

INISHFREE HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION - WHAT IS INISHFREE?

The name Inishfree comes from a poem written by W.B. Yeats, called "The Lake Isle of Innisfree". Set in County Sligo in Western Ireland, the poem denotes a sense of one who recognises the moment in time, when suddenly they feel compelled to take a different direction in life, and leave everything else behind, except the strongest motivation and will impulse to find something new. The poem speaks about a time then, when one can simply be oneself and in nature and at peace with oneself. It also reflects the memory of that event later in life, 'on pavements gray I hear it in the deep heart's core.' as a source of hope, strength and nourishment.

Every human being needs this connection with the earth, whether it is through planting and growing, eating and drinking, breathing and experiencing, waking and sleeping or simply enjoying the wonders of the natural world. In today's society we take so much for granted and have lost touch with what is essential. Inishfree endeavours to bring something of this substance, and make it available to those that need it now. The poem is as follows:

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

*I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.*

*And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings,
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.*

*I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.*

W.B. Yeats

Inishfree offers something profoundly different to all other rehabilitation centres. Its uniqueness is to bring about a sense of social responsibility and economic change, in an environment where there is prejudice and discrimination for those labelled 'addict' for life, and regeneration, diversification and support for the farming industry that has lost heart.

So welcome to Inishfree! We hope you'll enjoy your stay here. Because we are a new initiative part of your 12 months stay with us will be assisting in the transition between this place of residence and the farm we are trying to rent in the near future. Our aim is to provide a safe and supporting environment wherever we are so that you can address your addiction problem, learn new ways to handle your life and have some fun along the way.

Inishfree is a Social Enterprise, registered charity, and a company not for profit limited by guarantee.

Our approach is a holistic one based on a 12-month residential community programme founded on the principles and indications brought through Anthroposophy and the work of Rudolf Steiner.¹

¹ Anthroposophy or 'awareness of one's humanity' is a path of knowledge and self-development, which encompasses the realms of religion, philosophy, art and science.

We are not part of Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous or the 12 Step approach though we acknowledge this approach works for some.

So the main aim of all trainees will be to:

- Engage with all work/craft/artistic and group activities
- Involve helping each other, seeking to understand each other, caring for each other and sharing thoughts and feelings with each other, and this means more than just sharing facilities
- Gain insight and deeper understanding of your past addictive behaviour through living and working together, while contributing time and skills towards the well being of the community
- Show commitment and enthusiasm for the ethos of the programme
- Meet the needs of the wider community e.g. farmers, disabled people, 'rescue animals' schools, markets and the economic needs of our environment
- Develop your potential towards a self directed future

How the Community Works

You will meet all members of our Community within the first week or so. You will be given a contact person who is a co-worker and a companion (buddy system), who is a trainee on admission. Your companion is there to support you, and your co-worker will want to have regular 'one to one' sessions with you. If you need anything or are unsure of anything you can ask either of them for guidance. They are there to help you settle in. Your companion plays an important role in these early months watching over you, reassuring you and simply being there for you. Your co-worker will oversee this.

Inishfree has a structured time table, from early morning right up until bedtime, but there is time when trainees will be given free time for their individual project work within the framework of our organised activities. There will be time given to orientate yourself on arrival and you will gradually be integrated/guided through the rhythm of the day and the week. You will not be left alone at any time during the first 3 months, and your companion will ensure this.

Your stay will be reviewed regularly (see License agreement).

All individuals will be referred to as 'trainees'. You will be given opportunities to learn different vocational and social skills and further your education and self-development.

You are not an 'addict' for life and will be met as an individual who wants to address their addiction problems. You are a human being first and foremost!

Crafts/drama/leisure/project-work are also included in the evening timetable.

As you can see from the timetable, trainees will be expected to participate in the outside work programme most days during the week. We will expect you to get up and breakfast together with the whole community and be ready by 8.30am for the community meeting. This meeting is held twice a day to look at the day's work schedule and discuss any problems. The community meeting held later in the day is for reviewing how the day went. This is a supportive meeting as well as where issues can be brought to the attention of co-workers, and feedback given. This meeting will have an agenda and be recorded in the Log Book. Everyone has to attend.

Saturdays will be our 'at home' day with some free time, time for chores, baking and leisure activities, scheduled walks, etc. Sundays will be a quiet day for individual work and reflection. The community meetings are slightly different at the weekend: on Saturday to review the whole week, and on Sunday morning a reflective meeting and in the evening to look forward to the week ahead.

As part of the evening activities there might be guests invited for supper to talk about their spiritual path, their passion or other matters of interest.

We hope to answer all your questions in the next sections.

1. ASSESSMENT - ADMISSION - SUPPORT PLANS -HEALTH

Assessment

- Inishfree will invite you to meet and spend at least 2-3 hours with us, and we will do an assessment during that time. You will be included for lunch / supper, and have an opportunity to meet the other trainees when possible. We will let you know the outcome of our decision within 24 hours. It is sometimes suitable to give you a 24 hour trial period that will be extended if appropriate.
- If you need time to think about your decision, we would normally expect to hear from you within 24 hours.
- If we find that Inishfree is not the right place for you at the moment we will let you know and give you the reasons why we think so. We will also do as much as we can to help you find alternative accommodation or treatment. Reasons will be given and there is a Right to Appeal against the decision
- You have a right to appeal against our decision. Please ask the person who assessed you how to go about it.
- See policies regarding criteria for eligibility guidelines and assessment procedures for more details. You should have received these when you first contacted us.

Admission

If all goes well you can move in immediately:

- Signing up to a License Agreement and Programme
- You will be claiming Housing Benefit once you are here, so you need to make a new claim and give up your present claim if you have one
- There will be a full Induction into our Policies during the first week.

Support Plan

We will establish your support needs in the first 2 weeks after your arrival and write up an initial Support Plan which will take into account your own views regarding your needs for support as they become clearer through the daily reviews.

If you are not happy with any aspect of your support plan or you need to review it with a support worker, you can ask for a review at any time. We will be happy to arrange a time and look at it with you and consider your views.

Health

You will need to register with our local medical practice in Stroud after residing for 4 weeks. St. Luke's is an Anthroposophical Medical Centre which is working to the same principles as Inishfree. We will be working together with your Doctor where your health is concerned. Your health is important and homeopathic remedies can be very helpful in the recovery process. We would therefore want you to register and receive treatment there. However, to protect all trainees and the project we do have some rules about medication.

A co-worker / volunteer will accompany trainees' to the doctor's and will normally sit in on the consultation. It is important that we work with the Doctor and give him a full picture of your health so that he can give you the best medical advice. Any prescriptions given must be shown to the co-worker. You should not take any medication without the knowledge of co-workers. This includes medicines which you can buy over the counter, many of which can be a serious threat to recovery.

You need to take responsibility for any medicines you need and you should make sure they are kept securely for your use only. Medicines of any kind must not be shared, even homeopathic.

Self Harm

We have in the past worked with those that have physically hurt themselves, and we shall not evict anyone for doing so. However if the community become aware and disturbed by it, we would have to take that into consideration together as a community. See rules and regs in next Section 2.

Food

We take food issues and nutrition seriously. Please see Rules and Regs in next Section 2.

2. HOUSE RULES AND REGS

Inishfree can be a safe place for you and others only if trainees do not use or possess alcohol or drugs on or off the premises.

From time to time there will be someone who breaks this rule. If you know someone is using or has used drugs or alcohol whilst being a trainee it is essential that you tell co-workers about it. A using addict in your home puts everyone at risk, with perhaps fatal consequences to the relapsing trainee. It is in everyone's interest that co-workers are informed in order to keep Inishfree a safe place. We know that people often think this is "grassing" but if you are serious about your recovery you will understand the need to inform co-workers. If you know, but don't tell us, your stay will be reviewed and you could be asked to leave. We have a policy of random testing. Trainees who do not co-operate with this will be asked to leave.

It is in your interest to make sure you know and understand all the house rules. When rules are broken there are serious consequences that could lead to a dismissal. We will not accept pleas of ignorance. We have tried to keep our rules sensible and we hope you will understand that they exist to protect you, other trainees and the project. We reserve the right to change them when necessary. We would of course give each trainee a revised copy.

Alcohol & Drugs

- Trainees must not consume, possess or attempt to obtain drugs or alcohol, on or off the premises.
- Trainees aware of someone breaking this rule must inform co-workers
- Trainees must submit to a drugs/alcohol test when asked to do so

Smoking

Smoking is an addictive drug and substitute and there needs to be a willingness to address all addictive behaviour. We will offer you support around this.

- Smoking is to be done discreetly and on one's own. No rolling up in the house. Smoking is to be done without the comfort of any food or drink
- No smoking in the house or on the threshold.
- No smoking during any scheduled activity, inside or outside

Coffee, Tea, Sugar, T.V., Eating,

These are also addictive and can be used as substitute stimulants, which we take seriously and treat with the utmost respect in a recovery process

- No television in the house, nor is one allowed to be brought in (we cannot store it either)
- Self discipline and observation of your cravings where coffee, tea and sugar consumption are concerned is essential if you take your addiction to substances seriously
- No eating between meals (bingeing, stealing or hoarding) we want to help you with these issues so that honesty and observation of your craving, needs, hunger and desires are essential

Possessions and belongings

- Clothing
- Due to the nature of our work suitable warm clothing is essential, especially for outdoor activities. Warm clothing, footwear, rain gear will be provided if possible.
- What you wear has in most cases been tied up with your addiction and in the first instance of recovery needs to be in the past context and not brought into the new present situation. If clothing is noticeably characteristic of that time we will discuss the issue with you.
- No music systems
- No private cars
- No mobile phones or pagers etc

- No pornographic material to be displayed or brought into the house

Violence and abuse

- We will not tolerate violence whether actual or threatened. This includes bullying, harassment of any kind and abusive language intimidating another.

Post and telephone

- When you arrive your key worker will discuss with you whose post is going to be helpful in your recovery and what relationships you need to put on hold or let go of to focus on the difficult task of finding a new way of being. Personal post can be distressing/threatening/provoking. In the first 3 months you will need a co-worker to be present at all times when opening mail. Your key worker will need to know the content of a letter, but you will be asked to give your consent prior to admission.
- On arrival you will be given a private folder to file official letters and you will be ultimately responsible for their safety. Copies can be kept in the office at your request.
- There is no contact via the phone with family/friends for the first 3 months. Official calls can be arranged. You will be informed of incoming calls from family and friends but we will not pass on messages to or from yourself.

Visitors

When you arrive at Inishfree, family and friends will be relieved you are somewhere safe and dealing with your addiction. You will need to recognise their recovery also. All trainees will need to accept that those loved ones will also need time and space apart from you to get their lives back together as well. A seriously long break is necessary on both sides and we deem vital in the recovery process.

Inishfree will provide ongoing support and information for that period, and with your consent

- Only in exceptional circumstances will we agree visits in the first 12 weeks of your stay
- Visits must be agreed with your key worker before you make arrangements with your visitors
- We generally only allow visitors at weekends. The frequency of visits needs to be discussed with your co-worker

If you are a parent, children wishing to see you will be prioritised at an earlier stage and, ONLY when a child is asking. Parents will need to address their own needs through the support of the community and their key worker and not expect their children to fulfil their needs as a parent. This can be an extremely distressing time for your children and we would want to help in the facilitating of reunions (if children are asking to see you), especially when children have been frightened or worried by their parents' behaviour through substance misuse. Any concerns you have around contact with family will be explored and agreed prior to admission.

Leaving the premises

It is important to highlight that in respect of the premises we deem this your home, and it is shared with others as their home too. You will be living here for up to 12 months or longer depending on your needs. This can be extended in 2 different ways. We are very conscious of the fact that relapse can happen in the most unlikely of circumstances, like feeling confident. We leave nothing to chance or luck. Your well-being for the future rests in our knowledge of what works, and going out alone too soon is a high risk until you are stable, no matter how well you have done, or feel.

- Trainees are not allowed to leave the property at any time during their stay without the agreement of a co-worker or project co-ordinator. If a trainee needs to leave for an appointment they will need to be accompanied by a senior trainee or co-worker. The period for which this rule lasts is 6 months after admission but will depend on individual circumstances.
- Weekends are still held within the framework of the programme
- Overnight absences should be regarded as very exceptional and will only be allowed after a minimum of 6 months.

Consequences of breaking the rules

Any breaking of rules will result in your stay being reviewed. In some circumstances your stay will be ended immediately, in others you will first receive a warning.

Instant dismissal will always follow from any of the following behaviours -

- Use or possession etc. of drugs or alcohol.
- Attempting to obtain drugs or alcohol.
- Not informing co-workers of the knowledge of another resident's use or possession of drugs or alcohol.
- Not informing co-workers of the knowledge of another resident's attempt to obtain drugs or alcohol.
- The use or threat of violence
- Using the house for an illegal purpose
- Endangering the project or the progress of other trainees

In other circumstances co-workers/the community will consider whether negotiating or dismissal is appropriate.

Trainees' responsibilities - code of 'decent behaviour'

We will not tolerate deliberate bullying or intimidation of other trainees or co-workers. The use of repeated bad language, being generally loud in communal areas are examples of behaviour that are unacceptable. You must consider other trainees and co-workers and behave in such a way that others are not annoyed, upset or offended.

Appointments

Appointments for doctors, nurses, dentists, court, probation, etc. should not be made at times when meetings are held. You should ensure that all appointments are done together with a co-worker who will be able to advise you on appropriate times and enter them in the office diary.

3. RELATIONSHIPS

Early recovery is a very stressful time. There is usually much anxiety about the past and the future. Existing relationships are often strained. If you are in a relationship when you come to Inishfree, it is important to discuss it with a co-worker. Relationships can often make early recovery more complicated than it need be.

For this reason we will not accept you entering into a new relationship whilst you are in early recovery. We recognise that feelings can arise and we want you to feel able to talk to your Counsellor/co-worker about them. However, this should be done before you act on your feelings.

Relationships, which form between trainees, which are of a sexual nature, will put your recovery at risk for both of you, and will create tensions in the Community, putting others at risk. For this reason we will not accept sexual relationships between trainees, nor will we allow exclusive relationships. By this we mean a relationship which excludes other trainees and which is likely to distract from giving the programme your full attention.

- Trainees are not allowed in each other's bedrooms. As all bedrooms are shared this could always infringe on some one else's privacy.
- Exclusive relationships will be challenged

4. MONEY AND FINANCES

Trainees' money

All your benefits will be paid into Inishfree Account. Your personal allowance will be recorded and should cover travel costs for personal purposes for example, weekend leisure, personal shopping, hospital and dental appointments. However, where it is convenient we will do our best to give you lifts, but you will have to contribute to the cost.

At a later stage of your programme when you will have to manage your own finances (cash) borrowing and lending of money is discouraged. We all need to learn how to manage our money. You may not be the only one who someone is borrowing from. They could be getting into serious debt.

Income from Trainees

Our income comes from charging a rent and support costs for your stay. This is met partly by you, partly from voluntary input, and partly from other sources.

Your responsibility is to claim Housing Benefit and Income Support/Incapacity/ESA to cover your obligation for rent; support needs food and service charges. We will help you complete the forms. Housing Benefit and Income Support/Incapacity Benefit will be paid direct into our accounts.

As well as the rent we also make a charge, which is a contribution towards food, light and heat in your room, transport and towards your therapies. Your co-worker will tell you how much this is currently – it is also shown in the licence agreement. You will receive a personal allowance of £20.50 per week for your personal needs like tobacco, toiletries etc. A record of your spending will be kept in the office. You will get a statement of your balance fortnightly. (see money handling policy)

5. TRAINEES' RIGHTS

- To feel at home
- Follow and practise your religion or belief
- Be treated with dignity and respect by all members of the community
- Live in the house, free from harassment, prejudice, or discrimination
- **To be consulted and involved in the day to day running of the project and the programme**
- Use the communal facilities of the house
- Have all your belongings back that were imparted to Inishfree on admission
- Have information about personal interests
- See any documents that we produce about you and to keep all official documentation
- Make a complaint about the service you receive and to be given a reply to that complaint and be informed of the action that we will take.
- You also have a right to appeal against any decisions which have been taken to support your goals. We do however assume that our principal support plan as outlined in the programme and this handbook are understood by you before you enter into the programme.

6. ROOMS AND COMMUNAL AREAS

You are responsible for the cleanliness and tidiness of your bedroom. Fresh bed linen is available in the cupboard. All Trainees are expected to wash their own bed linen and either re-use it or place it clean in the cupboard. There will be a rota for household cleaning. You will be expected to clear up after yourself generally and not leave it for others. Remember that others use the same bathroom and toilet so please make sure you leave them clean.

You will not be able to lock your room and co-workers will have the right to enter your room if there is any suspicion of drugs/alc. This will usually be with your prior consent. There will be a daily room check for health and safety purposes.

7. REINTEGRATION AND LEAVING

People who successfully complete their stay here will have the option to join our reintegration programme for up to another year depending on their needs and available placements on a voluntary basis. There will be 2 possible options:

- Living locally and taking on a volunteering role within the Inishfree project
- To keep your residence with Inishfree (might be a caravan) and work elsewhere

There will be ongoing support from Inishfree Community whether you go on to our scheme or not. We positively encourage this contact if trainees remain clean and sober, or are struggling.

We may need to place restrictions on the return of people whose leaving is not planned.

We are supporting local farmers and providing placements on farms that may also provide accommodation should you need it.

However, when you leave Inishfree you should take all your personal belongings with you. Any goods left will be safely stored for one month. Please contact us within that month to arrange to collect your goods. We will have to dispose of the goods one month after your departure if you do not make any arrangements to collect them.

8. FACILITIES

We will have a limited number of library books, which you are free to borrow.

There is only one telephone line, which is for office use from 9-5 Monday - Friday. Please be thoughtful when using this phone, don't hog the time for yourself. Telephones in the office are for management use only. Arrangements for phone calls need to be planned and scheduled outside office hours unless it is an official call. See Rules and Regs Section 2.

Post

The post will only be handed to a co-worker; we will then distribute it as soon as possible. If you are not around it will be kept in the office and you will need to ask for it on your return. For all those admitted immediately post detoxification please see our rules and regulations admissions policy.

Laundry

A washing machine is provided for your use. In dry weather please hang washing outside to dry. Please be aware that others will want to use it without having to empty it first. A rota might be in operation.

We cannot, generally speaking, accommodate pets. We have 2 cats, pigs, sheep, chickens and ducks as well as a number of "visiting" dogs who will need your loving care and attention.

Safekeeping

We will have a 'safe keeping' facility for small valuable items. It will be at your own personal risk, Inishfree cannot take responsibility for loss or damage.

9. ADVOCACY - If you need help in dealing with Government or Council Departments etc. please ask your co-worker. We will support Liaising with family and friends, Social Workers, Probation, or any other individual or statutory bodies if needed or necessary.

All policies are available and are kept in a file in the living room bookshelf for your information.

On arrival there will be an induction into the policies and the programme by your key worker and peers.

INISHFREE TIMETABLE

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday		Saturday/Sunday
7.00	Wake up call	
7.30	Breakfast	9.00 Saturday House Clean
8.00	Chores	9.00 Sunday Morning Meeting
8.30	Meeting	
		Sunday Brunch
9.30	Start work / Gardening /Kitchen/ Building /	
11:00-11.30	Coffee break	
1.00	Main Meal	
1.45	Rest	
2.30	Work	5.30 Dinner
5.30	Supper	6.30 Review Meeting
6.30	Community Meeting (Review of the day)	
7.45	Social Activities: Art/Drama group/study/board games/groups/stories/	Journal/Leisure activity
9:30	Bedtime drinks/Journal	
10:30	To bed	
11.00	Lights out	