



**Building the first dedicated retreat in
England for teenagers and young adults
overcoming cancer.**

**Because every young person deserves the
opportunity to thrive.**

teens:)unite
FIGHTING CANCER

Registered Charity Number: 1118361



“ Words cannot express how much it would mean to spend time at a facility such as this during the hardest of times.

Going through cancer at this age brings so much fear, loneliness, and uncertainty. You think this is going to be your life forever, and without the support of Teens Unite, it could be.

Being with others who get what you're going through makes such a difference; you find the support and strength in each other to start living your life again. ”

Tyler, diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia, aged 18

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“ We’re delighted to share our plans to open the first retreat in England for teenagers and young adults living with, and beyond cancer.

Teens Unite is taking a vital step in transforming the support available to young people across the UK, who have experienced a cancer diagnosis.

In the UK, over 40,000 teenagers and young adults are currently living with cancer and its lasting effects. Each year, an additional 2,500 young people in this age group face a new diagnosis, highlighting the growing need for the specialist, long-term support we provide at Teens Unite.

Our vision is to create a dedicated space that unites young people with a shared experience of cancer, where their needs are fully met, and where they are provided with opportunities to thrive and live life to the fullest.

As we continue to experience an annual increase of 48% in registrations for our support each year, the need for this vital facility is becoming more of a necessity to be able to service this demand.

With the retreat, we’ll not only be able to support more young people who need us, but we’ll become more inclusive and accessible, and be able to expand our reach. Our ambition is bold, yet achievable with the retreat in place - to support 30,000 teenagers and young adults over the next 10 years.

Our work over the past 18 years has shown us the power of connection - the connections between the young people we support and the partnerships we’ve built to achieve meaningful change.

We’re grateful to the organisations and individuals who have already demonstrated their commitment to the project, but there’s still work to be done and a fundraising target to reach.

Please take the time to find out more information on our plans, the difference the retreat will make, and how you can support the project.

Together, we can improve the lives of teenagers and young adults living with and beyond cancer. ”

Roxanne Lawrance, Chief Executive

Debbie Pezzani BEM and Karen Millen OBE, Founders

Why our support is needed

Every two minutes, someone in the UK is diagnosed with cancer, with the fastest-growing incidence among those aged 20-24.

For teenagers and young adults, cancer is a lonely and isolating experience that continues to affect their lives long after treatment comes to an end.

Key adolescent milestones are missed, their independence is taken away, and their life is put on hold.

Cancer presents a specific set of challenges in this age group. It impacts their education and employment opportunities, friendships and relationships, physical ability, confidence and self-esteem, and their mental health - with PTSD, anxiety, and depression all commonly associated with cancer in young people.

Despite 96% of young people experiencing at least one serious mental health problem as a result of having cancer, 44% are without NHS support for the mental health impacts of their diagnosis.

Teenagers and young adults need specialist, ongoing support to live positively during treatment, and thrive in the years that follow.

The effects of cancer extend beyond the individual diagnosed, impacting the entire family. The safe and supportive environment we provide offers young people the chance to connect with others who truly understand their experiences, while also giving their families much-needed respite.

For teenagers and young adults living with, and beyond cancer:



80%

find the mental health impacts as difficult as the physical effects of their cancer, yet struggle to receive the NHS support they need.



95%

experience a negative impact on their physical ability, increasing not only the risks to their long-term physical health, but also their mental health.



87%

lose contact with their friends, challenging their sense of belonging at a time when social connections are critical to their development.



82%

feel worried about the impact cancer will have on their future employment; affecting their confidence and restricting their potential.



61%

find it presents barriers to their learning and qualifications, with young cancer patients twice as likely to be out of education compared to peers without cancer.

How we make a difference

Every young person deserves to thrive, and cancer shouldn't get in the way.

Teens Unite is the only organisation in the UK to provide ongoing support to 13-24-year-olds during, and after cancer.

We ensure there's more to life than cancer for teenagers and young adults.

Our tailored activities, stays, and programmes support young people to live positively with cancer, and navigate the years that follow.

Teenagers and young adults with a shared experience of cancer are united. Together, they find friendship, learn new skills, challenge themselves, enjoy new experiences, rebuild their confidence and self-esteem, and prioritise their mental health and wellbeing.

They find a sense of belonging in a supportive and encouraging space, where they are seen as themselves, and not as a cancer patient.

Through Teens Unite, teenagers and young adults can live life to the full, reach their potential, and plan for the future ahead, without cancer holding them back.

Whether a young person is currently undergoing treatment or living with the lasting effects of a childhood diagnosis, we are here to support them every step of the way as they navigate the challenges cancer presents in their teenage and young adult years.

For teenagers and young adults who have accessed the support of Teens Unite:



feel better connected and less lonely



feel their mental health has improved



feel their physical health has improved



have a more positive outlook on life - ready to consider education and employment



would recommend the support of Teens Unite to another young person with experience of cancer



“ Teens Unite has played a vital role in my journey and without them I’d be really lost.

They give you opportunities to socialise again, laugh again, and create positive memories - even at such a difficult time in your life. ”

**Hiral, diagnosed with
Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia,
aged 21**

Introducing the project

Providing young people with the support they need, and the opportunities they deserve, following a cancer diagnosis.

The retreat will be the first facility of its kind in England. It will be a dedicated base where Teens Unite will provide essential support to 13-24-year-olds who have experienced cancer.

Unlike medical facilities, the retreat will focus on helping young people overcome the mental, physical, social, and emotional challenges brought on by cancer.

Designed with accessibility and inclusivity at the forefront, the priority is to extend our reach, and support more young people from across the UK, throughout their cancer journey.

Currently, without this facility, our one-day activities are too far for many young people to travel for, and our short, residential stays are oversubscribed.

The retreat will consist of short-term accommodation, activity space, and recreational grounds. It will be used to host more of our one-day activities and three or four night residential stays, offering young people the chance to connect with others who truly understand the unique challenges of facing cancer during adolescence and early adulthood.

They will have opportunities to learn new skills, form meaningful friendships, and rebuild their confidence and self-esteem.

Away from the pressures of daily life and surrounded by the retreat's peaceful environment, they can focus on self-care, recovery, and embracing life with, and beyond cancer.



Why is the retreat needed?

For the past 18 years, Teens Unite has been supporting teenagers and young adults through activities and residential stays hosted in hired venues.

However, as the demand for our support continues to grow, this model has become increasingly unsustainable. The rising costs of hiring venues, coupled with the significant resources required to manage logistics and planning, limit our capacity to reach as many young people who need us.

Additionally, relying on external venues presents a host of barriers in relation to inclusivity and accessibility, and facilities fall short of the standards required for young people overcoming cancer.

Despite using a variety of venues, including private boarding schools and country homes, these spaces consistently fall short of meeting the unique needs of our beneficiaries - a challenge also experienced by the healthcare teams and charity partners we work closely with.

Hygiene standards are often inadequate, posing a serious risk to those undergoing cancer treatment. With weakened immune systems, young people are particularly vulnerable to infections and illnesses, making this a critical concern.

Accessibility is another significant issue. Many venues lack proper disabled access and amenities, resulting in wheelchair users being forced to stay off-site or, worse, unable to participate at all. This exclusion can leave them feeling isolated during a time when connection is vital.

As the young people struggle to come to terms with changes in their physical appearance and their loss of identity, the lack of privacy in shared amenities at external venues can heighten feelings of self-consciousness and anxiety. These experiences may discourage them from seeking support in the future, despite desperately needing it.

While Teens Unite is not a medical charity, we are acutely aware of the specific requirements of the young people we support. From the safe storage and disposal of medication to facilities for stoma bag changes, external venues often fall short of providing what is needed to ensure comfort and dignity for the young people we support.

Additionally, catering at these venues frequently fails to meet the nutritional needs of teenagers and young adults recovering from the physical toll of cancer treatment. Nourishment is essential as they rebuild their strength and fitness, yet many venues lack the capability to provide meals that support this recovery process.

These ongoing challenges highlight the urgent need for a dedicated retreat that meets the specific needs of the young people we support, ensuring their safety, comfort, and wellbeing at every stage of their cancer journey.

“ Without a doubt, the hardest part of this job is not being able to provide young people with the support they need, when they need it most. ”

These young people look to Teens Unite as a shining light during their darkest days, and knowing that some may still feel alone or unsupported weighs heavily on all of us.

Every young person should be able to access our support, without accessibility, inclusivity, or the standard of facilities coming into question. ”

Katie Andrew, Beneficiary Services Manager, Teens Unite

What will the retreat achieve?

It will enable us to:



Meet increasing demand

In the last 12 months we have provided 1,600 opportunities to attend our activities and stays, all of which were oversubscribed.

The House of Teens Unite will increase our support output by almost 50%.



Improve accessibility and inclusivity

Accessibility and inclusivity are two of the biggest barriers preventing teenagers and young adults from fully engaging in our activities.

Our retreat will be a dedicated, purpose-built space designed to be fully accessible for everyone, with appropriate disabled access and accommodation throughout.

With short-term accommodation on site, young people from across the UK will be able to access our support, regardless of where they live, helping us extend our reach and impact even further.



Ensure deprivation doesn't limit support

The retreat will ensure no young person faces cancer alone or is left behind, regardless of their background.

While we work to reach deprived areas across the UK, where access to support services is limited and opportunities for social connection are fewer, the retreat will offer more young people consistent access to our support.

For those from inner-city communities, it will also provide open outdoor space, quiet and tranquility - essential for their recovery.



Ensure high standards are met

The retreat will encompass the needs and requirements of the young people we support to the highest standards - from a clinically clean environment to reduce risk of infection, to private amenities, medicine stores and disposal units - we'll ensure it is a safe and comfortable environment, that doesn't feel like a hospital setting.



Provide a sense of belonging

Cancer is a lonely and isolating experience, especially during the teenage and young adult years when forming friendships and shaping your identity are so important.

The retreat will offer young people a much-needed sense of belonging - a safe and supportive space where cancer isn't what sets them apart, but makes them feel the same.

By socialising with peers who share similar experiences, young people feel understood, and see their identity goes beyond that of a cancer patient.



Improve and diversify our support

The retreat's dedicated Activity Centre will enable Teens Unite to host multiple activities simultaneously, allowing us to address the unique needs and interests of young people at every stage of their cancer journey, from diagnosis to remission.

The flexible design of the accommodation will enhance our ability to diversify support, providing a welcoming space for families to meet their growing needs for connection with others.

Informed by lived experience

The support Teens Unite provides has always been shaped by the lived experience of the teenagers and young adults we support, who have been diagnosed with cancer.

When it comes to the retreat; their input has been at the forefront of our decisions.

Guided by our youth advisory board

Our youth advisory board is formed of teenagers and young adults who have experienced cancer themselves, and share our passion for improving the lives of others their age now facing the same challenges.

Drawing on their personal experiences, they play a vital role in guiding Teens Unite's strategic direction and shaping our future. As advocates for the Charity, they are a powerful voice for young people across the UK, inspiring and educating others about the unique challenges faced by young cancer sufferers.

Through quarterly meetings, the Youth Advisory Board provides invaluable insights and advice on our initiatives. A dedicated portion of these meetings is held with our Chief Executive to focus on the retreat, ensuring it meets the needs of those it is designed to support.

Their personal insight has guided our architectural plans, highlighted priorities, and brought specific needs to our attention.

From guiding us in finding the right balance between communal spaces, and quiet areas, to identifying key requirements such as adequate storage and disposal units for medication; their input has been invaluable.

Learning from current residential stays

Teens Unite currently delivers two residential stays each year, offering an opportunity for young people overcoming cancer to connect with others their age who truly understand their situation.

These stays have always taken place at a range of external venues across the country. While each location has helped bring young people together, they've also presented ongoing challenges, forcing us to compromise on accessibility, amenities, and the level of personalised care and support we can provide.

Feedback gathered after every residential stay consistently highlights the same issues - the facilities simply do not meet the unique needs of young people living with and beyond cancer. Following our most recent stay, whilst 94% felt better supported in their cancer journey as a result of attending, 63% felt the venue facilities did not meet their accessibility needs.

These experiences have been invaluable in shaping our understanding of what is truly needed to deliver the highest standard of support during our residential stays, and have strengthened our commitment to creating a space that meets those needs without compromise.

Informed by other charities

Teens Unite is proud to be a member of the Children and Young People with Cancer Coalition (CYPCC) - a collaboration of 40 dedicated charities working together to support young people with cancer and their families.

By actively participating in the CYPCC's quarterly meetings, we've strengthened our understanding of the physical, emotional, and social challenges young people face at every stage of their cancer journey. This insight has reinforced the need for the retreat, and our intentions for how the site will be used and developed.

Introducing the site

Located on a private, 1.6 acre plot in rural Hertfordshire, the site is surrounded by beautiful countryside.

The site for the retreat offers an idyllic setting for teenagers and young adults to escape the stresses and challenges of living with cancer, allowing them to focus on their mental and physical wellbeing - both of which are essential to their overall recovery.

With inner-city areas recording the highest incidence rates of cancer, our vision has always been to provide young people with the opportunity to retreat to a relaxed, rural environment. Here, they can immerse themselves in the tranquillity of the great outdoors, take a moment of calm, reflect, and connect with nature.

Studies show that spending time outdoors significantly reduces stress and anxiety, combats fatigue, boosts mood and mental wellbeing, and increases motivation to stay active.

Recognising these benefits, we prioritised finding a location with expansive, outdoor space, which is especially valuable for those who have endured weeks or months of isolation within the same four hospital walls.

While the retreat's peaceful surroundings are vital, equal importance was placed on accessibility. The site ensures teenagers and young adults have convenient transport links and are within reach of medical care if needed.

The safety of the young people we support remains our highest priority. This carefully chosen site ensures they are never far from a cancer excellence hospital, with access to London via car or train in just 45 minutes.

The Borough of Broxbourne has always been home to Teens Unite, and this site enables us to remain part of a community that supports us.



Current view of the site prior to development

The importance of location

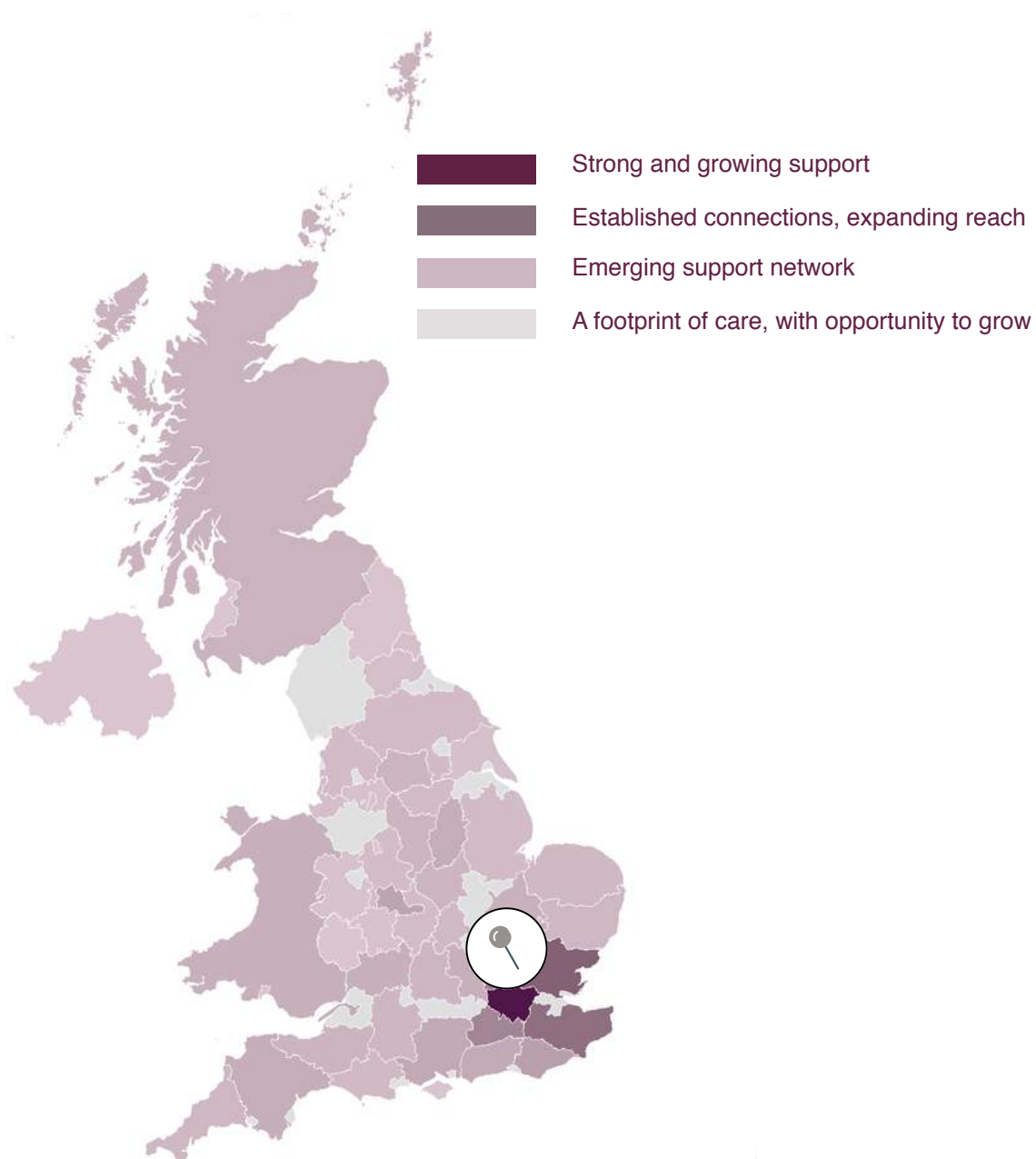
This map demonstrates the breadth of our support across the UK.

The location of the retreat has been carefully considered to ensure it is easily accessible for those travelling from further afield, to prevent this from becoming a barrier to our support, and to enable us to strengthen our service provision to these areas.

The retreat is located within:

- 4 miles of a mainline station
- 10 miles of access to the M25
- 30 miles of 7 key London train terminuses and 3 London airports

In addition, the welfare of the young people and their accessibility to medical care should they need it, has also been a vital consideration, and the site is within an hour of main cancer excellence hospitals.



The vision for the site

Transforming the existing site into a fully functional, accessible, and inclusive site that meets the requirements for which it is intended.

Working in collaboration with experienced architects, Saunders, who specialise in recreational and educational design, we conducted detailed research and analysis to determine the most effective way to utilise the sites existing assets and adapt them to meet the needs and requirements of the young people we support.

This comprehensive analysis, combined with in-depth building surveys, revealed that, regrettably, some of the existing structures are not fit for purpose. Structural constraints within these buildings prevent them from meeting the necessary standards for safety, accessibility, and functionality.

The new architectural plans bring a fresh lease of life to the site, adapting the existing buildings where possible, and creating purpose-built facilities where buildings are unable to meet the needs and requirements of the retreat in their current state.

These plans retain the adequate outside space, which will be beautifully landscaped to incorporate a vegetable garden, reflection area, quiet garden, and lawn.

The buildings will remain in keeping with the surroundings, and have been designed to ensure that every young person will be able to easily access them, without barriers or restraints.

The rejuvenation of the site has been broken down into four key phases.

Each phase will enable us to increase and improve our support provision in three key areas:

- 1) Residential stays (Phase 3)
- 2) In-person activities and workshops (Phase 2 and Phase 4)
- 3) Digital activities (Phase 1)



Four key phases of development

The development of the site will be a phased approach in line with funding, planning, and our priority of needs.

The four key areas of development are located on this aerial view of the site.

PHASE 1 - New Charity Head Office

Retain the existing granary building, and refurbish for the purpose of Teens Unite's office, removing the need for external charity office facilities.

PHASE 2 - Activity Centre

Retain and renovate the barn into a dedicated Activity Centre, providing workshop space to host an increased number of Teens Unite activities, without the need to hire external venues.

PHASE 3 - Residential building and landscaped gardens

Demolish the existing garage building and main house, and rebuild new accommodation to host up to 20 young people at a time, as well as kitchen and dining facilities, and communal areas.

Landscape the outdoor space into separate garden areas each with their own purpose - from increasing ecology and wildlife to the site, to growing vegetables, to being a quiet and reflective space to remember loved ones supported by Teens Unite.

PHASE 4 - Sports facility

Rebuild the existing outdoor summer house into a sports classroom and store, to support young people with their physical recovery.



Current aerial view of the site, locating four key phases of development

PHASE 1 - Head Office

The original granary building will be retained, refurbished, and transformed into the new Head Office for Teens Unite.

This space will become the heart of the Charity's operations bringing together the fundraising, marketing, and beneficiary support teams under one roof. This eliminates the need for separate office facilities, helping to reduce overheads and allowing more funds to be used directly on supporting young people living with, and beyond cancer.

Being based on site also means the team can witness first-hand the difference their work makes. This connection will improve engagement, motivation, and improve their understanding of the experiences of these young people, and the need for the support Teens Unite provides.

Estimated cost: £100,000

Actual cost: All services delivered pro-bono by Kinovo, Genco and Tesco Plc.

Phase 1 is now complete.



Teens Unite's new head office

PHASE 2 - Activity Centre

The existing long barn will be retained and converted into a dedicated Activity Centre.

The facility will consist of a ground floor level only, and will incorporate four separate rooms, accessed through wheelchair accessible doors, ensuring it is fully accessible.

This building will be used to host the activities and workshops taking place on site, and will enable multiple sessions to run simultaneously to suit the different needs and interests of the young people attending.

Ranging from art and pottery, to design, careers and CV workshops, and music and podcasting within the sound-proofed area, the Activity Centre will be a hub of energy and creativity on site, as the teenagers and young adults enjoy new experiences, learn new skills, and connect over the activities being run.

The barn will incorporate WC facilities (including accessible WC), a kitchen area for preparing snacks and refreshments, and will include an outside seating area under a canopy, overlooking the beautifully landscaped gardens.

Estimated cost: £600,000



Current existing building



CGI image provided by our architect, Saunders

PHASE 2 - Activity Centre - Architect plan

Activity spaces:

Three, sound-proof spaces will be at the centre of the building to host a range of activities and workshops for young people visiting the retreat.

These spaces will enable 10-15 young people to benefit from each activity at a time.

Entrance:

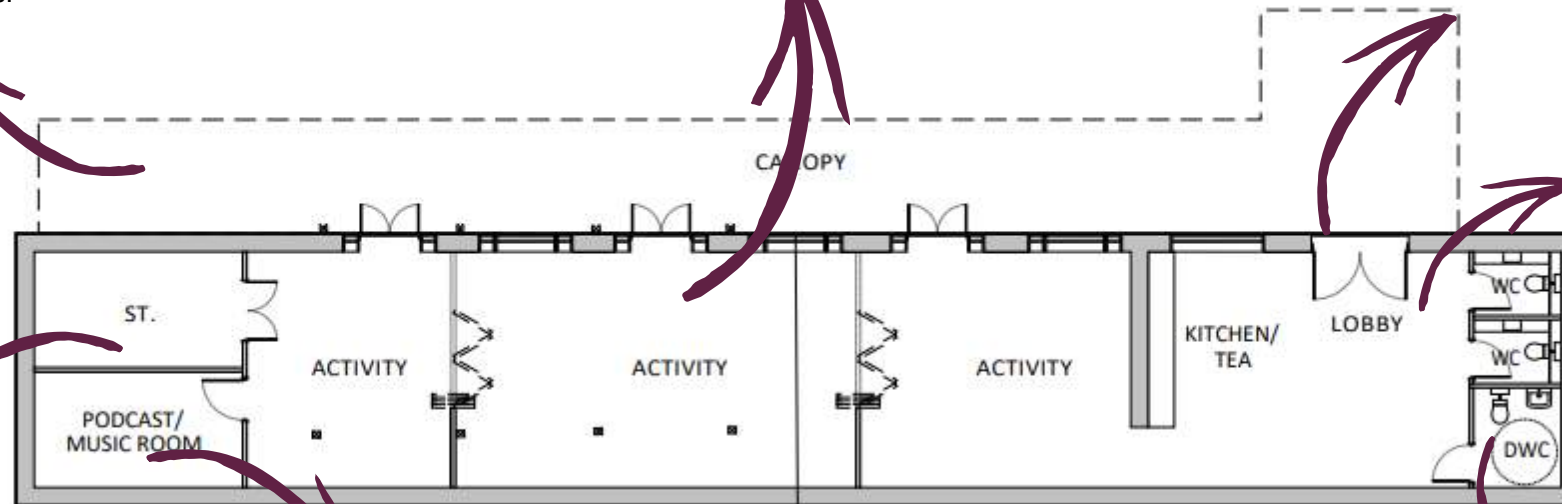
Entrance to the building will be through a wheelchair accessible entrance. Each of the spaces are on ground-floor level and also wheelchair accessible.

Canopy:

An undercover seated area overlooking the beautiful landscaped gardens, where young people can take a break from the activities and workshops, and enjoy refreshments.

Lobby:

An open-plan lobby with a small kitchenette to serve and prepare refreshments and snacks for the young people and activity leaders.



Storage:

Space to store materials and equipment needed for the activities and workshops.

Podcast and music room:

A sound-proofed, dual-purpose space used for therapeutic music sessions, and as a podcast recording studio.

This provides young people with a voice to speak about the ongoing challenges they face following cancer, and speak of their experiences in a way they haven't been able to before.

Amenities:

Three WC's, including one disabled access toilet to ensure the who facility is fully accessible.

PHASE 3 - Residential building

Demolition of the current main house and adjoining garage building, in place of purpose-built accommodation.

This building will consist of nine twin bedrooms accessed via a lift or stairs, all overlooking views of the beautiful outside space.

Each bedroom will have its own fully accessible en-suite shower room to ensure privacy.

Four of these bedrooms will have the flexibility of becoming adjoining rooms, creating larger spaces suitable for families.

In addition to the 9 guest bedrooms, there will be a dedicated staff bedroom, along with a self-contained care taker annexe, ensuring the site is managed, secure, and maintained at all times.

Ensuring the wellbeing of the young people remains a priority, and a medical room can be found on the first floor, including a medical store, and medical bed, should a young person need to self-medicate or requires medical attention.

Central to the site, this building also incorporates a professional kitchen set-up, where the young people will be able to benefit from cookery workshops to work towards learning new skills and regaining their independence.

They will be able to enjoy their homecooked meals in the communal dining area, before playing games with others in the lounge area, with a separate quiet space for those who wish to relax over a film.

Estimated cost: £3.1million



Current existing building



CGI image provided by our architect, Saunders)

PHASE 3 - Architectural plans (Ground Floor)

Guests will arrive to the retreat through private gates, and park in the dedicated car park.

Lounge areas

The lounge features two distinct areas overlooking the beautifully landscaped gardens, with large double doors opening onto a patio with seating.

The use of glass of panels within the design of the building means the space will be flooded with light, and bring a sense of the outdoors, in to connect young people with nature, and create a feeling of tranquillity.

The main lounge will be a vibrant communal space where young people can socialise, play games, and connect.

It will be a place where they can talk about their experiences of cancer and confide in others if they want to or just benefit from the comfort of knowing they are not alone in what they are going through.

Adjacent to this is a sound-proofed quiet room at the rear, offering a peaceful retreat for rest, reflection, or cinema screenings.



Caretaker annex

Self-sufficient caretaker accommodation, with separate access to the main house, which includes a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and lounge area. This will ensure the house is staffed and maintained at all times.

Reception area

Guests will enter the main lobby, and be greeted with a warm welcome by staff on reception, ensuring there is a clear log of all visitors on site.

A small office area behind the reception desk is where dedicated staff for the retreat will process admin.

Guests will access their accommodation via the lift, or feature staircase.

Kitchen and dining space

Nutritious, home-cooked meals will be lovingly prepared in the kitchen and shared in the dining area for all guests. During the warmer months, meals can also be enjoyed on the outdoor patio.

The professional kitchen will lend itself to cookery workshops, empowering young people to explore nutrition, develop essential culinary skills, and regain their independence.

PHASE 3 - Architectural plans (First Floor)

Access to the first floor will be via stairs or the wheelchair compliant lift. It consists of 10 twin-bedrooms, including accessible rooms, and staff-only accommodation.

Accessible accommodation

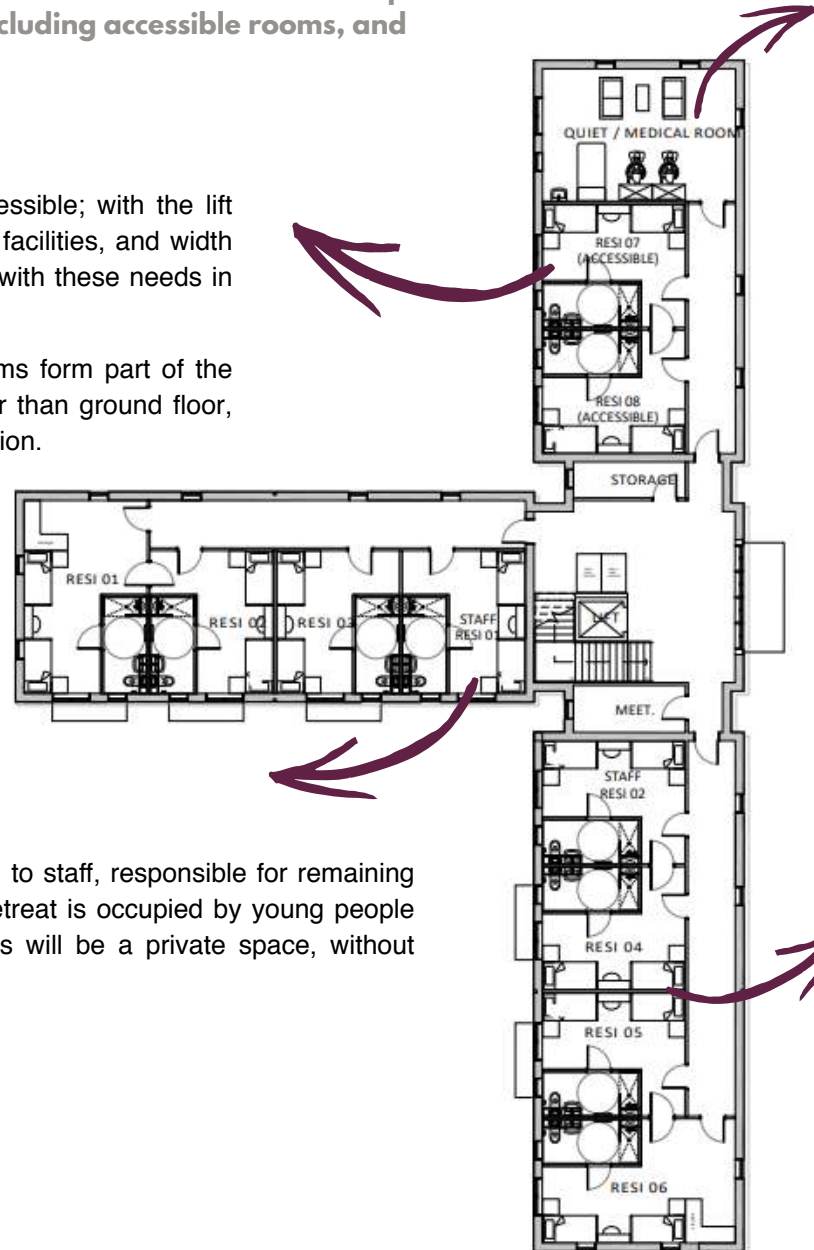
Two of the bedrooms will be fully accessible; with the lift access, doorways, wetroom showering facilities, and width of the connecting corridor all designed with these needs in mind.

It is vital that these accessible bedrooms form part of the accommodation on the first floor, rather than ground floor, to prevent feelings of difference or isolation.

As with the other bedrooms, these still have an interconnecting functionality, catering for families that require disabled accommodation.

Staff accommodation

One bedroom will be dedicated to staff, responsible for remaining on site at all times when the retreat is occupied by young people supported by Teens Unite. This will be a private space, without interconnecting functionality.



Quiet room/ beauty space

This space is designed to be multi-purpose and adaptable, meeting the diverse needs of the young people.

It will feature a medical bed and a secure medical storage area to accommodate those who need to self-medicate during their stay. While the retreat is not a medical facility, the safety and comfort of the young people visiting remains our highest priority. Every detail has been thoughtfully considered to ensure the highest hygiene standards are met, whilst providing a supportive and welcoming environment that accommodates their every need.

This room will also serve as a beauty and wellbeing space, helping the young people to regain their confidence and self-esteem following the physical changes they have experienced as a result of cancer. From make-up tutorials to skin care sessions, the young people will spend time with professionals in this field.

Flexible accommodation

The remaining 7 bedrooms all benefit from ensuite facilities. The design has been carefully considered including low-level shower trays to ensure ease of getting in and out, and large profile tiles to ensure maximum cleanliness and hygiene levels are maintained at all times.

Six of the bedrooms have an interconnecting function, which joins two rooms together - ideal for family visits.

Two of these bedrooms including a sofa-bed, increasing the on-site occupancy to 20 young people.

PHASE 3 - Landscaped gardens - Architectural plans

Outside areas for the young people to enjoy, connect with nature, and prioritise their mental and emotional wellbeing in quiet, tranquil surroundings. We commit to exceed a 10% uplift to the ecology on site, from the flowers we plant to the habitats we create - we'll be encouraging more wildlife into our gardens.

Recreational grounds

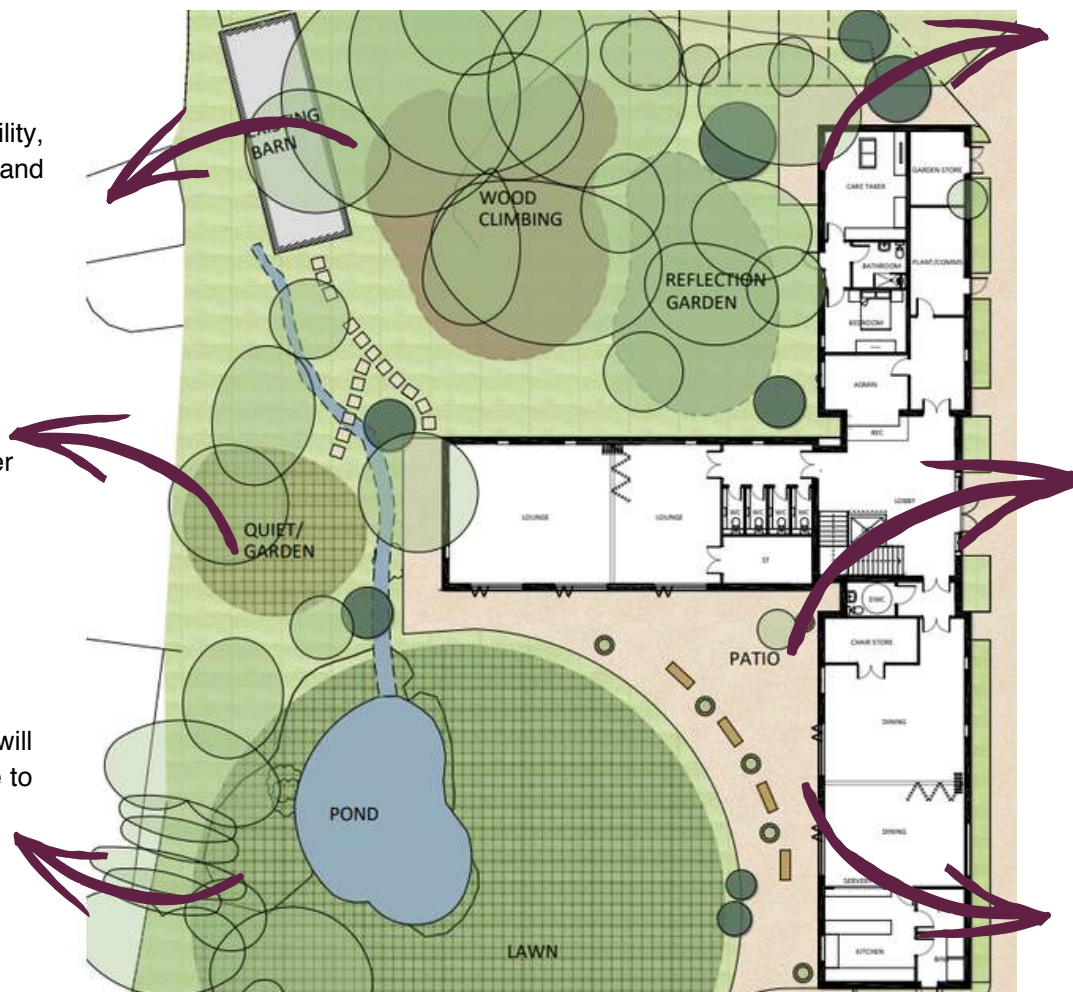
1-acre of lawn adjoining the sports facility, which will be used for outdoor sports and recreation.

Memory garden

A special place for families to remember loved ones supported by Teens Unite.

Pond and lawn area

The pond will be an area where wildlife will thrive, and the young people will be able to enjoy picnics on the lawn area.



Reflection garden area

A quiet place located away from the main garden area, where young people can reflect on what they've been through, prioritise their mental and emotional health, and consider the next steps they want to take in life.

Vegetable garden

A sustainable vegetable garden cared for and maintained by the young people visiting the retreat as part of their itinerary of activities for the duration of their stay.

A welcome distraction from the stresses of cancer and treatment, which gives them an opportunity to bond with others over the shared activity and feel a sense of achievement from the fruits of their labour.

Outdoor kitchen

A fully functional kitchen area, where the young people will be able to cook and enjoy the produce they have grown in the vegetable garden.

PHASE 4

Demolition of the current summerhouse, which will be replaced by a purpose built sports classroom and sports equipment store.

This building will open onto the 1 acre lawn, which will be used for outdoor sports, and recreational games.

The purpose of this space is to provide teenagers and young adults with the confidence and motivation to start rebuilding their strength and fitness, and overcome the negative impact cancer has caused on their physical ability.

The sports will be suitable for all abilities, and will encourage team work, and enable the young people to challenge themselves and feel a sense of achievement.

Whilst their ability and movement may have been affected from treatment, these activities will enable them to recognise their potential and capabilities, without cancer holding them back.

The inside classroom space will host professional sessions on fitness and nutrition, helping the young people to gain knowledge that will help them to improve their physical health, and find their independence.

The building will also include storage space to protect the sports equipment.

Estimated cost: £500,000



Current existing building

Awaiting architects image in line with proposed timeline of development (March 2026).

Facility will include:

- Secure storage facility for sports equipment used within dedicated sessions to encourage team work, help form connections, rebuild the strength of the young people and provide them with the confidence to start regaining their fitness.
- Workshop space for the young people to learn from professionals about easing your body into exercising during and after cancer, treatment and recovery.
- A 1-acre lawn for the young people to take part in a range of sports and outdoor recreation, from football, to yoga and Tai Chi.

Full site plan

Current architects drawing of the proposed developed site.

(To be replaced with CGI image)



Occupancy forecast

Once open, the retreat will help Teens Unite to provide 3,000 opportunities for teenagers and young adults each year.

Year 1 Forecast - 29% occupancy

This will be an initial 'testing' period, where an introductory level of support will be offered at the retreat, whilst the facilities are stress-tested. This first year also factors in available resource, and the recruitment process we will need to go through as the level of support increases.

Activity	Frequency (per year)	No. of beneficiaries (ea)	Total number of beneficiaries
One-day in-person activities	12	20	240
One-day activity with overnight stay	6	12	72
Four-night residential stay	6	20	120

Alongside this, we will continue to host an additional 30 in-person activities, 48 digital activities, and 2 motivational conference events off site, providing an additional 1,270 additional opportunities (excluding hospital visits) to access our support.

Year 3 Forecast - 82%

By Year 3, we anticipate reaching maximum capacity, taking into consideration change over days in between stays, agreements with charity partners and the full recruitment of additional staff to ensure the site is fully functional at all times.

Activity	Frequency (per year)	No. of beneficiaries (ea)	Total number of beneficiaries
One-day in-person activities	24	20	480
One-day activity with overnight stay	6	12	72
Three-night residential stay	6	20	120
Four-night residential stay	12	20	240
Family stays	10	20 (beneficiaries and family members)	200

Alongside this increased delivery we will continue to host hospital visits, digital events, and off site activities, which can only take place at external venues such as theatre trips and football stadium tours, which engage the young people we support.

Sustainability model

To ensure the financial sustainability of the project, and as a way of working collaboratively with our charity and corporate partners, when not occupied by our beneficiaries, the retreat will be used as follows:

Family support

75% of families said their family unit had been impacted by emotional and mental health issues during their child or siblings cancer journey.

The retreat will host special family events throughout the year, providing an opportunity to create memories and enjoy meaningful time together, away from the overwhelming stresses of supporting a child through cancer.

These events will also offer families the chance to connect with others facing similar challenges, reminding them they are not alone.

Charity partners and healthcare providers

Healthcare providers that we partner with, have echoed the same concerns and challenges we face in sourcing suitable venues for delivering support and conducting training.

Given these factors, many have committed to hiring the retreat as a solution to these challenges, and as a way of improving their own support, meaning young people either with cancer or other life-limiting illnesses can utilise the space.

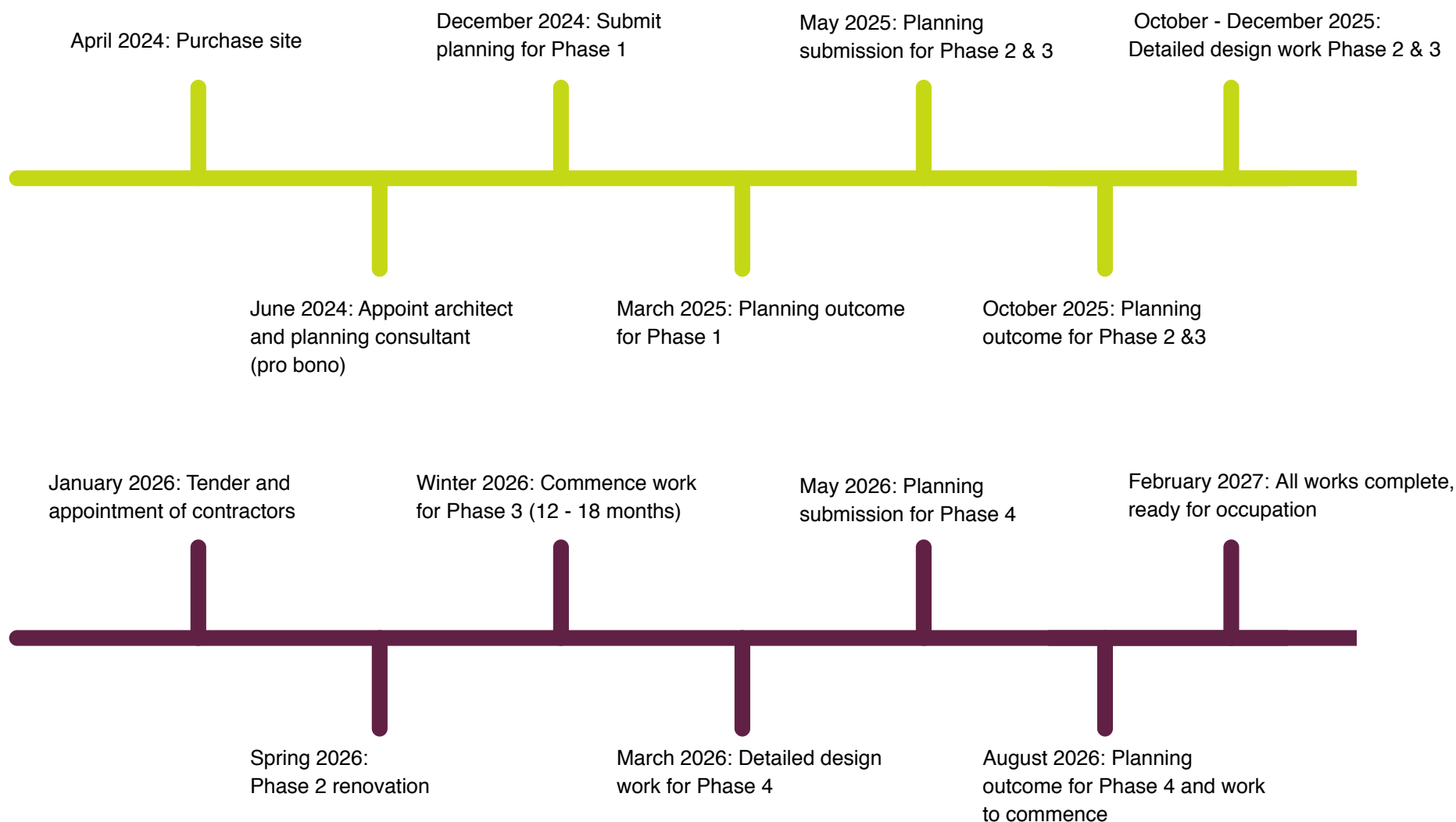
Corporate partners and Healthcare Professionals

The retreat will provide accommodation, and flexible space for small conferences, training, meetings, or team building activities.

Corporate partners and healthcare professionals will be able to benefit from exclusive hire of the retreat to suit their needs, in a peaceful and private environment without disruption.



Project Timeline (Subject to planning and funding)



2025 project team

Introducing the team responsible for the management and delivery of the project.

We are currently recruiting for skilled professionals to further strengthen the team with their experience.



**Roxanne Lawrance,
Chief Executive**

Roxanne brings over 20 years of expertise across the commercial and charity sectors.

As Chief Executive of Teens Unite, Roxanne oversees the charity's financial management while driving its mission to improve the lives of teenagers and young adults living with, and beyond cancer, ensuring we deliver against our strategic goals.



**Jason Marchant, Trustee
(Capital Project Lead)**

After selling his successful business in 2006, Jason transitioned into investing in start-ups and property development, further broadening his professional portfolio.

He presents opportunities, advice, and solutions to the rest of the board to progress the development of the retreat.



**Patrick Maslen, Trustee
(Treasurer)**

Patrick has 40 years of experience in the banking sector, most recently as an Area Director at Lloyds Banking Group.

His expertise in financial management, planning, and business strategy will ensure that Teens Unite's financial resources are maximised and used effectively to support the charity's mission.



**Lee Venables, COO,
Kinovo**

Lee has 36 years' experience in building and property services; ensuring safety, compliance, and sustainability.

Lee is committed to seeing completion of the project, providing advice and services to ensure that every aspect of the project meets the highest standards of quality, regulations, and compliance.

Kinovo has committed to the long-term maintenance of the site.



**Lee Clifton,
Project Manager,
Volkerfitzpatrick**

Lee has 22 years' experience with VolkerFitzpatrick; a leading engineering and construction company.

Lee is able to advise on making the architects vision a reality, and the costs involved in completing each phase.



**Louise Ford,
Planning Consultant,
Tesco Plc**

Louise Ford is a highly experienced Planner with over 30 years of expertise in town planning, having spent the majority of her career as Town Planning Manager at Tesco.

Louise brings a wealth of knowledge and professional insight to the planning strategy for the scheme. She will be supporting the coordination of the Teens Unit project, ensuring the right teams are appointed at the appropriate stages to keep the project aligned with key timelines and deliverables

Consultant directory

Working alongside a team of professionals to support the planning and development of the project.

Discipline	Company	Lead Contact	Position
Architect	Saunders	Martin Williams	Managing Director
Planning	MRPP	Martin Robeson	Managing Director
Ecology and tree survey	Enims	Fraser Gurney	Consultant Ecologist
Safety and regulatory compliance	Kinovo	Lee Venables	Chief Operating Officer
Project advisors	Tesco Plc	Nick Johnson	UK and ROI Property Director
Transport and highways	TPA UK	John Hopkins	Director
Fire	Hydrock	Richard Stevens	Associate Consultant
Landscaping	Coyne Environmental	Ken Coyne	Managing Director
Drainage	Pinnacle Consulting Engineers	David Meigh	Director
Archaeology	Mills Whip	Mike Hutchinson	Managing Director
Arboricultural	Consultant	Cristian Pinta	Conservation Manager
Structural Engineer			
Cost consultants			

Build costs

Total build cost: £4.35 million (informed by architect)

Funds already secured: £1.5 million

Plus an additional funding commitment of £750,000 for the project over the next three years, secured collectively from a major trust, major donor, and corporate partner.

Be part of something truly life-changing

You can help us reach our fundraising target and leave a lasting legacy by naming a space within our retreat.

Your support will play a vital role in making history and supporting future generations by opening England's first retreat dedicated to supporting teenagers and young adults following a cancer diagnosis.

A select number of naming opportunities are available, ranging from £50,000 to £1 million, including the chance to name the retreat in its entirety.

To request further information on this and to receive the brochure that showcases the packages in full, please contact:

Roxanne Lawrance, Chief Executive
E: roxanne@teensunite.org
T: 01992 440091



Endorsements

The support of Teens Unite and our vision of opening the retreat is supported by members of the council, corporate organisations, and families who understand the need for the retreat first-hand.

“ The Borough of Broxbourne has always been home to Teens Unite Fighting Cancer, and it's been a privilege to support their growth over the past 18 years. Now the charity is entering an exciting new chapter, and it will be an honour to see them open the first retreat in England for teenagers and young adults facing cancer, here in the borough, too.

As the only charity in the UK providing the vital, long-term supported needed by young people diagnosed with cancer, it's important that as a community, we support Teens Unite and share their passion for making a life-changing difference to this generation, and the generations to follow. ”

**Mark Mills-Bishop, Leader of
Broxbourne Borough Council**

“ Over the years, I've seen the remarkable difference the support of Teens Unite makes to teenagers and young adults facing cancer, helping them rebuild their confidence and find enjoyment in life, during such challenging times.

The retreat is a project that will create even more opportunities for young people to thrive, and it will be an incredibly proud moment to see the doors open.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to make a difference to such a worthwhile cause. ”

**Kirsty Keoghan, GM, Global Fashion,
eBay**

“ This age group is in a gap, they're not adults, not kids, and to have those teenage years impacted by cancer is such a hard thing.

Their social life is impacted enormously, there is loneliness, detachment from friends, they're out of education, not to mention the physical changes they are experiencing.

There are few services out there that try to understand and support this age group appropriately. So it is vital that you carry on the good work.

Thank you for the difference you have made to Alfred, as he overcomes the struggles cancer brings to his life every day. ”

**Ruth, parent to Alfred,
diagnosed with B-cell Acute Lymphoblastic
Leukaemia**



“ Interacting with other teens who have, or have had, cancer reminds me I’m not alone in what I’m going through.

Hearing their experiences, and the challenges they’ve overcome, motivates you to still live the life you want to. ”

Kai, diagnosed with
Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia,
aged 21



**Together, we can ensure that cancer
doesn't define the lives of young people.**

“ There are millions of pounds being spent on curing young people, but what about their future after surviving such an illness. Spending time with other young people facing the same challenges gives them back some confidence and self-esteem to push forward for their future. ”

**Professor Mufti OBE, Head of Haemato-Oncology,
Kings College Hospital**

www.teensunite.org

Registered Charity Number: 1118361

To find out more about our plans, and
discuss how you can support the
project, please contact:

Roxanne Lawrance, Chief Executive
E: roxanne@teensunite.org
T: 01992 440091

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FIGHTING CANCER