

The London Maggie's Centre needed to create its own sequence of internal and external environments cocooned from its surroundings – a welcoming beacon in this busy London streetscape.

Wedged between a busy corner of Fulham Palace Road and Charing Cross Hospital, it was clear from the start that Maggie's London would need to be sheltered from its urban environment. Dan Pearson Studio worked closely with the architects of Maggie's London, Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, to create a garden that both surrounds the building and grows through it in a series of intimate and sensual spaces. The relaxed mood and easy, inside-outside flow will help make the centre a sanctuary in the city.

More than 100 unusual birch trees with a pinky brown bark (*Betula albosinensis* var. *septentrionalis*) filter out the noise and pollution of the Fulham Palace Road and enclose and protect the centre and its visitors. A narrow path picks its way through restful woodland planting and leads to a magnolia grove surrounding the entrance courtyard of the centre. A series of ceramic sculptures by Hannah Bennett punctuate the woodland walk, the courtyard and the entrance. Together with arching bamboo, they form the focal point that draws you to the front door. A green courtyard beyond welcomes you inside.

Three courtyards within the building bring green spaces into the heart of the Centre. Each courtyard is generously planted in a relaxed style. With sensuality in mind, the planting is rich and eclectic. The largest of the three spaces forms a bright outdoor area for use in good weather. The most intimate is equipped with an outdoor fireplace, whilst the third is filled with dramatic foliage and has a window seat in its midst. The upper level of the building has a series of roof-garden spaces with plain rectangular beds, integrated seating and a further selection of tactile and scented plants.



"This will be a calm, green space that works throughout the year. In spring, the courtyard will be alive with the blossom of six multi-stemmed magnolias. In summer, there will be scented pelargoniums and herbs, colour and productive grapevines in the autumn. For winter we have scented jasmine and winter-flowering box. By stimulating all the senses and providing a connection to nature in an urban environment, Maggie's London will put all visitors in touch with this healing potential." Dan Pearson.

"This garden will allow people to be themselves and have their own space without having to speak to anyone and sometimes that's more valuable than any medicine: one can take courage from being in a good place, breathing in courage and breathing out fear." Cath Knox, West London, who has secondary cancer.



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front

maggie's

cancer caring centres

"The landscaping creates a therapeutic environment around the building, contributing to its healing potential."

The Landscaping

www.danpearsonstudio.com