



**WELCOME  
&  
INFORMATION**

**Hello!**

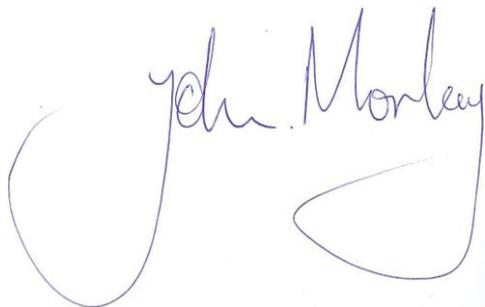
Welcome to "The Centre!"

This booklet has been produced to clear up some of the simple rules and requests that we have and to make your day more enjoyable. Please take some time to read it through.

We cannot cover every single incident or regulation imposed on us by other bodies; frankly we would not want to bore you! We also cannot cover every other eventuality in this booklet, so if you are unsure of anything your branch manager will help you.

We have pride in the fact that the atmosphere is fun, relaxed and secure. Our experienced teams are very approachable, should you wish to speak to anyone of us please do so!

It goes without saying that we are here for you!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Morley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'J'.

John Morley  
Operations Manager

[www.thecentreuk.com](http://www.thecentreuk.com)

## Firstly Our History, briefly

Because we have been operating for so many years you may have some questions with reference to our roots, so here goes...

The Centre was set up as an Independent provider in 1995 and known until 2009 as Wood N Stuff. We became a fully-fledged Social Enterprise in 1997. When it first started the founding Directors wanted to have a workshop that: -

- Was open to all whatever their ability
- Everyone treated with respect and as equals
- Allowed freedom of choice
- Had no barriers between staff and members
- Did not rely on sales to pay the bills
- Operated an open-door policy
- Offered social events as part of the training
- Offered training for work

The workshop was originally set up in Bury St Edmunds to offer training for eight people per day with three full time staff. The original building offered two workshops a craft room, kitchen and an office. The original premises consisted of Units one and two plus the courtyard. As occupancy increased, we were fortunate that the unit next door became vacant. In Bury St Edmunds we now occupy a complete row of buildings which we have joined together to provide access throughout.

By 2002 The Centre Bury St Edmunds had reached full occupancy so to relieve pressure and to create more places we decided to expand into Haverhill. We opened the unit in Rookwood way in June 2003 for Members from Sudbury and Haverhill and surrounding areas.

Because The Centre was a Co-operative Social Firm it was unable to qualify for grants. This meant that everything that we did in the way of alterations or improvements was self-funded. We are now forming a Community interest company and hoping to start grant finding from 2019!

We are still looking for ways to improve conditions and facilities within the units and suggestions are warmly welcomed.

## **What we do!**

We are all different, and we will never try and push a square peg into a round hole! That is where the Person Centred Planning approach works best.

So there are many aspects of daytime activities that The Centre offers. Our range facilities and opportunities which we offer can be listed under -

**Respite  
Daytime care.**

**Rehabilitation.**

**Employability  
&  
Vocational Skills.**

**Arts and Crafts Skills**

**Personal  
&  
Social Skills development**

Whichever route you take it will have been decided by your Care Practitioner in consultation with you, your carers and/or family and it will be written in your care plan. Attendance at The Centre will always have a goal for you to aim for.

Some members come to the unit for a short time to specifically work on one aspect of their rehabilitation before returning to paid employment or college training.

For those who attend for respite or day care the unit offers a wide choice of activities which you would have seen on your first visit or taster day.

## **Our Simple Member Charter**

### **What The Centre expects from you: -**

- To treat Staff members, volunteers' other members and guests with respect.
- To listen to Staff members and their instructions.
- To be patient when working in the workshop.
- To not disrupt other members by being rude abusive or aggressive in any manner.
- To observe Health and Safety rules throughout the workshop.
- To alert a staff member to any Health and Safety problems that you see.

### **What you can expect from The Centre**

- You will be given choice.
- You will be listened to.
- Your voice will count.
- You will be treated with respect but remember that respect is a two way street!
- You will receive, where possible, the training and guidance of your choice.
- Your personal details and information will be kept confidential.

**These rules are simple rules and from time to time the branch manager will update them, keep an eye on the notice board!**

The next few pages outline some simple rules covering points that are regularly asked by members, family and carers, it is not a complete list so, should you have any questions please firstly speak to a member of staff or your branch manager, they will be happy to help you.

## **Clothing and what to wear**

Just a quick reminder as you were told when you first started with us, please wear older, low value clothing to the Centre, there is a possibility that you may get paint or sawdust on them and we cannot replace items if this happens. Please also wear closed toe shoes if you wish to go into the woodworking rooms as we use timber and hand tools, which can drop! Ear defenders, goggles, gloves aprons and sleeves are freely available to use, just ask a staff member.

## **Getting here and transport**

We will gladly try to help you arrange your transport when you join. However, we do not normally have a great deal to do with transport after that due to the number of people involved. If you use a taxi service to get to and from the Centre it is a good idea to carry a card with their name and telephone number so they can be chased if late picking you up. If you have problems with the service you are receiving first contact the taxi firms head office and if this does not work contact your Care Practitioner. We cannot be involved in transport disputes where we do not provide it but we can try to help you should you have a problem.

## **Bad weather**

In the event that there is adverse or bad weather we may have to close a unit if we cannot guarantee that staff can make it. Due to the number of people involved it will not be possible to contact everybody directly so please contact the manager at one of the numbers to the rear of this book to check. We will endeavour to contact the local radio station to broadcast with the closure report they issue. **If you are in doubt, please do not get in your transport until you are certain we are open. Our phone numbers are at the back of this booklet.**

## **Smoking**

We are aware a small number of our members smoke, it is against the law to smoke inside any of our buildings, so a **NO SMOKING** policy applies in our premises, and this includes herbal, imitation and electronic devices too. Smoking areas are provided should you wish to.

## **Your medication**

As we do not provide nursing cover we do not have the staff on site qualified to administer drugs. We can however prompt you to self-administer your own medication. We do not have the facilities to safely store medication on site so please keep it secure on your person at all times.

## **Your health and feeling poorly**

If you have a cough, cold or other sickness which is contagious please try to avoid attending your normal unit because many of your fellow attendees are more susceptible to these complaints. If possible you may be able to attend another day, ask a member of staff if this is possible.

If you are epileptic or diabetic please let a member of staff know if you have not already done so. This information is kept confidential and it is intended to ensure that you receive the correct treatment in case of a problem.

## **Your behaviour and language**

We at The Centre are committed to creating an enjoyable work and social environment free from all forms of unacceptable behaviour, language and inappropriate conversations, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

We will not tolerate unacceptable physical behaviour or language of any kind from or towards staff, clients, members and carers. All allegations of unacceptable behaviour and language will be investigated and, if appropriate disciplinary action taken, which may result in refusal of admission, suspension or total barring of the person or persons concerned.

The Centre will also not tolerate victimisation of any person for making allegations of unacceptable behaviour or language or supporting someone to make such a complaint. We want you to enjoy your day and others around you enjoy theirs too!

A simple good rule to apply “would you behave like this in a queue at the supermarket?”

**Simply - treat everyone how you would expect to be treated!**

## **Personal Belongings & Valuables**

We understand that people bring with them items of personal effects. We provide at each site adequate places store your possessions. We do recommend that personal items are **NOT** taken into the workshops as they could be a hazard and it is possible that they may get dirty, get paint on them or get lost or damaged, for which we can have no responsibility.

If you bring money with you please keep it on your person for security reasons, if you have larger items of value, again, we provide lockers to keep them in during the day, no valuables or personal effects are to be kept on site during the night, if in any doubt please ask a member of staff for assistance.

## **Own Tools and Timber**

We understand that members get very enthusiastic about what they do at The Centre and many have equipped their own sheds out to mirror what we do. Over the years we have been asked if the member can bring in their own tools to work with, the simple answer is **no**. We have very strict rules from our insurers about what equipment is to be used at each site.

The same applies to timber to use for a project, we request that only timber supplied by us is used in the workshops, and there are many reasons for this reasoning from pests to disputes because someone else has used 'your' wood!

## **Making things for the Centre**

We do make some products which we sell to the public on the basis that the members needs come first, so we do not take high volume orders or large commitments. Our reply to an order is that it will take time to make and that they can have on Thursday, which Thursday we do not say!

The profit from such sales is put towards social events that take place most years. Please ask for a price list should you or your family be interested in buying from us.

We make a wide range of products as part of our day, whether its woodworking items or art and craft items. There is a rustic range of items for which we have jigs and templates for – we also like to have the occasional challenge and make all manner of bespoke things from ornamental bridges to twenty deluxe cat pens for Bury Stray Cat Fund!!

## **Making things for yourself**

Some members wish to make things for themselves and or family and we have acknowledged this fact by only asking for the cost of the wood taken used, not the offcuts, so as to keep the costs to you low! Before embarking on a project be sure as to get a true cost prior to starting, depending upon that cost you may need to pay a small deposit.

Because we do not charge for the offcuts when calculating a project they are stored to be used for other projects and items, they are not free to be used as some members in the past have asked!

## **Mobile Phones and headsets**

Nearly everyone has their own mobile phones these days. Please **DO NOT** use them in the workshop where they can distract you or your workmates, we suggest you either use a locker or ask the manager for a safe place to store it.

In the event of an emergency please contact a member of staff and they will find you a suitable quiet area to take your call. It can be annoying to other people who are trying to eat in peace or hold a conversation so either keep your calls short or take your phone away from these areas.

Please **DO NOT** listen to MP3 or audio players using earphones whilst at the Centre as you will not be able to hear any verbal instructions and it can distract people around you. Such items would be best kept in one of the lockers provided.

## **Bringing your own Carer and Guests**

Some members may require additional assistance and need to bring with them a helper or carer in addition to our trained staff. If you bring a carer our helper please ensure that they sign in the visitor's book and advise the manager that they are on the premises.

We have an outside carer information sheet that needs to be completed or each carer, this will be kept confidentially on your personal file. These simple guidelines apply to your helper too, so please let them read this booklet.

## Refreshments & Break-times

During the day we have a number of breaks for refreshments and lunch. We provide tea and coffee for a very small daily fee. The cost for this is less than a single cup would cost in town and this is for all your hot or cold drinks during the day. This will change from time to time but only with a consultation of all involved, including you. This small cost does not include cans of fizzy drinks, crisps and snacks or specialist requirements.

There are other choices besides tea and coffee such as hot chocolate various flavoured squashes and chilled water. If you require something different such as decaffeinated coffee or artificial sweetener, please ask. Unless you have a special diet, please **DO NOT** bring in your own hot drinks into the premises, we cannot keep these secure and it is not practicable to reheat, and our supplied drinks are very reasonable in cost to you.

For lunches, if you decide not to bring a packed lunch, there will normally be a member of staff going round with a list taking orders for sandwiches before or during the morning coffee break. If you get missed off the list or not asked if you want anything by first tea break and you need something ordered again, please tell someone.

There are no general cooking facilities available. There are however, microwave ovens at the units for where small quantities of pre packed commercial foods can be reheated. We are sorry but due to health and safety reasons no leftovers or home-made meals can be re-heated. The simple reason being that we will not know expiration dates and cooking instructions.

If you bring your own sandwiches or other packed lunch in you can give them to a staff member to put in the fridge. Make sure your lunch is marked to assist distribution at break and lunch times.

There are specific areas for eating and drinking all food on the premises. **DO NOT** take food or drink into the workshops. It is not safe or hygienic and leftover food encourages vermin if not disposed of correctly.

**REMEMBER**, you are not alone and there are normally a lot of people around at break times so please **be patient** whilst staff hand out the drinks to everyone.

## Social events

Throughout the year we look to organise subsidised social events, funding permitted. They vary in distance and in interest. On most of these trips the places are limited and are organised on a first come first served basis.

Below are some of the trips we have organised in the past. The coaches unless stated are wheelchair friendly and most trips take place during the week.

*Mystery Day out.* This is always put to the vote and normally ends up at a seaside resort. Remember the choice is yours and if enough people want to go it could be a Stately home or the races

*Christmas Dinners* We have booked a restaurant or two and had a slap up meal. We have had music while we eat or sometimes a disco afterwards. We actually have a couple , one in Bury St Edmunds one in Haverhill.

*Local Bar B Q s* We have held at least two B B Q s one of which is normally a pig roast at Bury St Edmunds in the Courtyard each year weather permitting. Each branch tries to have its own BBQ during the summer months, lookout for a flyer!

There are other events throughout the year; you might even have your own ideas.

Most of these events are subsidised by sales of wooden products from the workshops and additional subsidy from our sister charity, with members contributing to the balance.

So, the more wooden items made and sold the cheaper the trips!

## Fire Regulations

All employers have a legal duty to ensure that employees and Members have a safe working environment. In return employees and Members also have a duty to observe regulations and to report other observed risks to staff. We remind you that in our buildings there operates a **NO SMOKING** policy which is the Law in the UK.

Each Member has the following responsibilities throughout the working day:-

- Ensure you know the nearest fire exit
- Ensure all fire exits are kept clear at all times
- Ensure 'No Smoking' signs are obeyed
- Ensure that any observed risks are reported immediately
- Ensure you know where the fire extinguishers are situated

In the event of a fire or the Fire alarm being sounded:-

- Leave by the nearest exit
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings
- If the alarm is not sounded break the glass Fire alarm situated at the side of every door
- Do **NOT** attempt to fight the Fire yourself
- Outside the building stand clear of the road ways as they will be used by the emergency services
- Do not wander around as this makes head counting difficult
- The Directors will ensure that the building is vacated safely
- Follow the instructions given to you by Staff
- Do not attempt to re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so

### **REMEMBER**

**You have a personal responsibility to ensure that you observe the above rules. They are made to ensure that YOU, your Colleagues and Staff have a safe working environment.**

## Health and safety

Health and Safety is one of the most important issues in any workshop's that use electrical, mechanical or sharp tools. The Centre has a duty in law to protect people attending the workshop or using any of the equipment from any possible danger or injury. To do this we train the staff and maintain the tools, equipment and buildings to provide a safe working environment.

We also try to maintain a higher temperature in the building than that required by law so that wheelchair bound members are comfortable, Remember that if you feel too warm tell a member of staff who will either turn the heating down or provide more ventilation. Please don't interfere with the heaters or leave doors open. Your fresh air is someone else's draught besides wasting money by letting the heat out.

Do not use any of the electrical tools unless a member of Staff has shown you the safe way to work them. You will be given a Health and Safety assessment by a Senior Member before use. If you are in doubt ask a member of staff to show you again. We prefer to be safe than sorry.

By the side of the various machines there are notices about wearing masks or ear defenders or other protective clothing. If the necessary equipment isn't there ask a member staff to find it.

You too have a duty to look after your own safety as well as other's. This means acting sensibly, do not interfere with equipment that other people are using or distract members in any way. You also have a duty to tell staff if you see anything that could be a danger to you or other members.

Most of the paints and glues used are water based and have a very low toxicity but they still need treating carefully. You are also expected to keep your own work area clean and tidy by washing your brushes out after use and returning your tools to the store. For those of you that like a night time read there is a full copy of our Health and Safety Policy and Equal opportunities Policy available from the office.

### **REMEMBER**

**You have a personal responsibility to ensure that you observe the above rules. They are made to ensure that YOU, your Colleagues and Staff have a safe working environment.**

## **Complaints Procedure**

As in any large organisation, from time to time things will go wrong. Therefore we have introduced a procedure for you to follow if you feel you have a complaint about The Centre or its Staff or director's.

Anything that you say will be kept confidential unless it involves serious allegations or you agree to make the accusations public.

Your first step would be to speak to the nearest Member of staff as soon as you have a complaint.

Do not let your problem drag on, the sooner we are made aware the sooner it can be resolved. This staff member will help you fill in a complaint form (available at the office) and you can ask for further help if needed.

If after talking to a staff Member you are still unhappy then talk to one of the Directors of your choice.

If you are still not happy then a committee consisting of a Senior Director plus two members chosen at random will meet with you and try and resolve your problem. Remember at all times you can have a friend or anyone else of your choosing to be with you for support whilst you make your complaint.

In the event of a complaint involving an accusation of assault or abuse, Adult Community Services (formally Social Services) will be informed immediately and a hearing set up to decide on a course of action.

In the more serious allegations the staff member or attending member will be suspended until the hearing. They too will be entitled to have representation at such a disciplinary hearing.

Remember, you have the right to complain but wherever possible go through the above procedure first, don't go to your care practitioner with minor complaints that can be settled quickly.

## Keeping In Touch Contacting Us

### Phones

From time to time you may want to contact someone when you are at the unit, please ask a member of staff for assistance. Each office has its own phone line and they are normally very busy so please only ask to use it in the event of an emergency it just ask a member of staff who will gladly help.

### Contact

At some time you may need to contact us. The following numbers might be useful to you in office times (between 9 and 4 Monday to Friday):

<b>Bury St Edmunds</b>	<b>01284 702195</b>
<b>Haverhill</b>	<b>01440 707878</b>

There is an answer phone system at all sites for after hours or during very busy times.

If you need to contact either of the Unit Manager's their mobile phone numbers are:

<b>Bury St Edmunds</b>	<b>07875 152435</b>
<b>Haverhill</b>	<b>07875 141522</b>

The mobile numbers are only to be used in an emergency such as bad weather and are only available between 8.00a.m. & 5.30p.m.

Straightforward messages such as absence can be left on our answer phone.

**From time to time we may need to contact YOU so please, if you change your phone number, address or method of transport, please let the office know.**



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