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Land of Joy

Buddhist Retreat Community



*"To be human is to be powerful. We have the ability to do great things
because our fundamental nature is positive."*

- Lama Yeshe -

November brings a particular quiet to Land of Joy. The garden, having offered its bounty all summer, now rests beneath falling leaves. The days shorten, the nights deepen, and nature draws inward.

This season invites us to do the same - to slow down, to reflect, and to discover what emerges in stillness. As the outer world grows darker, we have the opportunity to tend the inner light.

We're grateful to be walking this contemplative season alongside you.

Could Land of Joy be calling you?



At Land of Joy, volunteering isn't just about getting things done—it's about who we become together. When we cook side by side, tend the garden in companionable silence, or gather for evening activities, we're not simply maintaining a retreat centre. We're weaving sangha. We're creating the conditions for each other's awakening.

We're looking for people who want to deepen their practice while serving the Dharma in a beautiful, supportive community. Whether you have a few weeks or a few months to offer, volunteering here is an opportunity to step away from the noise of daily life and into intentional living—where work becomes practice, and community becomes family.



Days flow with a natural rhythm: morning meditation, shared meals around a communal table, meaningful work in the house, garden or kitchen, afternoon tea breaks filled with laughter, Dharma study with our resident sangha, and quiet evenings by the fire. Swap stories with people from across the world, and discover that the most profound teachings often emerge not in formal sessions, but in the simple, sacred act of showing up for each other and supporting those committed to completing a retreat.

We welcome people with all levels of experience—gardeners and cooks, builders and administrators, social media enthusiasts and those who simply bring a willing heart. What matters most isn't your skill set, but your openness: to practice, to community, to being changed by this place and the people you'll meet here.



You don't need to be Buddhist—just curious, open-hearted, and ready to discover what happens when spending time in an environment where you can truly connect, with yourself and with others. Accommodation and meals are provided, and you'll have access to teachings, the meditation room, and the wisdom that lives in this land and in this community.

Many volunteers say their time here transforms them—not through any grand revelation, but through the quiet accumulation of meaningful days lived in good company, in service to something larger than themselves.

Ready to explore? Visit our website to learn more about volunteer opportunities, or contact us directly via volunteering@landofjoy.co.uk. We'd love to welcome you.



Apply to Join Our Team

Updates from the Land of Joy Board



Each of our board meetings is a precious opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate the previous three months. Here are some highlights we'd like to share with you from our latest meeting on 28th October.

Retreat Programme

Our retreat schedule continues to flourish, with group retreats well attended and our solitary huts welcoming practitioners from across the UK and beyond. The 2026 programme is now published and open for bookings—we're excited about the wonderful teachings and practices we'll be offering, including three retreats in collaboration with Jamyang Leeds.

Spiritual Life & Community

Tulku-la is growing beautifully into his role as Minister of Religion. He now leads weekly Q&A sessions for volunteers and will lead a White Tara retreat during the Days of Miracles following Losar 2026. The Wednesday night meditation group continues to thrive, with growing interest in deeper Dharma study.

Our volunteer book club meets weekly and is nearing completion of *When the Chocolate Runs Out*. We're considering opening it to the local community as a gentle way to connect with what we offer.

Retreat Huts Project

Wonderful news—planning permission has been secured for the two new retreat huts! We're now working with local contractors on groundwork planning and hope to build both huts simultaneously in autumn 2026. Thanks to a generous potential donation and existing restricted funds we are starting from a strong foundation. A dedicated fundraising campaign will launch early next year as invitation to our community to help us actualise this incredible project.

Volunteer Community

Our volunteer team continues to be the heartbeat of the centre. Many volunteers are extending their stays or returning for future visits, and the atmosphere remains warm and committed. The team has embraced the vision of a "volunteer retreat"—approaching their time here as an opportunity for personal growth alongside service.

Kitchen Garden Abundance

The walled garden has been wonderfully productive this year, with onions, leeks, beans, tomatoes, courgettes, and abundant herbs all making their way into our communal meals. We're grateful to Lou, Pete, and all the volunteers who have tended this nourishing space.

Karma Yoga in Wellies: Lake Clean-Up Crew

At the end of October, our Woodland Working Week volunteers transformed the lake—clearing overgrowth, removing debris, and restoring habitat for the kingfishers, herons, otters and other wildlife who call Land of Joy home. The crew embodied karma yoga in action, discovering that sometimes the deepest practice happens with boots on and hands in the earth.

Interested in joining? Our next Woodland Working Week is the 8th - 15th March, 2026. [Book your place now.](#)



To Our Woodland Working Week volunteers:

Your generosity moves us beyond words. You have given not just your time and energy, but your presence, your laughter, your willingness to wade into cold water and muddy banks for the benefit of this land and all beings who find refuge here. Most precious of all is the spirit you brought: the joy in shared labor, the kindness in each small gesture, the living demonstration that caring for the earth and caring for each other are one and the same practice. You have not only restored our land; you have reminded us what it means to be a community rooted in service and love.

From the depths of our hearts, thank you. Your footprints will remain in this soil, and your kindness in our hearts, long after the work is done.



Upcoming Retreats



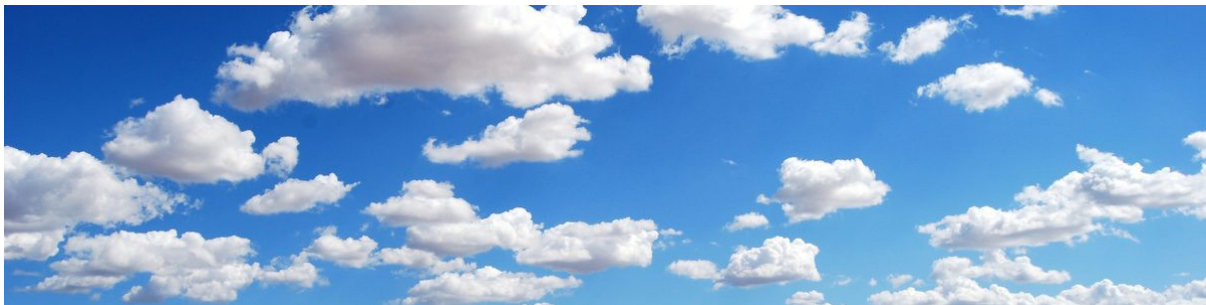
MAKING SPACE FOR JOY: LEARNING TO LET GO

With Alison Murdoch & Anna Colao: Friday 30th January – Sunday 1st February 2026

As we step into a new year, this weekend offers an opportunity to slow down, release what no longer serves us, and reconnect with our inner capacity for joy and wholeness.

Drawing on the deep wisdom of the Buddha, we'll explore how letting go—of craving, aversion and confusion—creates the space for joy to naturally arise. The retreat will offer a rare opportunity to step out of the noise of daily life and into a safe, nurturing space where we can reconnect with our body, align heart and mind, and begin to understand the habitual patterns of craving, aversion and confusion that obscure our natural clarity. Together we'll explore what it means to let go with warmth, playfulness and self-compassion so that we can be a more beneficial presence in the world.

[Register Here](#)



MAHAMUDRA: NATURE OF MIND RETREAT

With Roy Sutherwood: Saturday 7th until Saturday 14th February 2026

Land of Joy warmly welcomes back the much-loved annual Mahamudra retreat. In the dark winter days, join us to turn inward under the guidance of the experienced and kind-hearted teacher Roy Sutherwood. The retreat is open to both newer and more experienced meditators, and is most suitable for those with a little stability in meditation.

[Register Here](#)



WHITE TARA LONG LIFE RETREAT

**With Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la) & Di Carroll: Monday 23rd
February – Wednesday 4th March**

Land of Joy warmly welcomes back the much-loved annual Mahamudra retreat. In the dark winter days, join us to turn inward under the guidance of the experienced and kind-hearted teacher Roy Sutherwood. The retreat is open to both newer and more experienced meditators, and is most suitable for those with a little stability in meditation.

[Register Here](#)

Even the Pheasants Want In! 🦉



An Unexpected Visitor

Life at Land of Joy is full of surprises—some more dramatic than others. Recently, one of our local pheasants decided it wanted a closer look at what goes on inside the main house and flew directly at one of the beautiful bay windows in our library.

The result? One very startled pheasant (who flew off unharmed, we're relieved to report), and one rather spectacular spider's web of shattered glass radiating across the window pane.

Finding Joy in the Chaos

Even unexpected mishaps become opportunities for practice at Land of Joy. The pheasant is fine, the window has been repaired, and we've added "enthusiastic wildlife" to our list of things that keep life here interesting.

Living on 42 acres of woodland means we share this land with all manner of beings—red squirrels, deer, herons, kingfishers, and yes, the occasional overly enthusiastic pheasant. They remind us daily that this isn't just a retreat center; it's a sanctuary for all creatures seeking refuge.

And while we'd prefer our feathered friends admire the Dharma teachings from

a respectful distance, we're grateful that both the pheasant and our beautiful old building emerged relatively unscathed from this encounter.



🙏 ***May all beings—even overly ambitious pheasants—find peace and refuge*** 🙏



Recent Retreats



Shamatha Retreat: Cultivating the Clear Mind

This October, practitioners gathered at Land of Joy for a focused Shamatha retreat with Ven Mary Reavey—training the mind in calm abiding through repeated 24-minute meditation sessions.

Following B. Alan Wallace's *The Attention Revolution*, Ven Mary skillfully guided participants through the progressive stages of shamatha development. Teachings were complemented by reflection time, Q&A, and group discussion.

Whether new to meditation or experienced practitioners, our wonderful retreatants found benefit in this fundamental training of attention—the clear mind that enables us to uproot negative habits, develop bodhicitta, and gain insight into reality's nature.

The retreat reminded us that patient practice of shamatha offers a transformative path, no matter where we start.

"The food was naturally excellent - and I love the way Ven Mary lives her truth. Inspiring!"

"Everything was wonderful! I have learned so much from Ven Mary, the amazing library - each book is truly inspiring. Also - the volunteers? What a team. Kind, patient, available for great discussions - and amazing food! Thank you!"

Stories from Land of Joy



The Curtains That Practiced Impermanence

Written by Land of Joy volunteer Sandeep

Every day, the curtains perform the same play — a morning bow to the sun, an afternoon sway to the wind and an evening curtain call to the dark.

He often watches them while drinking tea, fascinated by their quiet choreography.

Sometimes they flutter wildly when a storm brews; sometimes they barely move, as if holding their breath for a passing cloud.

Yesterday he said, "They're so peaceful." This morning, he said, "They're restless." I wanted to tell him — they're neither.

They just move when moved.

Change doesn't bother the curtains.

They were stitched for it.

They don't argue with the wind; they partner with it.

Impermanence isn't a threat.

It's the breeze that keeps the soul from gathering dust.

When he finally learns to sway like them,

he'll stop calling it uncertainty and start calling it grace.

Moral: When you stop resisting change — you flow with impermanence.



A big thank you, as always, for your ongoing support of Land of Joy.
Please continue to visit us and support us in any way you can.

We hope to see you soon!



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