Fordhall
Community Land Initiative

Celebrate at Fordhall Organic Farm

THE STRAW LODGE FUNCTION INFORMATION PACK

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V.05.24

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Let us introduce you to Fordhall's Straw Lodge!

We would like to introduce you to Fordhall Organic Farm and our Straw Lodge. We are delighted to be able to be able to rent this unique building to accommodate guests to the farm, encouraging people to get immersed in nature and enjoy our wonderful landscape.

About the Straw Lodge

This fantastic straw bale structure was completed spring 2019 and was constructed using traditional methods. We used a specialist firm supported by hundreds of hours work from our dedicated army of volunteers, this truly is a building built by the community, for the community. The Straw Lodge is not only supporting our community, but it also benefits our environment too. It has exceptional environmental credentials including:

- A **round wood timber frame** which was produced by a workers cooperative in Wales. The timber was all harvested by hand and crafted by hand, with no machinery in site. It is oak pegged together and by using the round wood, waste timber is reduced. Furthermore, it allows the smaller trees which are no good for conventional timber yards to be fully utilised and not wasted.
- The walls are all made from **straw** harvested in Shrewsbury and built on site by members of our community. Internally this is rendered with clay and externally is rendered with lime.
- **Recycled Car tyre** foundations (sourced from our local town) have been used for the base - there is no CO2 emitting concrete insight.
- The straw walls or **sheep's wool** in the roof form the insulation needed.
- A **cedar shingle roof** completes the build – in fact it is almost a compostable building!
- PV Panels have been erected to produce electricity for the build.

Consequently, your stay is not only relaxing, but also gentle on our planet.

Timber frame and straw bale walls under construction

Clay being applied to the straw on our internal walls

About Fordhall Farm

Fordhall Farm has been farmed by the Hollins family for generations (see fordhallfarm.com for more information) but when larger German yoghurt manufacturer became the families neighbours, their once distant landlord decided he wanted to sell the land the family had nurtured for so many years.

Not content with losing their families heritage, siblings Charlotte and Ben Hollins (then 21 and 19 years) took on the fight to save the farm, their father's organic legacy and a community asset for the future. A community share scheme was launched and £800,000 was raised through the sale of £50 non-profit making shares in an Industrial and Provident Society called the Fordhall Community Land Initiative. After months of hard work and sleepless nights in 2006 they were successful.

This society now owns the farm through its 8000+ strong membership and is managed by Charlotte Hollins. As a community landlord it uses the farm to educate future generations about the importance of natural food and farming, and works hard to engage with the local community. The Fordhall Community Land Initiative runs events, open access through the farm trails, educational visits, a community garden, a youth project working with young people at the point of exclusion, volunteer weekends, short courses, yurt holiday accommodation, meeting room space, weddings, birthday parties and Arthur's Farm Kitchen.

The livestock, butchery/shop and farm are run by our tenant farmer, Ben Hollins. He lives in the farmhouse with his family (wife Marie-Anne and children Jamie & Isobel) and manages the land at Fordhall following organic principles created by his late father and organic pioneer, Arthur Hollins.

He continues to operate a system called 'Foggage farming' created by Arthur. This extensive, natural farming system means that Fordhall's cattle and sheep remain outdoors all year round, eating only organic grass and herbs from our pastures. The meat which results has been proven to be naturally higher in concentrations of omega three fatty acids and with the additional marbling; it has a flavour to compete with any other.

You may see Ben around the farm or possibly Bertie his stockman, who walks the fields twice a day with his dogs. Bertie is a very friendly chap and will be happy to answer your questions if you see him in the fields (although it is often very early in the mornings!).

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Straw Lodge Information

The building consists of:

- Large living space with exposed timber frame, log burner, dining table/chairs and adult beanbags for relaxing
- Large kitchen with central island (lowered at one end for accessibility) commercial electric six ring cooker, dishwasher, fridge and double sinks
- Private double bedroom with a triple sleeper bed (double bed on bottom level, single bunk bed on top)
- Accessible wet room/toilet which is ensuite to the private double bedroom
- Private single bedroom with one set of single bunk beds
- Two dormitory style bedrooms with five sets of single bunk beds in each (bunks are suitable for adults)
- Total beds to sleep 25
- Access to two showers and five toilets (these are shared access with our volunteers and private service users during the day, but NOT the general public and they cannot access the private living areas/bedrooms)
- Decking and enclosed outside area
- Car park

What we include:

- Heat / light / power
- Bedding provided as per option selected during booking, this is either
  a) Bringing own bedding – beds will have mattress protectors, pillow with protector and an uncovered duvet
  b) Using our bedding – beds will have mattress protectors, pillow with protector, an uncovered duvet and supply of clean bedding of base sheet, duvet cover and pillowcase for you to prepare your bed on arrival. This must be booked and paid for in advance of arrival.
- Tea/coffee supplies
- Basic kitchen equipment – pots, pans, knives, chopping board, utensils
- Basic cleaning supplies – washing up liquid etc, tea towels, dishcloths etc.
- Crockery – plates, bowls, glassware, mugs
- One basket of logs and firelighters in the winter months only, additional can be purchased from the farm shop.
- Toilet rolls

What you need to bring:

- Bedding – If you have selected bring own bedding please remember to bring base/fitted sheet, duvet cover and pillow case
- Towels
- Food including basic items such as milk, butter, bread, cooking oils etc.
- Disposable cooking supplies such as tin foil, kitchen paper
- Portable radio if you wish to listen to music etc
- Family entertainment such as games – there is no TV in the property
- Sensible footwear for a farm location - wellies are advised!
- Slippers for inside the building, we request outdoor footwear is left on the boot racks

WiFi - Please connect to the network Fordhall-Friends, the password is Lov3theseasons

CHECK-IN: 5.00pm on day of arrival **(unless otherwise agreed)**

DEPARTURE: 10.00am on day of departure **(adjustments to times considered on case by case basis)**

FUNCTION SPACE

The living space can accommodate a function of up to 70 people, with further space in the rear garden.
As a guideline for capacity:
Seated functions with matching chairs – up to 40 people
Seated functions with mix of chairs – 41 to 60 people
Informal gathering, occasional seating, standing room for some & full use of the garden space/picnic tables.
Buffet style food or BBQ – up to 100 people. We cannot permit more than 70 people to be in the building at any one time.

Grazing Table buffet

Wedding couples may wish to consider hire of the field at the rear for location of a hired yurt, tipi or marquee for further or main formal seating. Please contact us for more specific information on weddings!

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Please complete and return the enquiry form on the back page to get a quote for your event

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THE STRAW LODGE FUNCTION ENQUIRY FORM

Name:

Email Address:

Contact Tel. No:

Address:

Post Code: **Are you a Shareholder: Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Interested in becoming one!** ☐

How did you hear about us:

CATERING

Date of Catered event: **Approximate Timings**: (From/to)

Number of guests: ☐ Adults ☐ Children ☐ Infants requiring highchairs

Menu option:

Drinks:

Additional items/notes:

Any known dietary:

ACCOMMODATION:

Yes ☐ **No not required** ☐

Date of Arrival: **Date of Departure:** **Total No. of nights:**

Time of arrival: **Departure time:** **No of vehicles and type:**

Bedding: We will provide our own bedding ☐

We would like to hire ☐ sets of single bedding and ☐ double

Please return the form by post or email to get your personalised quote and itinerary, or simply give us a call.

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