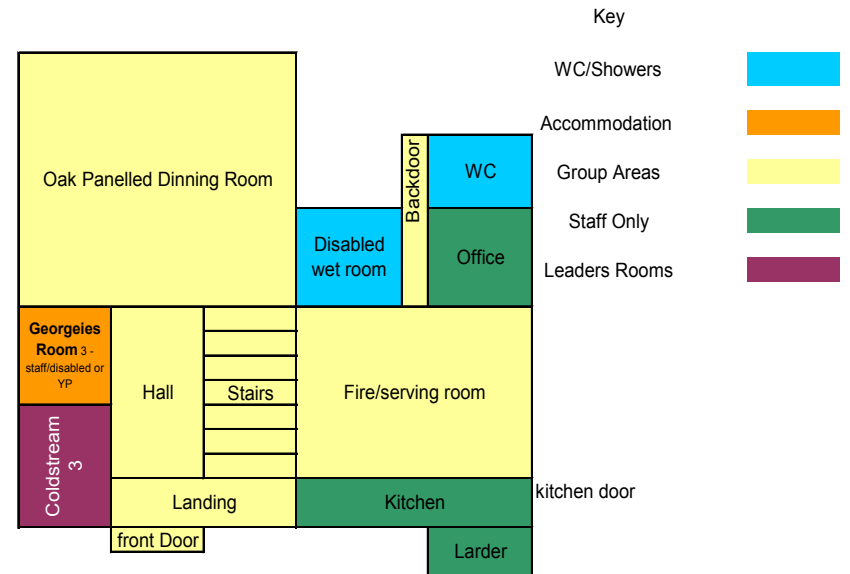
#### Local Village

- The nearest village of Merton is 2 miles away which has a small shop and post office.
- The small town of Great Torrington is approximately 10 minutes drive away. This town has various shops and facilities which include a post office, pharmacy, doctors and dental surgeries.

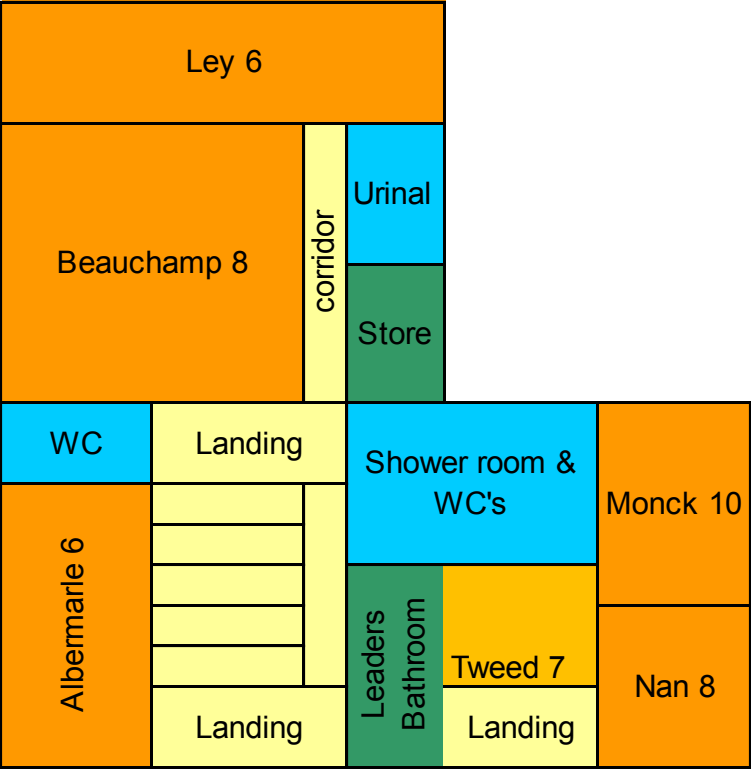
Barnstaple is the nearest large town which is approximately a 35 minute drive away and this is also where the nearest train station and main hospital are located.

### (4) Floor Plans

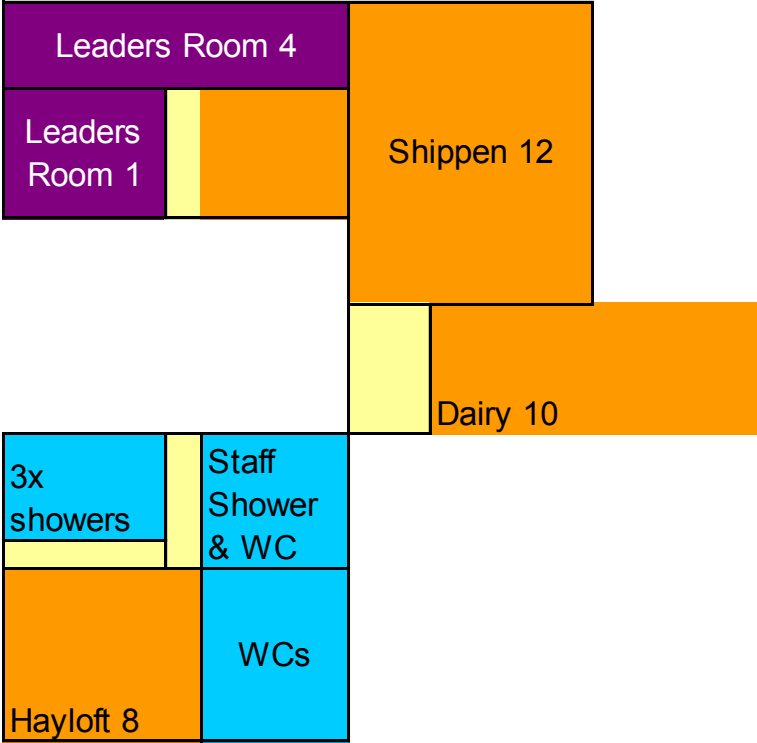
#### Great Potheridge House Ground Floor



# Great Potheridge House first floor



# Barn Complex



## (5) Safety and Security

Great Potheridge House is set in relatively remote rural Devon. Our nearest neighbours are  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile away. The house is set  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile off the main road on a private farm track. We are next to a set of barns etc used by one of the local farms to hold cattle in the winter.

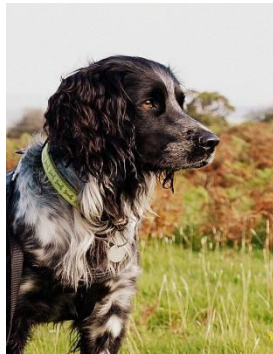
The house and barn accommodation complex have a good fire alarm system which has been updated recently. A fire drill is carried out on the first day of a residential visit to Great Potheridge.

For safety and reassurance of visiting groups we provide the following:

- All outside access doors used by the group are locked with keypads when requested
- Security lighting
- Gated access to the main entrance
- Guard dogs - will bark then lick visitors!
- Duty member of staff for emergencies etc. on call 24 hours a day
- The Centre Manager and staff live on site
- Activity staff are first aid qualified and most live on site during programmes
- All staff have been DBS checked.



MOLLY



BANJO

## (6) Safety On Activities

Staff training places a strong emphasis on safety when running all activities. Risk Assessments are carried out for all activities, copies of which are available on request.

### First Aid

The company has an emergency action plan for any serious incidents/accidents. All instructors are first aid qualified and carry first aid kits on activities. All our vehicles have first aid kits in them. Great Torrington has a minor injuries service which is 4 miles away. Great Potheridge House is approx. 35 minutes from North Devon Hospital (Barnstaple) for any serious injuries/concerns. We have vehicles on hand if a hospital trip is needed. In addition to this Devon Air Ambulance is based at an airfield 6 miles from us.

Nearest A&E from Hartland (coastering location) is North Devon Hospital. Nearest A&E from Meeth Nature Reserve (location for our watersports) is either North Devon Hospital or Exeter.

Our emergency procedures are checked as part of our Adventure Activities Licensing Service inspection and our Learning Outside the Classroom quality badge.

If a child/adult should require a visit to a hospital/doctor:

- Staff will help to arrange transport which may be the site car/van or a taxi
- An adult from your party must accompany a child on a hospital/doctor visit
- Please take their full medical form with you
- Details of the visit must be filled out on a form for our own records
- Parents/family will be contacted depending on the nature of the injury.



## (7) Directions to Great Potheridge House

Great Potheridge House, Merton, Okehampton, EX20 3DN  
01805 603003 or 0771184116

Directions from M5 driving south Bristol/A303 (55 min from J27 M5 to Great Potheridge)

- Exit M5 at junction 27 and take 3<sup>rd</sup> exit onto A361 to Barnstaple. Follow this road for 22 miles
- After 22 miles turn left at roundabout, onto the B322 to South Molton. Drive through the town of South Molton following signs to Torrington. At cross roads turn left sign posted B3227 Torrington.
- Drive over the bridge over the river Taw and turn right onto the A377 sign posted Barnstaple & Torrington. After approx.  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile turn left back onto the B3227. Follow this to Great Torrington.
- At roundabout take the 1<sup>st</sup> exit onto Calf Street B3277
- At mini roundabout turn left onto A386 to Okehampton
- After 4.5 miles turn left onto private farm road. (Cottages on the left before turning, signpost for Encompass Training on the junction.)
- After 3<sup>rd</sup> of a mile turn left into Great Potheridge main car park just after the main house.

**Beware of farm traffic**

Directions from A30 (30 mins from A30)

- Exit A30 at Okehampton and drive into the centre of Okehampton. Turn right at the cross roads in the middle of town, following signs to Hatherleigh. Follow this road out of Okehampton for approx. 2-3 miles.
- You reach a T junction, turn right here, joining the A386 (signposted Bideford, Great Torrington.) Follow this road for approx. 10 miles.
- Great Potheridge is 2.2 miles after leaving the village of Merton, turn right onto a private farm road. (Signpost for Encompass Training on junction, cottages on the right after the turning.
- After 3<sup>rd</sup> of a mile turn left into Great Potheridge, main car park just after the main house.



## (8) Equipment List

Here is a list of what you will need to bring for your week away. Make sure that you remember to bring a packed lunch on your first day.

### Clothing

- T-shirts
- Long sleeved tops
- Tracksuit trousers or leggings (no jeans)
- Disco clothes
- Warm jumper/fleece
- A waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers if available
- Shorts
- Underwear
- Socks, at least one thick pair
- Gloves and a scarf
- A warm hat
- A sun hat

### Toiletries

- 2 towels
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Soap
- Flannel
- Sun cream
- Hair ties for long hair

### Other

- Book to read
- Diary
- Pens and pencils
- Paper/writing paper
- A torch
- Plastic bags for dirty clothes
- Drink bottle for water (a must)
- A packed lunch in a small ruck sack for the coach trip

### Footwear

- 2 pairs trainers/strong shoes
- Shoes to wear in water
- Wellies

NOTE: Specialist equipment is provided for all activities

### TO THE PARENTS

Please make sure that children bring **LOTS OF OLD CLOTHES** for activities as they will undoubtedly get wet, muddy and suffer from wear and tear. It is important that children do not wear jeans for activities for safety and comfort reasons. We will brief on clothes for activities but generally, old, long sleeves and legs for most activities. Always have a warm extra layer and waterproof to hand on activities.

The sun can be surprisingly hot even early on in the year. Please make sure that all children bring sun hats and sun block. Children will need to fill their drinks bottles with water and take them to daytime sessions so as to prevent dehydration.

Please make sure that children's property is clearly marked with their names.

## (9) Arrival Day

Please let us know beforehand your expected time of arrival. If you are delayed for any reason then please phone the centre as soon as possible (01805 603003). On arrival at the centre you will be met by the staff who will be waiting to welcome you.

The instructors will help unload all luggage from the coach while you and the children gather together in a designated meeting area for a welcome talk.

### Settling In & Organising Rooms

Once in their rooms, children will need to decide who will sleep where. They then need to make their beds and organise their things so that they are ready for the remainder of the day.

### Orientation Tour

After you have had some time to settle, the group will meet for a guided orientation tour. This is a chance for both the children and adults to gain an overview of the site. You will be shown where the dining room and other on-site facilities are located.

### First Activity Session

The first activity session will begin soon after the orientation tour. It's important that the children establish good routines by ensuring that they meet their instructor at the set meeting point on time. They also need to make sure that they have listened to what they need to bring and that they come prepared.

Then the adventure begins!

## (10) A Sample Day

Here is a sample of how an average day would run. Please note that timings may vary slightly depending on the activity programme and the number of people on the site at the time of your stay.

7.15am	Wake up, wash, make beds and tidy rooms (Teachers please check that all children are up).
7.50am	Line up for breakfast
8.00am	BREAKFAST
9.00am	Make lunch
9.30am	First activity session begins.
12.30pm	LUNCH
1.20pm	Meet your instructor for afternoon activities
5.00pm	End of activities
6.00pm	EVENING MEAL
6.45pm	Free time
7.30pm	Evening Activity
9.00pm	Hot chocolate and biscuit
9.30pm	Tide up, have a wash, get ready for bed
10.00pm	Lights out. Go to sleep!!!

Please can teachers work with the children to ensure that children are on time for sessions and meal times so that they can get the most out of the day.

Thank you.



## (11) The Evening Entertainment Programme

The evening entertainment activities will be outlined on your activity programme.

This will offer a variety of activities, which again encourage teamwork and further develop the social skills of the children.

Examples of activities are as follows:

- Egg Drop
- Night Walk
- Disco and BBQ
- Wide Games
- Film Night
- Camp Fire



## (12) Departures

### The Second to Last Day

On the second to last day the children are advised to do their initial packing either late afternoon or early evening. Bags should be packed except for items they require for the last day's activities. They should have a big tidy up of the rooms i.e. putting all rubbish in the bin, checking for sweet wrappers under beds, tidying bathrooms etc. This makes departure day much easier and less exhausting! It's a good idea for teachers to check to see that children are making good progress.

### The Final Day

On the last day of your trip we ask that teachers ensure that the party are awake half an hour earlier than usual. Children will be expected to finish packing their bags and to tidy up their rooms. All room members then need to work together to ensure that they leave the room as tidy as they found it on arrival.

The instructors will be on hand before breakfast to help move luggage and to check that children have totally cleared and tidied their rooms.

By breakfast all kit should be packed and the rooms tidy. Please note that it is important that everyone is ready for breakfast at the usual time so that the day can run to time.

After breakfast there will be the final activity session as specified in your activity programme. Packed lunches will be provided and can either be eaten at the centre, if time allows, or taken to eat on the journey home.

## (13) Meal Time Arrangements

Meal times are:

Breakfast 8.00am, Lunch 12.30pm, Dinner 5.30pm

These may vary occasionally. If there is an alteration in meal times the Party Leader would be informed immediately.

- Breakfast will consist of a choice of cereals, cooked breakfast and toast.
- Lunch will consist of sandwiches with a choice of fruit, crisps/biscuits and a drink.
- The evening meal will consist of a main and dessert.
- Cold drinks will be available with each meal. Hot drinks are available for staff at meal times.

### Dietary Requirements

On the group lists we request information about any medical or ethical dietary requirements for both children and adults. Dietary requirements will be then passed on to the catering staff.

Please ensure that we are made aware of all dietary requirements in advance so that the kitchen can be adequately prepared.



## (14) Teachers Responsibilities

*What is the role of the leader during the excursion?*

We will need you to confirm essential information shortly after arrival, such as final numbers in the group, dietary needs and medical conditions. Please let us know any other information we need to be aware of. **Our aim is for our staff and yours to work well together as one team for the week.**

Visiting staff have loco parentis and primary duty of care for the young people on the course. We have a duty of care to all on our activity programmes to you and your group. If you are not happy at any time about safety - please tell us at the time - ask the instructor for a quick word. In practical terms at a course it normally works that visiting staff ensure students are up for breakfast, take the lead in monitoring and supervising at free times and organise the students when required. We are of course on hand to help whenever needed. The nature of the buildings and accommodation is such that we are around. We do expect a member of the groups staff to accompany the group on activities.

The instructors have strict procedures that they will follow to ensure that each of the activities are run safely.

The teacher is there to ensure that the children are behaving in an appropriate way so that the activity can be both fun and safe for all involved. If a child's behaviour is continually preventing an activity from running well then the teacher should take time to talk with this child so that others can continue working with the instructor.

For sessions such as climbing & abseiling the teacher is required to oversee the remainder of the group freeing up the instructor to focus on the one to one instruction required with the children. Likewise, for archery where an instructor will be working with one or two pupils at a time the teacher is responsible for the behaviour of the rest of the group.

We encourage teachers to have a go at the various activities if they wish to. Often it is a chance for teachers to enjoy the challenge of trying something new. The children also love to see the teachers involved.

Programmes are aimed to stretch and challenge - everyone will feel out of their comfort zones at sometime or other but we conduct activities in a framework of safety and the sense of achievement from stretching yourself is immense. No one is made to do an activity but we do actively encourage and motivate to encourage participation. Please help us with this encouragement.

For some of the group problem solving sessions it becomes important for the teacher to become a more silent member of the group (as frustrating as this may be when you can see a solution!!) By all means encourage the children, but try to avoid giving suggestions. Your instructor will provide guidance during such sessions.

**Learning and Development** - Students gain this by working as much out for themselves as possible and doing it themselves. E.g.. If they build a shelter and they get wet if it rains it's their responsibility, if they stay dry it's their responsibility and reward. If we do it for them it's our fault if they get wet!

Teachers are also required to attend the evening activities along with the children. For most of these activities you will also be involved to some extent.

When the children are not on an activity session or involved in the evening entertainment programme they are under your care.

Please be aware that the activities we run are at the mercy of the weather, if we feel an activity needs to be changed due to the weather we will. An alternative will be organised.

Last, but not least we hope that each of the teachers can enjoy their stay and can leave at the end of the week knowing that both they and the children have had a sociable week full of fun and challenges.

## (15) Feedback

- During the week please keep us informed of how things are going. If you have any problems feel free to approach the centre staff. We'd rather you raise problems at the time and the centre manager is available at various times throughout each day should you require assistance.
- Our staff work very hard to ensure that you have an exciting and enjoyable stay. Please help us by encouraging the instructors and taking time to let them know what they do well. It's always nice to see children remembering to thank instructors at the end of sessions too.
- At the end of the week we ask you to fill in a Feedback Form. This allows you to give a summary of how you have found the week and will highlight to us what we have done well but also where we may be able to improve.
- We fully appreciate the time you take to complete the Feedback Form. They are of huge benefit to us as they allow us to continually revise how things are going and to make changes as required. We also value your suggestions for future years, as we are a company that seeks to continually develop programmes to suit the needs of individual schools.
- At the beginning of the week a senior staff member will meet with you. This is a good time to ask any questions that you may have.



## (16) General George Monck and Great Potheridge House

George Monck was born in Devon in 1608 to a family of modest means. By the time of his death in 1670, then General Monck was a National Hero honoured with a state funeral at Westminster Abbey. This pivotal and key man and his stately palace are the backdrop to a unique residential programme at what is preserved of his original ancestral home, Great Potheridge House.

His military career began at 16 when he joined the English expedition against Cádiz (1625). His talents as a soldier and skilled swordsman took him to the Europe again, this time fighting for the Dutch during their war of independence against the Spanish again.



General George Monck

### **The Civil Wars 1642-51**

General Monck served as a Royalist General. Following his capture Monck spent 2 years in the Tower of London where he met his future wife Nan. Such was the regard for his leadership and professionalism, Monck was freed to serve as a General for Cromwell.

After the civil wars Monck served as commander of the navy against the Dutch. Despite his initial total inexperience of naval warfare he defeated the Dutch 1652. In 1653 he became commander in chief of forces in Scotland.

Following the death of Cromwell in 1658 the nations of Britain were thrown into political turmoil and the looming spectre of another damaging civil war. In 1660 General George Monck marched his well-disciplined regiment from the Scottish borders to London. A new election was called and conditions for Charles II returned to the throne were issued. General Monck's actions saved us from another bloody civil war. The long term legacy of his actions included removing the military from politics and ensuring trial by jury.

Monck's regiment was the only New Model Army regiment to be incorporated into Charles II's standing army, the oldest regiment in the British Army, the Coldstream Guards, who still guard the monarch to this day.

Monck returned to Devon and set about building an H-shaped house over 10 years fit for his new status and wealth. In the 1730's the house was badly damaged by fire. The part of the palace that wasn't damaged became a three-storey farmhouse, which contains several notable features from the original palace such as the staircase, over-mantels (rediscovered in the early 1990's) and panelled dining room with its impressive fireplace and carved coat of arms. The Great Barn and the front garden also revive some of the past grandeur of the House. Much of the history and extent of the original palace, surrounding complex and tunnel remain undiscovered.

After the Great Plague 1665 and Great Fire 1665-1666 George Monck was appointed to govern London. He died in January 1670 and was given a full state funeral paid for by the King.

Today, Great Potheridge is often used by re-enactment organisations, keeping the history of this important site alive.

