



Registered Charity no:  
1121458

# Scoping Document and Vision

February 2025



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## Introduction

### Purpose of this document

This is a document which presents the case for support and BFTF (Building for the Future – Charity registration number 1121458) to acquire a building in the local area of Wokingham, Berkshire.

The aim of this is to create and develop a unique centre for both disabled children and young adults in Wokingham area, providing opportunities for play, recreation, socialisation, employment etc such as does not currently exist in our area.

### About us

Building for the Future is a Wokingham based, parent led, self-funded charity set up in 2007. It has successfully provided activities, support and therapy for children with disabilities and/or additional needs since the opening of its play centre in 2014. It also provides support to their families.

The charity is structured around an established board of trustees and has a CEO, Fundraising Manager, Centre Manager, Caretaker and a long-standing volunteer group.

## Scoping Document & Vision

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Key successes to date include our accessible play centre for disabled children and their families, which is called **'Our House'**.

The charity works in partnership with other local disability/community groups to provide a joined up local service and is very proud to have been awarded the 'Queens Award for Voluntary Service'. This award has helped the charity gain support from a large number of local and national businesses.

*Our aim is a simple one and that is to raise the profile of disabled children and young people in Wokingham Borough and surrounding areas ensuring that all are celebrated. Every child and young person deserves to be valued and to be recognised, regardless of whatever challenges they may face.*



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

'Our House' establishes a focal point for this activity in the heart of the community, providing a friendly welcome, focused facilities, therapies and support for families with disabled children.

Since opening, the charity has seen fantastic benefits; bringing families together to provide support; bringing children together to encourage friendships and siblings together to decrease isolation. The charity has witnessed a dramatic improvement in the mental wellbeing across all of the 'Our House' family which currently consists of over 500 children and young people.

Our team is represented by:

### **Jane Holmes, CEO and Founder of Building for the Future.**



Jane has a 23 year old daughter with cerebral palsy who, along with several other mothers of disabled children, set up the charity in 2007. Before her daughter was born, Jane was a Human Resources Manager and has many years' experience working in the hotel and restaurant industry.

### **Karen Woolford, Trustee**



Karen joined Building for The Future as a Trustee in 2009 and was an integral part of locating and then project managing the renovation of a deserted office into the inspirational space we have for our children today. She remains on the board now as a representative parent of a disabled child. Karen has 3 children, one of whom has cerebral palsy. Her background is in project management in the IT industry.



## Testimonials

*Building for the Future is an outstanding charity which supports disabled children in my constituency and across Wokingham Borough. The charity's Chief Executive, Jane Holmes, is a constituent of mine and I have keenly observed and supported its progress since its foundation in 2007.*

*Building for the Future was founded by the parents of disabled children with the aim of raising money in order to fund a local community centre for children with disabilities. This vision has come to completion with the establishment of the 'Our House' centre, which was officially opened by Their Royal Highnesses the Earl and Countess of Wessex in May 2014. 'Our House' allows disabled children and their families to come together, find support and information, and access therapies. It provides a range of facilities and is a truly impressive achievement. The cost of running the centre is met entirely by donations and fundraising efforts, with staff working on a voluntary basis.*

*The charity plays a vital role in supporting disabled children and their families in the local area.*  
Former Prime Minister Theresa May

*Treloar's is a specialist school and college for students with physical disability. We are based in Hampshire but support students and families across the South-East and beyond, including in Berkshire, and we support many students from this area. We are aware of this proposal as several of the people supporting the project are families of current students.*

*One of the greatest challenges our students face, and by default therefore one of our biggest challenges, is what happens after they have left college. We equip disabled students with the ability, tools and confidence to be able to live their own lives and make their own decisions, including in where and how they live, and how they are productive members of their communities. Most students wish to live as independently as possible with appropriate support but often close to their families and home communities. Many are unable to achieve this because of the lack of availability of suitable housing and associated support. Our ex-students want to live in supported adapted accommodation that meets their needs, with appropriate care support, living with other young*

*adults close to amenities and with work and leisure opportunities. We therefore support this provision which addresses these needs.*

*This initiative appears to us to be a well-designed and thought-through solution for disabled people wishing to settle into their adult lives in their home community. We can assure the authorities and other partners of a high level of demand for the provision just amongst our student body. We have met with members of the management committee of BTFT, and have talked through support we would be able to provide. As a provider of residential accommodation to disabled people, often with complex levels of clinical need, we have offered advice and support on capital specifications and care provision models on an ongoing basis. We can potentially offer practical support to the care provider in a number of ways, including offering elements of specialist training for staff and advice in establishing robust quality assurance measures.*

Ryan Campbell

CEO of Treloar College, Alton.

## Current Services

'Our House' is a unique accessible play centre with a range of facilities, including soft play, a sensory room, teen chill-out zone, PCs, gaming and free play area. At 'Our House', disabled children can relax, have fun and be truly valued and accepted for who they are.

Services that we currently offer include:

- Regular weekend family play schemes for children with all levels of disability
- Specialist weekend sessions for vulnerable groups who are unable to access the general disability session
- Fortnightly pre-school sessions
- Monthly youth group for teenagers
- Holiday family play sessions
- Regular facilities hire for local disability groups such as Busy Bees, ASD Family Help, Reading College etc.
- Special Key Events e.g. Christmas Parties, Easter Egg Hunts, visiting entertainment e.g. local theatre group, circus, animal/pet groups, science sessions etc.
- School Holiday therapy sessions
- Parent information and support sessions hosted by BFTF and run in-house by outside specialists - e.g. sleep workshop, sensory integration, online safety, DLA form completion
- Service signposting and information library for parents covering a range of needs and disabilities
- Facilitating parent-to-parent support
- Offering our accessible centre for small disability groups to hire at reduced rates such as Reading College's educational offering to young adults with profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- Hiring out of accessible facilities for private parties/events.



## Current facility

Building for the Future has now out grown its existing facility which is a simply adapted/refurbished, ex-private rental office space in the Toutley Road Industrial Estate, Wokingham.

It consists of:

1. A small central play-space - zoned to provide soft play, art and craft opportunities and computer facilities to our service users as well as floor space for lower level activities and seating areas for reading/games. There are specialist sensory wall panels, integrated toy storage and seating for parents throughout.
2. A separate room leading off the main area suited to older children containing an Xbox and large screen TV with DVD player, a piano/organ and seating
3. A sensory room
4. A small office - shared usage with Reading College
5. A fully accessible changing room, with height adjustable changing table and portable hoist
6. A parent room which doubles up as a meeting and training space and staff room for Reading College. This room is not accessible to children
7. A small kitchen with washing machine, dishwasher, microwave and a counter top small oven
8. A non-disabled toilet area
9. Limited, contained outside space which includes a small play area and ramped access to the centre.

## Parents comments

*“It’s a safe place where my children can play.”*

*“A safe place for my children to be who they want to be.”*

*“It is a wonderful place for my younger boys to play with other siblings while my eldest son can chill out and I can stop to have a coffee and chat to other parents.”*

*“Can meet friends in a neutral environment that is safe. My kids absolutely love coming to the centre and they feel comfortable in being themselves.”*

*“My disabled child loves going there. Great venue to meet other parents and supportive chat.”*



## Limitations of current facility

The charity is increasingly aware of the limitations of this current facility, which are now restricting the services it can offer. This is prohibiting any growth and limiting the services it can provide to young adults.

Key limitations include:

1. The charity currently welcomes well in excess of 500 families per annum utilising its space and numbers wishing to access sessions are growing all the time. It has particularly seen a significant rise in numbers, following the change to the government’s Direct Payments model where families are now managing budgets to pay directly for services. Sessions at Our House have always been free of charge to the end user to ensure complete inclusion for all.
2. In order to ensure the centre is as self-financing as possible, the charity hires out the use of its space to Reading College, at times when there is less demand by its regular children i.e. weekdays during term time. Unfortunately, this then means that it is unable to access the current building itself during this time due to space and layout restrictions. (It does however retain use of the building on a Friday, for essential office access, charity meetings, pre-school groups and a group of adults with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties). This is a key area where the charity has the potential to expand its services in line with its vision, to open its current services to pre-schoolers. For this to work, the charity needs vital access to on-site office space throughout the working week, without encroaching on the space required by Reading College. Reading College has requested to hire out the space for a fifth day per week, but due to space constraints, the charity has been unable to give them this. They are currently operating a waiting list of eligible students who need to be educated in the unique, fully-accessible centre.

3. Additional and more flexible space is needed from which to continue the work started by Building for the Future Plus, the service providing life-fulfilling opportunities for young adults with disabilities who have left school or college. Requests for a 'hub' offering space to young disabled people have been made as there is nowhere of this nature available, so to be able to provide this space for this would create important opportunities for this group in terms of employment, socialising and the pursuit of hobbies and other activities.
4. Parking is currently a major issue for the charity at some of our busier sessions. This is due to the increase in centre users, coupled with a decrease in parking availability from surrounding land redevelopment. This has been exacerbated by the residential development in the area.
5. The current space is on the edge of an industrial estate on the outskirts of Wokingham. Due to infrastructure development in the immediate area, the centre has become isolated and unappealing. It is likely to become more so as it becomes swamped by new houses and relief roads.

## BFTF's Ambition - The new project

We would like to provide a greater range of services for both children and young adults with disabilities in Wokingham. We would like to replicate our existing service within a larger space, with room for a provision for young adults to meet, socialise, work and to have an opportunity to lead more fulfilling lives than they are currently able to.

Along with a purpose designed centre, the charity needs to offer:

- Sufficient car parking adjacent to the building
- A more central location for easy access and prominence
- A space that is accessible to a greater age range of disabled children and young people
- Flexible group spaces which can be independently rented, with folding walls that can be opened up to create larger event spaces
- Greater office space for the charity and its partners
- Enhanced storage internally and externally for the various current and proposed building users.
- A base for young, disabled adults who have left full-time education from which to work, learn and socialise, such as does not currently exist in our area.

## Project Funding

1. Key partners have pledged to support our feasibility study and site evaluation, provide design and build consultancy and marketing services. They are also supporting the charity over the next few years with various fundraising efforts.
2. To fund the main project costs the charity is already actively speaking to a number of prominent community groups who have expressed an interest in supporting our plans.
3. There are also a number of capital investment grants which the charity is eligible to apply for and it is actively researching these.



4. The charity partly sourced the furnishing and kitting out of rooms in its current centre by obtaining “room sponsorship” from key local and national businesses e.g. FlynnPharma, Brayborne Cleaning Services, Tesco’s, The Tile and Bathroom Place, Twyford. The charity will involve the local community in a similar way with the new building.
5. The charity will raise money not only to lease the premises, but to refurbish it, according to the needs of its users.
6. The charity has ring-fenced reserves to pay towards necessary adaptations.

### Current running costs:

The charity’s current total running costs for its existing centre, include rent (25%), salaries (30%), utilities, maintenance, cleaning, security, insurance, business rates, operating expenses, telephone/IT expenses, office and marketing expenses. Its total annual running costs are approximately £120,000 per year. The charity does not expect these costs to change significantly.

This in the whole is funded by:

1. Regular income sources - e.g. building hire to Reading College and local disability groups; children’s party hire
2. Grants
3. Donations - including regular supporters and one-off sums
4. Business sponsorship deals - annual nominated charity schemes run by local businesses
5. Fund Raising - including community events, annual ball, Christmas shopping, community fundraising efforts etc.

We anticipate that our annual costs will continue to be covered in the same way with:

- Increases from the larger collaborative offerings
- Current rental costs which will be saved when the charity moves into new premises, which can then be offset against future rental cost.
- Further income through doubling the capacity of students from Reading College. It is always Building for the Future’s aim to be as self-sufficient as possible, using regular income streams to cover our operating costs where possible.
- The charity aims to make the new facility as sustainable as possible to minimise its carbon footprint and reduce running costs as far as possible.

As part of the ongoing discussions and feasibility reporting, we will make our annual accounts available to support future financial modelling and to demonstrate commercial viability.



## Benefits of our vision

We have outlined the potential shared benefits of our proposal below and anticipate that these targets will form an agenda moving forward, to establish an overall scope to support WBC’s collaborative aspirations.

Elemental Proposal	Benefits of our Proposal to:		
	Wokingham Borough Council	Children/Young People/Families	Local Community
Create a training space and deliver opportunities for young disabled people.	Offer increased apprentice-style opportunities for young people with disabilities to learn transferable skills, expanding employment potential.	Improved outcomes. Give young disabled people a chance to learn in an appropriate and safe environment.	Inclusion of all sectors of society. Greater understanding and integration of the community.

Elemental Proposal	Benefits of our Proposal to:		
	Wokingham Borough Council	Children/Young People/Families	Local Community
Enable more disabled young people to take part in activities and /or work nearer to home.	Relieve the pressure on expensive transport provision. Reduce number of young people having to leave the Borough on a daily basis to access social, educational or work-related activities.	Less risk from lengthy journeys, less time spent travelling. Gives young people with disabilities a greater connection with the local community. Give parents a greater sense of ease in having their children living nearer to home.	Less strain on Children's services/Local Authority resources therefore greater funds to be directed towards other key community services.
Having a safe and purpose-built facility, flexible to cater to various needs, will increase confidence and mental well-being of disabled children and young people.	Possible prevention of mental health and the escalation of behavioural challenges and issues requiring Adult services' intervention. Increasing the chances of disabled young people building relationships with peers which could lead to smoother and more successful residential placements. Relieving some pressure on the vast social care bill faced by the Council.	Give young people with disabilities a greater sense of being valued and appreciated. Providing opportunities to help create fulfilling lives for disabled young people, giving them a greater place in their communities and a sense of accomplishment. Continued platform for parent-to-parent support which will in turn support young people and children with disabilities and their families.	Potentially relieve strain on mental and other health resources, waiting lists etc.

Elemental Proposal	Benefits of our Proposal to:		
	Wokingham Borough Council	Children/Young People/Families	Local Community
A new facility will provide a better platform to build links with local organisations and to create new and exciting opportunities for disabled children and young adults.	<p>Creating organisational link-ups and training with organisations (sports, drama, retail, ...) to expand opportunities for disabled young adults.</p> <p>Improving efficiency by facilitating the communication and support between locally-based groups.</p>	Greater acceptance and work/life opportunities for young adults with disabilities leading to greater inclusion and life enhancement.	Enhancement of working community. Better inclusion.
Provide community space which can be hired by groups/private individuals when the centre is not in use by its core users.	<p>Become a hub/campus which will provide easier signposting for families with disabled children towards complementary charity services locally.</p> <p>The new facility with greater flexible space will become a centre of community importance.</p>	Providing a place for young people with disabilities to socialise with friends and family outside of normal centre opening hours, in a fully accessible and safe environment.	Provision of a large, fully-accessible resource for the community to use outside of use by core clients/users.
Supporting local service provider strategies and working in partnership to develop additional and improved services.	Relieve pressure on Local Authority by collaboratively working to help provide exemplary services and achieve best strategic outcomes (in support of WBC's 12 point plan).	Creation of a more joined up service, enabling young people to access learning, training and life experience under one roof.	Greater efficiency of Council resources facilitating greater support for other community activities.

Elemental Proposal	Benefits of our Proposal to:		
	Wokingham Borough Council	Children/Young People/Families	Local Community
Provide new and enhanced local play and activities for children and young people with disabilities	Provide play and activities for children in a fully accessible environment within Wokingham Borough. Work towards providing a one-stop-shop for families to enable easier access to the Local Offer.	Continuation of provision of fully-accessible play and activities for disabled children.	Continued provision of a fully accessible play area in our Borough, including the addition of fully-accessible outdoor space.

## Support for our project and services



Willmott Dixon is a key supporter of our Charity. Willmott Dixon is the largest privately-owned construction company in the UK. Founded in 1852, and family run, they are dedicated to leaving a positive legacy in our communities. They have been recognised for their endeavours in sustainable development and for social mobility with the Queen’s Awards for Enterprise and Promoting Opportunity.

As a company, they have a mantra of ‘Build lives less Ordinary’ within which they live a ‘Purpose before Profit’ culture.



*“The world is filled with enough ordinary. It’s all of our responsibility to make it extraordinary. That’s why every project we take on at Willmott Dixon has to deliver a positive and memorable impact. For our customers, that means opportunities to prosper and grow. For our communities, it means places not just to live in but to thrive in. For our people, it means work that challenges, inspires and really rewards.”*

Each of Willmott Dixon’s regional offices has a chosen charity and BFTF has been selected by their Farnborough business. At their annual challenge last year, they raised over £38k in support of our charity. Their team has roots in the Wokingham area and they have a long standing relationship with the charity.

Willmott Dixon has confirmed that they would like to support the charity to produce a feasibility study and business case to secure a site and help with fundraising to realise our ambitions for a new facility. They will support us through our journey as a ‘critical friend’, offering design and build consultancy and advice without charge.

## Conclusion

This is an exciting time for the charity. We have the potential to define a greater scope of service provision, delivered more efficiently and for the benefit of a greater number of disabled children and young people and their families within the borough and surrounding communities. Our service for young disabled people will be ground-breaking and will hugely benefit not only the disabled residents of Wokingham but will also serve to increase the profile of Wokingham Borough locally.

This report is offered as a catalyst to further discussions and for the potential alignment and growth of anticipated services for both disabled children and young disabled adults who have left school or college and for whom there is very little in the way of life-fulfilment.



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## Contact us:

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