

Criteria for Discernment for
Residential House Volunteers at Nether Springs

1. Many who have served on the House Team have done so during a time of transition in their lives. The applicant needs to be grounded and safe enough in themselves so they can hold a safe space for those who stay at Nether Springs and are often vulnerable and in a time of transition themselves. By 'being safe enough' we mean that an applicant has sufficient awareness of their own inner world, their patterns and thought processes, and how these impact on their own behaviour and well-being and on others.
2. Living and working at Nether Springs can be emotionally, physically and spiritually demanding. Whilst there is a supportive team, there is no specific person allocated to team members to provide specific support for their personal and spiritual development. We therefore encourage applicants to seek a suitable person for spiritual accompaniment (where this is not already in place), and, where appropriate, support in other areas.
3. The applicant is welcome to bring all of their experience and competencies to the team but must be teachable and open to learn and adapt. An ability to collaboratively work in a team is essential.
4. "Let him who cannot be alone beware of community... Let him who is not in community beware of being alone" (D. Bonhoeffer). An applicant has to be comfortable with spending time alone whilst being aware of their need for others. Life at Nether Springs brings with it a high level of interaction with others, both within the team and those staying at Nether Springs, and at the same time requires that team members do not rely on being in community at any given time.
5. The applicant needs to have a commitment to seeking God for themselves, and be able to corporately pray the Daily Offices in Celtic Daily Prayer. Preferably, the applicant, with support and guidance, over time will be able to lead Daily Offices at Nether Springs.
6. The applicant needs to be able to offer a hospitality of heart to people from a wide range of faith backgrounds, with differing political and social convictions. The applicant needs to show deep respect for other people's humanity and their seeking of God.
7. The applicant is not required to be a Novice or Companion in Northumbria Community but must be or become a 'Friend' of Community and must be open and respect Northumbria Community's ethos and spirituality.
8. Provision of own transport is not a requirement but is preferable, as there are limited means of public transport available.
9. Preferably, an applicant has received Covid vaccinations. Willingness to undertake regular Lateral Flow Tests and work with Covid related protocols to ensure the safety of visitors and the team at Nether Springs is essential.
10. It has only been on two occasions that families lived and worked as part of the longer-term Residential House Team at Nether Springs. Whilst this is not impossible, an application from a family, be it with children under or above the age of 18, to live and serve at Nether Springs requires special consideration.
11. Additional consideration needs to be applied for applicants from outside the UK who will have to explore Visa requirements for the duration of any long-term stay. Currently, we are not a sponsoring organisation with the Home Office, so residents outside the UK may be limited to staying for only 30 days.