

# BARDSEY TIME: THE ENLLI EQUINOX RETREAT

Ynys Enlli, North Wales  
18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
*Guided by Judith Mills & Fern Smith*



Image: Caroline Jones

**Come, join us** to consciously and creatively mark the 2021 Autumn Equinox, on Bardsey Island, Ynys Enlli in Welsh, a tiny land mass, half a mile wide and one mile long, located two miles off the coast of North West Wales.

**The Autumn Equinox is a special time of equal darkness and light;** a moment of suspension and a pause in between times. The Equinox offers a chance to turn our gaze inwards, to take a breath, to take stock and notice what is waiting to be born within us and in the world. Enlli in September, has a mellow landscape and it is the time that the many seals who live on and around the island give birth to their pups.

**Ynys Enlli translates to 'Island in the Tides'.** It has been a place of pilgrimage and spiritual seeking since at least the sixth century. Like many of the world's sacred sites, it is a powerful place: a portal for connection, a place of beauty, mystery and of legends. It is a place where we can align with the universal energies in order to receive support, healing and wisdom. From here we can also send out appeals and invocations for others, ourselves and the Earth.

**Bardsey Time** provides a nurturing space to turn our gaze inwards, in order to contemplate and listen to guidance from the Island and beyond. The Retreat is a journey into depth: an invitation to explore Enlli via the themes of our own life; a space to witness to connect and dialogue with others. It is an invitation to take time out, to seek wisdom and guidance from the landscape, its animals and birds, the stars and the sea so we are more able to navigate the tides and times of our own lives.

The retreat offers new ways of seeing, being, doing and living as well as an opportunity to receive answers to questions many of us are asking in these complex, fast-moving times. Questions such as:

- What is the work that needs me to do it? And how can I prepare to undertake this work?
- How do I connect to the support and guidance I need?
- What needs healing in my life?
- What do it need to let go of or let rest?
- What am I ready to birth in my life right now?



Image: Caroline Jones

**Judith and Fern will guide the group and each participant in a creative, emergent process** offering depth, spaciousness, periods of silence and contemplation as well as time for connection and personal ritual. By just being on Enlli you will connect to its energies, the tides, stars and skies, the land, its birds and insects, its animals, flowers, history, myths and culture. You never quite know what's going to happen when you get here!

**Each day there will be something offered to the retreatants** - a task, action or invitation - to help you be with the island in a different way in the service of life, light and health on Earth. We will open to the power and potential of 'sacred activism' and the work each of us can personally undertake during these momentous times. This might include art-making using materials you find on the island, writing and reading poetry, creating ceremony to offer up gratitude and prayer, or perhaps finding new ways of receiving information from the invisible realms. There will be time for walks and exploration as well as time for deep rest, joy and celebrating life. We will each have time to listen to what Enlli wants us to hear, see, feel and do. We will meet as a group twice during each day to share our insights. Fern and Judith will

offer each person the support and guidance they need to do what needs to be done. Each retreatant will receive a Bardsey journal for their reflections.

### ***Length of Retreat***

You will spend seven days and nights in total on the island. The duration of the retreat is five days, beginning on Sunday and finishing on Friday. This will leave you space at the beginning and the end to explore the island on your own and to make final preparations for your departure. The schedule will be sent to you in advance. Details may alter depending if weather conditions affect boat crossings.



### ***Retreat Guides***

***Judith Mills*** is a coach and facilitator who developed a model for career and personal change through her exploration of the Enlli Pilgrim route. [www.intuitivecareermanagement.com](http://www.intuitivecareermanagement.com)



***Fern Smith*** is an artist, wilderness rites of passage guide, craniosacral therapist, celebrant, facilitator, and coach. [www.fernsmith.co.uk](http://www.fernsmith.co.uk)

*Both Fern and Judith have a deep and powerful connection to Enlli and felt called by the island to set up and guide this week. We intend to offer an open and accessible space that welcomes people with faith or no faith, spiritual or secular, those who have never retreated or those who do so on a regular basis.*

## Practicalities & Logistics

### Accommodation

Retreatants will stay together in Ty Capel at the north end of the Island. Accommodation in Bardsey's beautiful and historic houses is simple but comfortable. There is no electricity in the houses, so bringing a torch is essential. Each house is provided with small solar lamps. There is a multi-fuel stove in each of the houses with firewood provided with more available to purchase if needed. Duvets and pillows are provided but you will need to bring your own duvet cover, bottom sheet, and pillowcases.

Drinking and cooking water needs to be boiled and filtered, daily ablutions are taken in the kitchen and the loo is a composting one in the garden of each house.

### Group Space

The group space is at Plas Bach, where Judith and Fern will also stay. Details on all Bardsey's houses can be found [here](#).

### Food

An evening meal will be provided for three of the seven days. The first meal will be cooked by Judith and Fern, and two further meals will be served at the farm café. You will need to bring all other food to the island with you, sufficient for lunches and breakfasts for yourself each day and for four communal evening meals. The group will liaise in advance about preparing the communal meals. Judith and Fern's meal and all communal meals will be vegetarian. Meat and fish dishes can be ordered from the farm café.

You will need to bring your food packed in large plastic boxes to ensure it stays dry on the crossing. The Bird Observatory shop also stocks very basic provisions and the farm can provide some fresh vegetables. We will send you more information about food on booking.

### Mobile Phones

There are a few places on the Island you can get 4G. You can choose to be device free for a week or check in with normal life as you desire. Phones and cameras can be charged at the warden's house.

### To Bring

Please bring poetry, art materials and/or anything you might need for a fulfilling retreat. A list of other things to bring will be sent on booking.

## **Terrain & Weather**

Enlli has rough tracks connecting the houses, interesting and diverse terrain, steep cliffs, sandy beaches and inlets, the mountain, Mynydd Enlli, grassy coastal paths and is peppered with Manx Shearwater burrows. This encourages being mindful. Good walking footwear is essential and some might find walking poles helpful.

Island weather is unpredictable and changeable, so be prepared for all sorts. Looking at the forecast the week before the retreat will guide your packing. It is chilly in the evenings and early mornings so bring warm clothes as you may be stargazing or welcoming the sunrise and sunset.

## **Boat Journey**

We travel across to Enlli by boat from Port Mywyddwy which is about two miles from Aberdaron. The boat trip to Enlli is about 20 minutes. We find out at 6.00 pm the Friday evening before travelling, the departure time of the boat for the following day. After leaving your car at Cwrt Farm near Aberdaron, a tractor will then transport your luggage down the track to the boat where it is loaded. The luggage is then taken off the boat in Bardsey and delivered to your house. Payment for the boat trip (£50) is already included in the fee for the retreat.

The boat only travels if the tides and winds are safe. Accommodation is available in the Aberdaron area if you require it the evening before or if the boat is postponed. It is recommended to take out travel insurance in case of delay. It is also a good idea to take extra food in the event of the boat not being able to make the crossing.



## To Book Your Place

Places are limited to a **maximum of six people**, so please book your place early to ensure your participation.

The cost of the Enlli Equinox Retreat per person is £440 (sharing twin room) or £520 (single occupancy of double room).

A deposit of £200 will reserve your place on booking. The remainder is payable by 20<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

*The cost of the retreat does include your baot crossing but does not include car parking on the mainland at the farm (£15)*

## Contact us

For more information, a conversation or to book a place:

Fern 07528 527836 [fernsmith@gmail.com](mailto:fernsmith@gmail.com)

Judith 07793 458244 [jm@judithmills.com](mailto:jm@judithmills.com)



Image Chris Bird-Jones

*It was our intention to offer this retreat for the first time in 2020. Due to Covid-19, it happened, but not in the way we expected! Instead of cancelling, we made the decision to come together to Bardsey to mark the September 2020 Equinox. During our time here, we gained many insights and were gifted with a joyous feeling and an invitation from the island to offer 'Bardsey Time' in future. We hope that you will be able to join us in 2021!*

Bardsey Time is an Emergence Initiative!  
[www.emergence-uk.org](http://www.emergence-uk.org)