

THE ASSOCIATION LE MAT PRESENTS

# *The New Neverland Makers* Project

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## European Volunteer Service (EVS)

*Founded by the French National Agency for Erasmus+ (Youth & Sport)*



VIEL AUDON

October 2015-August 2015



## **The new neverland makers project**

*The new neverland makers* is a long-term evs project (11 months) that will take place at the hamlet of Viel Audon, situated in the Ardèches cliffs. The Viel Audon is a cooperative village, where 4 organisations live together and cooperate according to the value of sustainable development, with a strong educational attitude.

This project is born from the partnership between the association le Mat (France) Mais Cidadania (Portugal) and Zajezka (Slovakia).

This project aims to promote the ecocityzenship and cooperation through those 3 axes:

- personal growth and fulfillment
- education to the cooperate (between individuals and socio'economic stakeholders of Viel Audon)
- education to sustainable lifestyles and nature-based learning

The new Neverland Makers, are the new generation of dreamers, who believes, like Peter Pan and the lost boys that we can still live in a pristine and cooperative world. They are those who believe that what seems impossible is still possible if we do together and listen to the life cycle of the nature!



**Period : October 2015- August 2016**

**Venue: Le Viel Audon, Ardeche (France)**

**Number of Volunteers : 2 (1 from Portugal, 1 from Slovakia)**



## The hosting site : Le Viel Audon

The site of **Le Viel Audon** has been inhabited since Prehistoric times by people who have enjoyed its mild climate, a river full of fish, a spring with constant temperature as well as rich fauna and flora.

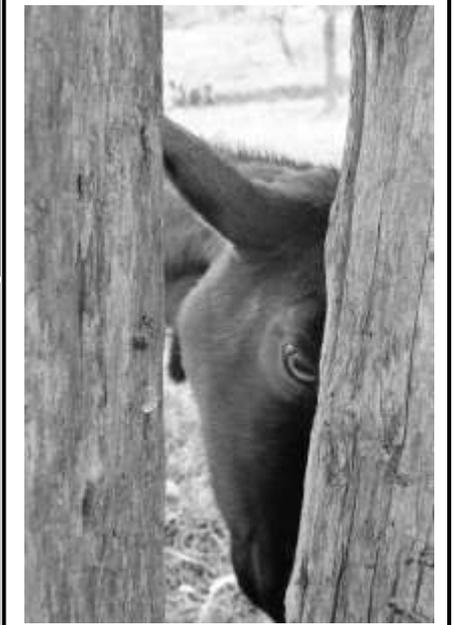
In the early 19th century, when silkworm breeding was a successful activity, the inhabitants of the hamlet left it to build large silkworm breeding houses on the plateau overlooking the village.

After being deserted and forgotten for a century, all that was left of it was a heap of ruins buried under ivy.

In the 1970's, a handful of "utopists" put it into their heads to revive LE VIEL AUDON. They created an association and organised international volunteer work programmes for young people. Over 10,000 volunteers took part in rebuilding the hamlet, and some of them decided to live there too.



LE VIEL AUDON



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Code A.P.E. 9499Z - SIRET 329 142 152 00019 - T.V.A. INTRACOMMUNAUTAIRE FR.30329142152

## The hosting organisation Le Mat

Le Mat is a center for the education for the environment the sustainable development and the cooperation. It manages a hostel and a hosting center with a total capacity of 48 beds. It is located in the pristine hamlet of Viel Audon, on the community of Balazuc.

### *The activities of the association :*

- management of the hosting center : hosting, cooking, cleaning...
- nature-oriented educational activities on site for school trips ( from primary school to university) such as baking, gardening, natural walkings, ladart visit of the farm and production of diary products, orienteering, DoItYourself activities ;
- trainings/stages for adults around the environmental education and sustainable development
- volunteer workcamps to renovate the buildings and the external areas of the hamlet.
- hosting of tourists in the hostel
- Hosting of International youth for non formal education activities
- Organisation of cultural events in cooperation with the other key actors of the hamlet
- Gardening



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***Who is the Mat's team in Viel Audon?***

The association has 8 employees.

Adine, Francesca, Elodie and Colin. are in charge of managing the activity on the site, including gardening, children activities, cleaning, secretary, cooking...

Marie and Yann. are in charge of the networking with the professional of environmental education on the local community

Michele is responsible for the accounting and administration



## The other key actors of Viel Audon

- the SCEA, the Viel Audon farm, an agricultural enterprise responsible for the goats breeding, cheese making and the management of a boutique on site.

-the BATELEUR, an association in charge of growing vegetables and transforming them into preserves to sell.

-the Association of Youth's workcamp AJC, managed by young volunteers who organises summercamps in order to rebuild the hamlet

-The informal group of « Cultures ! », formed by individuals working at the Viel Audon who aim to organise on a voluntary-basis some artistic events in collaboration with local artists.



**SCEA DU VIEL AUDON**



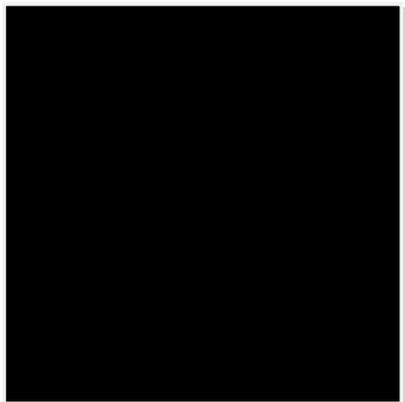
**LE BATELEUR**



**AJC**



**CULTURES !**



**LE MAT**

## Volunteers missions:

The volunteers will have 35 hours of activity per week, which corresponds at 5 days per week.

-3 days per week will be dedicated to the activities of Le Mat

support the team in the hosting tasks (cooking, cleaning, gardening, fixing, logistics, activity leading ...)

conception of pedagogical tools based on cooperation

-1 day per week will be dedicated to the full immersion in the farm activities ( vegetables and animals-related activities) managed by SCEA and Le Bateleur

-1 day per week will be dedicated to the personal « cooperation » project

For example:

To propose and lead activities for the connection between the Viel Audon and the local community

To carry out a new cooperation within the stakeholders of Viel Audon

And also, possibility to take part to the youth vounteer workcamps in summer.

## Which volunteers we are looking for

Ideally, the volunteers will have

-a good level of french or at least an evarage level of French and English

(The region is not really international so the knowledge of the french language can help the social integration oft he volunteers)

-an european driving license (the Viel Audon is really isolated from any shop , so for the social life oft he volunteers being able to drive can be really important!The cars oft he association will be available)

They will be

-willing to learn, experiment and share!

-interested in nature and curious of ecological issues

-willing to take active part of the dynamics on the site of Viel Audon

-willing to develop manual skills

-ready to live in a rural area

-prepared to live in simple conditions (ready to share a room with an other volunteer, to share toilets and kitchen with other inhabitants, to sleep in a comfortable tent during the warm periods)

## **Living in Viel Audon**

### ***Location***

The Viel Audon is an hamlet under the municipality of Balazuc (around 300 inhabitants), situated by the river Ardèche. The access to the hamlet is possible only by foot. There are 2 pathway from the car parkings:

-the first is 800 meters long, starting from Balazuc walking by the river.

-the second is 300 meters long starting from the top of the cliff.

The Viel Audon is situated on a public trekking path, therefore it represents a nice stop for the trekkers and the tourists, although its isolated position reduces a lot the tourists flow, compared with the number of daily visitors of Balazuc.

### ***Food***

During the hosting periods, the volunteers will eat with the hosted groups and with the rest of the team. In fact, Le Mat often prepares the meals for the school groups, the training and the tourists, by using as much as possible local and organic food.

When there will be no hosted groups, the association will provide the food for the volunteers. In case this is not possible, a maximum amount of 7 euros per day will be given to volunteers to buy their own food.

### ***Lodging***

The 2 volunteers will live on the site of Viel Audon.

During winter time, there are some chances that they will share the same room.

During summer-time each of them will have their own “tiny lodging”, such as improved tent, caravan, Mongolian tent...

During summer time, they will probably share kitchen, living room bathroom and garden with seasonal workers

### ***Transports.***

The public transport are very limited (few per day) and the bus stop is more than 1 Km from Balazuc.

We have 2 shared cars, that can be used by volunteers where is needed. The consumption of petrol needs to be refunded to the association.

Most of the inhabitants of Viel Audon has a car, so sometimes car sharing will be possible.

### ***Community life***

The Viel Audon counts around 10 employees all year long plus some seasonal workers/volunteers during summertime. Not all the employees, live in Viel Audon. For those who live in Viel Audon, they don't share a common house but have different lodgings on site.

Nonetheless, a common space is available for all the workers/volunteers during the working time, in order to cook and eat at lunch and to spend some nice time with the others.

Beside the everyday work, all the workers/volunteers of Viel Audon, no matter which of the 4 associations they are working for, are responsible for the well being of the community of Viel Audon. Therefore in the activity

schedule of each one is also included some common tasks like the management of the rubbish as well as the maintenance of buildings, public toilets, workshops and so on.

When some important work is needed (for example rebuild a roof, renovate a building), we organise a collective workcamp, where all the workers/inhabitants/volunteers of Viel Audon can work together for a common goal while learning new techniques and get closer to the others.



**SHARING MEALS WITH OUR GROUPS**



**COLLECTIVE WORKCAMP BETWEEN VIEL AUDON WORKERS**



**LOCATION OF VIEL AUDON**

## The Geography

### Ardèche

is a département in the Rhône-Alpes region of south-central France. It is named after the River Ardèche.

With its rivers and streams, the Ardèche has become a favorite place for canoe and kayak enthusiasts from around the world. The Ardèche contains a part of the Cévennes National Park. The area is very well known for sport climbing.

Some 50% of the population of the department lives in rural communities, The Ardèche has an average population density of 52 per km<sup>2</sup>, compared to 122 per km<sup>2</sup> for the Rhône-Alpes region and 104 per km<sup>2</sup> in France. Population density is highest in the regions around the two towns of Annonay and Aubenas and along the edge of the Rhône valley.

### Balazuc

The village has been labelled a "Village of Character" by the Departmental Committee of Tourism. It is a member of Les Plus Beaux Villages de France (The most beautiful villages in France) Association.

For millennia Balazuc has been the site of a ford on the Ardèche river which was a Gallic stronghold. The name *Balazuc* comes from the name *Baladunum* of *bal* meaning "rock" and "dunum" or "fortified height" in Gallic

The village underwent an evolution of houses across the centuries but retained its originality and the medieval character of the village with its narrow streets and its "callades".



## Social life in Southern Ardèche

The southern Ardèche, in the surrounding of Balazuc lately started to draw more and more young neo rural people, willing to experience an ecological lifestyle in a natural environment and to experiment new forms of fair and inclusive micro-society.

Thanks to these dynamics, lots of different associations blossomed and several cultural and environmental events are organized all year long and especially in summertime everywhere in the different villages.

Aubenas, the second biggest city of the department is 20 minutes far from le Viel Audon is. Here you can find any type of shopping facility as well as live-music bars, cafés, cultural and sport centers and so on.

