

Featherstone Ostara Gathering 2026 Call

Saturday 7 to Monday 16 March

Featherstone Castle, Haltwhistle, NE49 0JG



Calling all Radical Faeries, Queer Spirits, Gay Witches, Faggot Farmers, Drag Druids, Walkers-Between-and-Beyond-Worlds, Ritual Diva Queens, Long-Time Heart Circlers, Fae Newbies, Wild Womxn, New-Age and Old-Age Enbies, Pagan Pansies, Lesbian Lightworkers, Transgender Priestesses, Queer Eco-Goddesses, Gender Fuckers, Shape Shifters, and whoever else you may be... welcome home!

Yoo Hoo Faeries!

Spring Awakening

In Celtic neo-paganism, Ostara is the festival of the Spring Equinox, a time to celebrate the moment between darkest winter and the height of summer. It is the origin of the Christian festival of Easter. Ostara comes between Imbolc and Beltane, and is the second spring festival on the Wiccan/Neo-Pagan Wheel Of The Year. As the equinox, Ostara brings night and day into exact balance — it's the day when the hours of sunlight perfectly match those of moonlight, before the days get longer as we progress into summer. Like Samhain, which falls on the Autumn Equinox, Ostara is a liminal time between winter and summer. But while Samhain historically deals with death and what lies beyond the veil, Ostara instead celebrates rebirth and life on this mortal plane.

Our gathering doesn't quite coincide with the Equinox which starts in the afternoon on 20 March but we can join together to build energy towards the point of the Equinox. Ostara celebrates fertility and readiness to grow, and can be seen around us in the colour of flowers and blossom, so it is common practice to celebrate this time in nature observing the effects of the astrological union of sun and earth. The moon will be in it's "final quarter" phase on Wednesday 11 March.

While the earth lies quiet just before the Spring bursts into blossom the Equinox is upon us and with it the return of growth in our natural world. The arrival of mother nature's growth brings the sprouting of our winter inward gazing and outward gazing into the sunshine to come. Join us in honouring and gifting our bodies and mind while reviving, enlivening or activating our creative nature with our inventive, imaginative and primordial instinct to explore bringing art into physical form through experimental silliness and embracing our inner fools...

Let's co-create a hybrid gathering of community well-being, growth through bodily action, making art, making connections, & sharing space - whether that's in a heart circle or on the dance floor !

In the Albion Faeries we celebrate our diversity, and this includes neurodiversity. Many of us are on the autism spectrum, many of us have ADHD, and many of us live with a variety of mental health conditions. Faerie gatherings are co-created conscious communities: spaces where we can build and develop our communities. We're not clinical practitioners, and the nearest mental health crisis teams to Featherstone are in Carlisle and Newcastle which are both considerable distances away, so it's important that faeries coming to Featherstone are in a place where they're able to self-regulate, regardless of any condition they may have. Our welfare team and other participants can offer peer support, but we're not placed to deal with a mental health crisis.

Faeries with such challenges in self-regulation must contact us prior to the gathering in order to create an actionable support plan.

This is to ensure that you have the support you need, and that those doing the supporting are consenting and adequately resourced. If you come without a confirmed registration or adequate support plan, you will be asked to leave. If you refuse to leave then a circle will be called to inform the gathering transparently of the situation and further steps will be taken.

Substances, Self-Care and Consent

Please be aware that you may not be safe from witnessing things that might upset you; you may be kept awake by loud music, communal spaces will be very busy, and so on. We will do our best to make quieter spaces available, but we cannot always guarantee this.

The castle is a sex-positive, body-positive space. This means faeries are welcome to be naked in the castle, and you may witness faeries connecting with each other sexually. You are invited to be mindful of the faeries around you if you engage in sex or nudity at the castle - this might be by taking sexual connections to the Love Temple for example, rather than shared bedrooms. Please be conscious about nudity outside where passers-by might see.

Consent is a key aspect of the care we show for one another in faerie space - always ensure you have consent before any physical touch, sexual or not. You can read more about faerie consent at this link: [Love Temple and consent](#).

We ask faeries to be mindful about intoxicants, including being aware of our own limits and how your behaviour may change. As a sign of care for each other, we ask that you do not offer intoxicants to anyone unless they explicitly ask for them - even if you know they have consumed that substance in the past; and even if you know they've consumed other substances that day. Some faeries may find being around certain substances triggering, so we ask faeries to keep their substance use discrete (using mugs for alcohol where possible) and in spaces or times agreed within

the gathering. Please note that smoking and vaping is not permitted anywhere inside the castle, but feel free to smoke outside (please don't litter your fag butts though).

Whilst everyone is encouraged to take agency over their own self-care and the care of the wider community, we have welfaeries who are available to support if needed - you can read more about them (and other roles) at this link: [volunteer roles](#).

Workshops, Rituals and Offerings

Co-creation is the heart of any gathering, with individual faeries offering a wide variety of events from drum circles, talent shows, auctions and drag balls, to workshops, rituals, walks and heart circles. You can find out more about events and happenings at the gathering at this link ([events and happenings](#)). If you have an idea for an event you'd like to run, you can request any equipment or support in the booking form, or bring what you need with you.

Key teams of fae give service at the castle to provide us with things like meals, decoration, wood-chopping and welfare. Volunteering together is a great way to build friendships at the castle and to show your love and appreciation for the faerie community. You can read more about volunteering teams at this link ([volunteer roles](#)), and step up for these roles on the booking form or at the venue during circles.

Diversity

Over recent years, the Albion Faeries have begun a radical journey from a primarily white, gay, male community, towards a community that is more inclusive of the diverse spectrum of ethnicity, gender and sexuality that makes up queerdom.

We want to think a little differently about diversity at our gatherings - about the barriers that minorities encounter, and the unique identities of each individual fae.

This is an ongoing evolution, and in order to ensure that gatherings offer sanctuary and belonging to those queer minorities most at risk of exclusion or harm, we continue the tradition of offering at least 25% of places to faeries who self-identify as diverse.

Examples could be that you're a faerie of colour / from the global majority, a faerie who is non-binary, a trans faerie, or a someone AFAB (assigned female at birth) or who is a woman.

And lastly, if you would like to hold a minority-inspired ritual or event, we can support you in manifesting your ideas. We'd particularly like to hear from the community about how we can improve our representation and involvement from people of the global majority.

About the Castle

Featherstone lies in the magical Northumberland countryside, about 27,000 light-years from the galactic centre of the milky way - along the inner edge of the Orion Arm. We've included some essential information about your stay below, but you can read more at this link: [self care and what to expect](#).

Accommodation

Accommodation is generally in shared rooms, with a very limited number of single rooms for those who cannot sleep in shared spaces. There's also space for camping and camper-vans. You can let us know about any accommodation requirements in your booking form and we'll do our best to fit you in.

Food

All meals are vegetarian (and mostly vegan) and we also cater to gluten-free and other individual dietary requirements - as far as possible. Please give your details in the booking form - if you have any allergies, you can let us know in the form as well. Whilst we can't guarantee a totally free-from environment, we will do our best. If there is a risk of anaphylaxis due to your allergies, please make sure you bring the necessary equipment (eg epipens etc).

Accessibility

The castle is far from modern accessibility standards and this can make it challenging for people with mobility needs to navigate - and inaccessible to wheelchairs. You can find more information at this link: [accessibility & mobility](#) and we're more than happy to answer any questions before the gathering by email.

What to Bring:

A suggested packing list for Featherstone Castle can be found here on the Albion Faeries website: [packing list for Featherstone](#).

Registration and Payment

Featherstone Castle gatherings are very popular, and places typically fill up within 2-3 days. Booking is first-come-first served and there will likely be a waitlist, so please email us as soon as possible if you have a space but cannot make it, so that another faerie can take your place. We also ask that faeries do not turn up without a booking, as a mark of respect to those on the waiting list.

In order to break even, the cost of this gathering will be **£40 per faerie, per night (plus £3 towards the cost of the PLI)**. This is made up of **£32.00** for the castle (this is a small increase on last year but is still considered a discount rate by the owners, who charge £35 per night to other groups) plus **£8.00 for food, firewood & other essential supplies**.

For the full 9 nights/10 days, the total break-even cost will be £363 (£360 plus £3 towards the PLI - see next paragraph for details). We're asking, if you can afford it, to consider paying £43 per night (£390 for the whole gathering: £387 + £3 towards the PLI) as this will help towards the NOTAFLOF capacity for those who can't afford it. And, of course, if you can, then you'll be helping to support a faerie to come who might otherwise not be able to join us.

The castle team are also requiring us to have public liability insurance with cover up to £10 million. We have managed to find a provider of this, and the premium is £120. To split this evenly across an estimated 40 participants, this will be an additional cost of £3 per person, on top of the per-night fee. Please add this to your total. If we end up with more than 40 faeries, the extra will go towards NOTAFLOF.

We'll send the payment details along with your booking confirmation and we ask that you make any payments at the time your booking is confirmed (you can also find the payment details at this link: [payment & finances](#)). If you'd prefer to pay at a later date or pay in cash at the gathering, please drop us an email when you receive your booking confirmation.

As a radically inclusive gathering we operate on the faerie principles of NOTAFLOF, ADAFAE and GAYABAGS - and we've included some extra guidance, brought together at the Summer Transcendence 2024 gathering, so please read more about it on the finance page.

The following points were in the outcome notes from a recent Moot of the Albion Faeries where we discussed the financial situation that we're currently in, and some deep conversations about the principle of NOTAFLOF:

No One Turned Away for Lack of Funds means that we always ensure that people with severe issues around lack of adequate income/ benefits, asylum seekers, and other fae in unforeseen or longer term financial crisis will always be able to join gatherings. We aim to maintain this principle.

NOTAFLOF does not strictly apply to folk who actually do have funds but who may struggle to plan their finances or who may choose to spend their funds elsewhere. In these cases, we can offer those folk a savings plan or payment by instalments or suggest a reduction in payments, but not totally free places.

As a community, we ask each other for honesty and trust. We ask that this trust will not be abused by deceit or theft as these destroy our collective sense of community.

A key community value of our trust is to respect each other's decisions and choices, and not to shame or disrespect others for those choices. For instance, we will not pursue individual folk who do not follow up on their pledged payments for gatherings.

- please contact us for any requests for NOTAFLOF ostara@albionfaeries.org.uk
- if you can't make the break-even amount of £40 pfpn then please get in touch
- we can only accommodate people paying less, if others pay more
- follow this link for [finance details and how to pay](#)

Gathering Updates and Questions

Over the last few years fae have created this [Information Portal](#) where you can find a wealth of additional information about accessibility, what to expect at the castle, volunteer roles and more.. The [Albion Faerie Website](#) is also a great source of information. If you can't find what you're looking for, feel free to drop us an email at ostara@albionfaeries.org.uk and we'll get back to you as soon as we can.

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions

We want to honour the discussion had in recent moots (faerie-wide meeting) about how our community can better follow the principles of the BDS movement, to avoid supporting companies associated with the ongoing genocide of Palestinians. To this end, we have decided not to use Google to create our booking form this year, and will be taking a look at how we source our

groceries for the gathering to make sure we aren't supporting any companies on the BDS campaign's [list of targets](#).

Follow this link to [find out more about BDS](#), and get in touch with us if you've got any questions or further ideas about how we can honour this intention.

How long is a pice of string?

A very important question which has been on people's minds for many years...

Booking Form

Please follow [this link to the booking form](#). It will go live at 12 noon on Friday 30 January.

with love from your Samhain organising team:

Mama Sparkles, Discovery, Twitch, Candy ...