

Children with Cancer UK Raines Repurposed

Chelsea Flower Show Press Pack

Thomas Clarke – One of UK's youngest Garden Designers working towards a world where every child survives cancer.



Thomas trained at The Inchbald School of Design in Garden Design and shortly after received Silver medal at the 2022 RHS Tatton Park for Young Designer with his garden Paradise Found. He joined Children with Cancer UK to work as their garden designer at Raines Retreat, a brand new retreat the charity is creating for families going through the unimaginable. His mission is to create a space that allows families to reconnect and take the burden of the day to day stresses faced during a cancer journey.

When a family receives the devastating news that their child is diagnosed with childhood cancer everyone in that child's life is forever changed. When a child with cancer is saved, that is indeed a precious, loved life that is saved. But that is the beginning of what is being saved. The siblings who silently, stoically push aside their own anxieties, and need for love and attention, because they know that family life now is all about treating and caring for their brother or sister with cancer.

When a family goes through the unspeakable and loses their child to childhood cancer, life will never be same.



At Raines Retreat Tom designed and build the garden and recreational spaces for a rural retreat for children and their families affected by childhood cancer. He took his inspiration for his balcony design from the local materials, repurposing materials that would have otherwise gone to waste. 80% of his design consists of materials from the original Rains Farm, embracing and celebrating the retreats' origins.

Not only is his design a calming place to reflect, but it is fully self-sustainable, embracing local businesses and craftsmanship as well as support.

Oenothera lindheimeri 'whirling butterflies' is a key flower used. Its natural beauty and the playfulness of butterflies is a perfect match for a space aimed at children and young adults. It also inspired mum of cancer survivor and illustrator Emma van Klaveren to create a bespoke logo for the event.



The colour scheme is largely shades of green with flashes of white and palest pinks through to burgundy. A shaded seating area provides a place to relax and enjoy the scented flowers and gentle movement from the surrounding grasses.

The green comes from the evergreens *Taxus baccata*, *Pinus mugo*, *Thymus vulgaris* as well as *Brizia media* whose semi-evergreen grass with purplish tinted and blue-green leaves introduces more colour. These flowers are excellent for drying and will provide a wonderful activity for those families using the balcony.

In line with the sustainable importance of the design the garden will return to Raines Retreat where it will be used by families once the retreat opens.

“The show is such a prestigious event and it is a professional aspiration to exhibit. The exposure for any aspiring designer is immense and also provides a great platform to highlight the message of my sponsor Children with Cancer UK.”

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Press Enquiries:

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Notes to Editors:

About Children with Cancer UK:

Children with Cancer UK is a leading children’s cancer charity dedicated to raising and investing funds into vital specialist research to save the lives of children and young people with cancer. Our mission is to improve survival rates and the quality of survival in young patients, and to find ways to prevent cancer in the future. Whilst working towards this, Children with Cancer UK funds support for children and their families as they navigate treatment. What began as a small memorial charity in 1988, has evolved into a major force raising more than £300 million and investing in over 200 pioneering research projects.

For more information about Children with Cancer UK, visit www.childrenwithcancer.org.uk

