

Planning Application

When Sebastian launched his campaign to build a holiday home for children with life-limiting illnesses, shortly before he died on Christmas Eve 2003, he had no idea how much time, effort, expertise and expense would be required to achieve this very special goal. In the last five years the Trust has been blessed with the generosity and support of so many who have given their services freely to bring this dream closer to becoming a reality. This feature, by Sebastian's mum Jane Gates, highlights just some of the extraordinary gifts from those who are committed to seeing this project through to fruition.

Although our commitment to fulfilling Sebastian's last wish was strong, we had little idea at the outset how we might achieve such a daunting task. But fate was with us in 2004, when a friend arranged an introduction to **Mark Fitzpatrick**, Commercial Director of Bewley Homes. Having learned of Sebastian's drive and determination to help others, Mark secured the support of the Bewley board, who agreed to manage the project build as a gift to the Trust. A gentle Irishman with a friendly manner and a cheeky smile, Mark was able to use his persuasive charms to enlist the services of others who have become vital members of "Team Seb". Mark quickly persuaded architect **Richard Gandy** of Phillip Design Associates to design the house, once a potential site in a suitable location, and a design brief, had been established. Mark's friend and former colleague **Hugo Haig**, now of Lochailort Investments, was also a crucial figure. It was through him that the Trust was introduced to landowner **Patrick Sweeney**, who offered to donate a site for the home in the Hampshire village of North Waltham, if planning permission could be obtained.

Pat generously offered a choice of sites within the village perimeter; the current application is in fact for the third site that the Trust has sought to develop since 2005. Our first site proposal did not become a fully fledged application as it met with access problems. Ardent supporters of the Trust will know that although in May 2007 our second site choice (which became our first actual planning application) was refused, Basingstoke and Deane

Borough Council urged us to work with their planning officials to find an alternative site that would meet the Council's strict planning criteria. True to their word, the council's Head of Planning **Giorgio Framalico**, and his colleague **Jane Colley**, assessed the other sites Pat Sweeney was offering; the current final application is situated on the site they considered to be the most viable. The Trust's latest proposal was submitted in January 2008, following tremendous efforts from the many specialist services involved. By now the application was being driven by **Hugo Haig**, whose experience in planning matters has been crucial to our endeavours. Hugo brought in the planning expertise of **Nick Pryor** of The JTS Partnership and the application has been studiously managed by Nick's totally unflappable colleague, **Rachael Dickson**.

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Sebastian's House artist's impression



Mark Fitzpatrick



Richard Gandy



Hugo Haig



Rachael Dickson



Nick Pryor



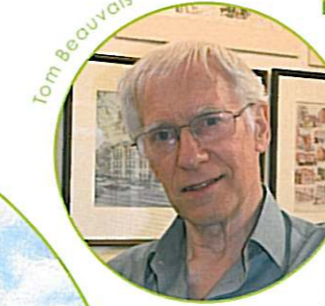
Siobhan Gillespie



Alan Corcoran



Jason Mills



Tom Beauvais



Graham Floyd

Sebastian's House

Whilst the legal complexities have been handled by **Alan Corcoran** and **Siobhan Gillespie** of Shoosmiths, the highly technical, arduous surveys and assessments in respect of noise, highways and traffic issues have been meticulously undertaken by **Jerry Muscroft** and **Jason Mills** of Stuart Michael Associates. These reports have been absolutely vital as the site is located in fairly close proximity to the M3 and is situated on one of the main access routes into the village.

To compliment Richard Gandy's architectural design a beautiful perspective was painted by **Tom Beauvais** and a comprehensive landscaping plan was created by landscape architect **Graham Floyd** of Floyd Matcham; this aspect of the application has required many revisions to meet the often conflicting demands of the various council departments that form part of the normal consultation process with any planning application - at the last count we stood at 7 revisions!!!

Although an application of this kind should expect a decision within thirteen weeks, we were still awaiting an outcome some eight months after submission. This perhaps reflects the complexity of the proposal, given its unique status as potentially the first holiday home of its kind in the UK, but also the council's determination to



Landscape Strategy

ensure that all parties involved in the planning process have been appropriately consulted, and that their recommendation for approval was both a sound and viable decision.

In commercial terms an application of this magnitude would have cost in the region of £100,000 to assimilate. Through the generosity of these wonderful people, the application has not cost the Trust a single penny, save for the planning application processing fee of £3,000 paid to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. We are truly indebted to all who have played such a magnificent part in achieving so much and for creating something truly special.

A Giant Step Closer to Achieving Sebastian's Dream

September 17th, 2008, is a truly special day in our history, thanks to the fantastic efforts of the team we have introduced to you. Our application was approved with a unanimous vote, an accolade reserved for few, and one which is a tribute to the commitment of all involved. We are thrilled.

By 8.30 the following morning, despite celebrating into the early hours, Mark Fitzpatrick had begun the serious task of organising the construction side of this exciting project. We are now working towards breaking ground before Christmas and, with a little luck, opening the doors to our first families by Christmas 2009. All in all, it has been one hell of a year!!

The house will include two four-bedroom apartments, allowing two families to stay at any one time, with shared leisure facilities featuring a swimming pool, games room, library, sensory room, and a caretaker's flat.

In all probability, Sebastian would be overwhelmed by all that has been achieved in his name, but also incredibly thankful for the tremendous support that has been given to his immediate family and the Trust. He would be so grateful to all who have generously given their time, energy, services and commitment, and who shared a belief in his vision.