



## **Additional Information for Applicants**

### **General**

Burwell House is an education centre providing residential and day visit opportunities for school groups, youth groups and adult education courses. Set in a beautiful 18<sup>th</sup> Century house in the village of Burwell, with 3 acres of grounds, the Centre is available for booking seven days a week and for approximately 50 weeks of the year. Last academic year, pre Covid, we accommodated approximately 8700 visitor days in total.

Burwell House is part of Cambridgeshire County Council. The Centre exists as a traded service whereby we receive no direct subsidy from the Council and need to pay our own way. The Centre has been open for over 50 years and has grown from strength to strength. In recent times, it has been busier than it's ever been, with increases in visitor numbers, bookings and income year on year, enabling us to minimise increases in our prices and continually invest in our beautiful house and gardens.

Our whole staff team work very hard and very flexibly to maintain the Centre and the service we provide, in order to retain existing and to attract new customers and user groups. New members of staff will be expected to work as an integral part of that team to maintain these high standards.

### **User Groups**

**Schools – residential.** The bulk of our customers are primary school children on 1 or 2 night residential visits. We have between 25 and 55 residential children on site at a time, with all groups getting sole residential use of the property and three meals a day – with breakfast and home cooked lunch and dinner. On a changeover day, numbers for lunch would include outgoing and incoming groups – meaning that there might be 120 children taking lunch at our absolute maximum.

**Schools – non-residential.** We currently have around 10 visits per year who visit the Centre on a day basis. This number is slowly rising; these groups do not usually have catering as part of their stay.

**Catered weekend groups.** As well as one or two primary schools who regularly visit us at the weekend, we also have weekend catered courses from other groups. Last year we had 10 courses in total, a number which is rising year on year. These groups are from diverse backgrounds, including youth drama groups, A-level art students and music groups, each with their own individual catering requirements.

**Catered holiday courses.** We have an annual event – the Burwell Bash – in which up to 80 folk musicians from around the world visit the Centre in what started as a summer school and has become for many a pilgrimage! This is a 5 night fully catered course which has been running in various guises for 25 years and is by far the busiest week of the year. It normally occurs in the last week of July / first week of August.

**Self catering groups.** Our greatest growth area recently is organised groups using the house as a self-catering property at weekend or holiday times. Whilst there is no catering required for these courses they do require the kitchen facilities and therefore the kitchen staff are a major part of making sure that these groups are prepared for.

**Special events.** As well as the above, we have various special events over the course of the year, which might require catering to a greater or lesser extent. This has included in recent years open days, teachers training evenings, travelling theatre shows and school holiday cookery courses for children.

### **The kitchen and dining areas.**

Though situated in an old building, the kitchen is fitted out to modern, high standards and is well equipped to deal with the numbers of staff and visitors. With two large gas ovens, 10 hobs and 2 fryers for cooking and a good range of preparation areas and equipment, the kitchen is well set up.

The customers eat in either the dining room directly adjoining the kitchen area, the conservatory or outdoors. As with many of the rooms at the Centre, each of these areas are multipurpose – so may be used for other activities at different times.

### **The accommodation.**

We are extremely proud of the cleanliness of presentation of our house. The Domestic Team work incredibly hard to provide the warm and homely feel that welcomes all our visitors. In an old house, and with the majority of the bedrooms being dormitory style with bunk beds, this is sometimes difficult, but the team are crucial in providing the welcoming atmosphere that makes the centre so successful.

### **The staff team.**

We are proud that by far the most common positive comment received from our visitors is to do with the friendly, warm and homely welcome they receive from all the staff. This contributes in a major way to the number of repeat bookings we receive and to the 'this feels like my second home' comment that we regularly hear.

Our staff – 18 people in total – work in separate teams, but through regular staff meetings, various whole-staff work activities each year, the whole team support each other and have a close understanding of each others' areas of work.