

The Joshua Tree

our story



Why? When Josh was diagnosed with Leukaemia in September 2004, David and I were bombarded with a barrage of information explaining his condition, and what this subsequently meant, not just for Josh, but also for us as a family. We have vivid memories of a whole list of 'you will not be able to...' and we were left wondering whether a return to relative normality would ever be an option.

Because of Josh's greatly reduced level of immunity due to his Leukaemia, he (particularly during the first year of his treatment), is very limited to where he is able to go e.g. no indoor play areas, cafes, restaurants, cinema, theatre, play barns etc, in-fact anywhere where there will be a number of people gathering in a confined space. All families are advised not to go on holiday during the first year of treatment, and this is why our initial idea about *The Joshua Tree* was borne.

We felt very strongly that we wanted to create a haven for families to be able to spend quality time together in a safe environment. So much of a family's initial time after diagnosis revolves around the hospital, and more often than not, siblings have to spend time with other carers whilst 'mum and dad' begin a process of adjustment at the child's bedside.

We believe that time away together as a whole family is very precious in bonding the family back together, where all members can laugh again and enjoy 'time out' together. My background in Psychology and Counselling has led me, too, to understand the importance for many to feel supported. The support centre aims to achieve this.

What? To allow a sense of freedom and fun, we envisage that *The Joshua Tree* will include a taster of those things that children with Cancer cannot normally enjoy due to risk of infection. e.g. creation of a soft play area and cinema room. We would also like to include a playground and multi-purpose all weather court so that travelling off site for recreation isn't necessary.

We would like to offer accommodation for 4 families to allow opportunities for sharing but also to ensure privacy when needed. There will be a separate room for quiet reflection and contemplation.

In order to minimise ongoing running costs once *The Joshua Tree* has been built, we are planning to construct an energy efficient structure. For example, wind turbines, solar cells, ground source heat pumps and efficient insulation.

When? A 5-year business plan is being drawn up. Progression relies totally upon the generosity of individuals, groups and sponsors so as to raise enough money to fulfil our aims.

Where? We intend to buy a plot of land in Cheshire ensuring that it will be within travelling distance of the children's hospitals for peace of mind.

Who? *The Joshua Tree* is being set up as a charitable company, with a board of 9 Directors. We would like to compile a list of *Friends of the Joshua Tree* who are interested in our project and would like to keep up-to-date with current plans.

How? We plan to have a varied calendar of fund raising events as well as making applications to major grant making trusts.

The Joshua Tree Holiday House and Support Centre for Courageous Kids and their Families

Lynda and David Hill, 2 Redgate, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 4TQ
web: www.thejoshuatree.org.uk email: office@thejoshuatree.org.uk tel: 01606 781777
Registered Company Number 05654487 Registered Charity No 1114000