



**VOLUNTEER  
WELCOME  
BOOKLET**

**ASSOCIATION LES  
VILLAGES DES JEUNES**

# INTRODUCTION

This booklet was developed and written by several heads and several hands. This co-writing was carried out by volunteers and permanent staff, and is part of a desire to prepare future volunteers as best as possible for their arrival here, in Vaunières. During moments of collective reflection, it had indeed appeared to us that there was a difficulty in transmitting the experience of the volunteers on the site, their place in the scope of this project. This difficulty in giving an overview of the place, in particular due to the complexity of the project, may have created a gap between the expectations and projections of the volunteers, and their reality subsequently experienced. It seemed to us that the preliminary interviews (especially in video) could be cumbersome, too much information, and that they did not constitute a sufficient format in itself to give an idea of what it means to be a volunteer. in Vaunieres. This is why we decided to develop a written support, which can be transmitted to future volunteers.

## LES VILLAGES DES JEUNES

The association Les Villages des Jeunes (<http://www.villagesdesjeunes.org/>) was born from the dual desire to promote social, cultural and generational decompartmentalization between people from diverse backgrounds and to revive abandoned sites in rural areas. . Its particularity is to be established on two sites located in the Hautes-Alpes: the Hameau de Vaunières (since 1964) and the Ferme du Fai (since 1990). Throughout the year in Vaunières and from April to November in Fai, the Youth Villages team welcomes increasingly heterogeneous audiences.

Vaunières and the Fai are above all tools at the service of meeting and intercultural exchange, places of learning and personal training. In addition, Villages des Jeunes supports several cultural projects such as the Melting Potes festival, culinary and musical events, etc.

Here and there, through the renovation, the management and the animation of rural sites, the associative team carries daily the collective utopia which allows people from varied socio-cultural backgrounds to meet around a project of collective interest. This is based on different types of reception: volunteering, voluntary work, activity through economic integration (integration workcamp), the reception of young people with fewer opportunities, the arrival of families or holidaymakers. Whatever the origin and the reality of each, a visit to Villages des Jeunes is most often a milestone in the journey of each other.

The Hameau de Vaunières is an old village whose oldest buildings date from the 17th century. Converted into collective lodgings, workshops or party rooms, they now host a large part of the activity of the Youth Villages.

## THE COLLECTIVE OF INHABITANTS

The collective of inhabitants is made up of several people. French and international volunteers, workers and permanents.



# HOSTING GROUPS

On the Hameau, we welcome groups throughout the year. This may be cultural social centers, children's homes, training, artistic residences... We also do some rentals weekends for weddings, birthdays.

We have a capacity of 48 places in hard distributed in two buildings, the lodging and the hotel industry. In addition, in the summer we welcome many groups on the campgrounds.

Groups can be accommodated in free management, half board or full board. The groups in half board or full board then share meals with all the inhabitants. That can be a moment of meetings, exchanges.

In addition, some groups take part in workcamps organized in the morning by the hamlet. They will therefore take part in cooking, carpentry, painting, transformation...



# THE INTEGRATION PROJECT

The hamlet also hosts an IAE (Insertion through Economic Activity) project. This is a system of subsidized contracts allowing people to exercise a professional activity in a secure working environment, and benefiting from support, in particular administrative support. They may be people in professional retraining, encountering difficulties in finding a job in conventional workplaces, or encountering difficulties (social, medical, family, etc.) requiring an adjustment of their work environment.

Multi-skilled employees (thus people working in Vaunières as part of this IAE project) do not live on the site. They go up every morning and leave in the evening. They participate in the various construction sites (renovation, kitchen, etc.), and are also required to supervise the construction sites with young people and groups.

- Not part of the collective of inhabitants, but daily interactions
- Accompanied position and companions



# THE VOLUNTEERS

The missions of the volunteers are diverse and vary according to the season. Throughout the duration of their volunteering, volunteers will be involved in welcoming groups, in ongoing projects. They can choose the place they want to hold. This can be discussed and decided together with the permanent team.

Missions all the years :

- renovation of the Hamlet (wood work, paint...)
- preparation of the room for the hosting groups
- cooking for the groups
- animation of the collective life

Missions specific during the summer :

- gardening
- animation of an international workcamp
- animation of the technical workshops with the groups



# HOUSING

The volunteers are housed at Les 3 Roues and the Auberge, and generally separate from their room with one or two volunteers.

Collective spaces and the tasks that require them are therefore shared by all the inhabitants.



# HOLIDAYS /WEEK-END

Every month you have the right of to 2 days of vacation that you can take throughout your volunteering. However, all the people working at the Hamlet (permanent, volunteers), we cannot take vacations during the summer, namely the months of July and August, because we welcome a lot of people and we then need that all the inhabitants are present.

Weekends, there are no work sites offered and are rest days. However, living within a collective, you will share your weekends with all the volunteers, young people present in the Hamlet. When there is group reception, you may be required to work evenings to help in the kitchen or to work on weekends. If you work on the weekend then you have 2 days off in the following week. You will never be alone during these evenings or weekends, there is always someone present.



You will therefore share the collective spaces (kitchen, living room, dining room, etc.) with all the inhabitants. All the inhabitants live, eat and work together. It is through this collective life (heart of our project) that people really set out to discover the Other, break down some of their prejudices and live in a real social and cultural mix.



If you are between 18 and 30 years old, you like social relations and you want to live an experience in a living and welcoming place, this volunteering is made for you!

In this unique place in the Hautes-Alpes, surrounded by mountains, you will be able to discover volunteering and its many missions linked to the Hameau de Vaunières: reception of groups, reception of young ASEs, construction sites, hotels, training etc...

You will also be able to develop many skills thanks to the workcamps that we offer throughout the year (carpentry, cooking, gardening, hospitality, etc.), but also relational skills thanks to community life (worksite café, menu café, homemade coffee...).

To be a volunteer in Vaunières is to be an actor in your volunteering. If you have projects, if you want to set up projects, we will be delighted to support you. Volunteering in Vaunières is also a commitment on several levels: personal, emotional and collective.

**What can be difficult during your volunteering (or not!):**

- Living in a collective, every day
- The isolation of the place (no telephone network, distance from cities)
- A fairly harsh winter
- Cohabitation with young people from ASE (living in the same house, noise, etc.)

**What will make your volunteering amazing:**

- An exceptional living environment surrounded by mountains, in the middle of nature
- A family atmosphere during collective moments of daily life
- The meeting of many people from different backgrounds and backgrounds
- Interculturality