

Land of Joy Retreat Hut Community Guidelines

Our retreat huts are precious spaces. They exist to support deep, structured Buddhist practice in a quiet and protected environment. We recognise and deeply respect that retreat can take many forms — including less structured or more spacious and reflective time away. All of these approaches have value.

However, as we have only a small number of huts and they are in high demand, we prioritise their use for structured individual retreats that particularly benefit from the boundaries and quiet environment the huts provide.

These guidelines help us care for the spiritual environment, the volunteer community, and the integrity of retreat for everyone.

1. The Type of Retreat Supported in the Huts

The retreat huts are intended to support structured individual Buddhist retreats that include:

- A minimum stay of 7 days
- A clear and intentional daily schedule
- Three or four formal sessions of practice per day

These practice sessions may include:

- Ngöndro
- Meditation
- Deity practice
- Lam Rim
- Other established lineage practices

The huts are designed to support retreats that benefit from sustained silence, containment, and discipline. They are not intended for holidays, remote working, writing projects, creative work, or informal personal practice time.

2. Retreat Boundaries

Retreatants are asked to honour both the structure and boundaries that allow retreat to deepen.

During your stay we ask that you:

- Maintain a daily schedule of three to four formal practice sessions.
- Keep your focus on retreat for the full duration of your stay.
- Avoid engaging in study unrelated to retreat, or social activity.
- Remain within Land of Joy's grounds during your retreat.
- Leave the grounds only in the case of a medical emergency or for quiet walks in the surrounding countryside.
- Refrain from off-site visits or engagements.

Maintaining these boundaries doesn't only support your own practice. They also protect the precious practice environment of the huts for those who will use them after you and help reduce distractions for practitioners using the other huts at the same time as you.

3. Silence, Communication & Technology

Silence is a powerful support for retreat. When external conversation and stimulation are reduced, the mind has the opportunity to settle more deeply. It protects your practice from unnecessary interference and helps create the inner and outer conditions for clarity, steadiness, and insight to arise.

Limiting communication and the use of technology is therefore an important part of maintaining a beneficial retreat environment. The retreat huts now have phone signal, so maintaining this boundary relies on your own self-discipline and commitment to your practice.

During your stay, we ask that you:

- Maintain silence.
- Communicate only when necessary for practice/logistical needs or concerns with the volunteer team.
- Refrain from social interaction with guests or volunteers during your retreat period.
- Arrange your affairs in advance to minimise outside communication.
- Refrain from email, social media, news, and general internet use.
- Use the internet or phone only where necessary for retreat practice materials or genuine emergencies.

You are warmly welcome to connect with the volunteer team and wider community before and after your retreat.

4. Relationship with the Main House

The volunteer team will do all they can to quietly support you throughout your retreat with the intention of helping it be as beneficial as possible.

- Lunch and supper are prepared and delivered to your hut.
- Breakfast items are provided in your hut for you to prepare yourself.
- Notes may be left for the volunteer team to communicate dietary needs, laundry, or urgent concerns. However, we encourage that this is minimised as much as possible to enable you to focus on your practice.
- Group retreats take place throughout the year, so personal retreatants are asked not to come to the main house except to use the **library/laundry facilities or if there is an emergency**.

This supports both the integrity of your personal retreat and the volunteer team's care for group retreatants.

5. Dharma Support

Individual retreats can be challenging experiences, regardless of how much experience a practitioner has. We therefore ask retreat hut users to have a teacher or experienced and trusted dharma friend available to contact for advice and support throughout their retreat in case difficulties arise.

6. Ethical Conduct & Protecting the Retreat Environment

The retreat huts are more than practical spaces — over time they hold and accumulate the energy of sustained practice. The integrity of this retreat environment is protected through ethical conduct and mutual care.

Hut users are therefore asked to:

- Refrain from harming any living being.
- Refrain from taking what has not been offered.
- Speak truthfully (when speech is necessary).
- Refrain from sexual activity during retreat.
- Abstain from alcohol, drugs, and tobacco anywhere on the land which includes smoking and vaping.

By upholding these principles, you help maintain the quiet, respectful atmosphere that allows the retreat huts to continue supporting deep practice — both now and for those who will come in the future.

7. Generosity

Retreat huts are offered within Land of Joy's generosity model.

There is no fixed fee for staying in a hut. Instead, we invite hut users to offer what feels meaningful and supportive in response to their experience.

Your generosity helps ensure that these retreat huts can continue to be available for others in the future. In this way, your offering becomes part of a living chain of support — sustaining the huts so that future practitioners can benefit from the same protected space for retreat.

We are deeply grateful for any contribution made in this spirit.

A Shared Understanding

The retreat huts are a collective offering. Their continued availability depends on mutual respect, discipline, and care.

If the way a hut is being used is not aligned with these guidelines or begins to disrupt the retreat environment, we may need to review the stay in conversation with the retreatant.