

Quarterly Update

Feb-April 2025

Gympanzees HQ continues to be a hive of activity this Spring. Preparing our 2024 annual report and accounts has given us the chance to reflect on the incredible achievements of the past year, and has highlighted the great progress already made in 2025.

I've also had the pleasure of exploring the latest developments in inclusive equipment with some recent trips to potential equipment providers. It's inspiring to imagine the impact that this innovative kit will have on our children and families, and exciting to know that Gympanzees will be at the forefront of inclusive exercise.

On site, with the interior of the ground floor stripped back to an open-plan state, the scale of the space is truly coming to life. Seeing each room marked out makes it even more real and so exciting! We can now clearly picture a centre that offers the facilities, space, and inclusive environment our families deserve.

I hope you enjoy this latest update. As always, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me or a member of the team if you have any questions or thoughts.

Kindest Regards,

Steph

Stephanie Wheen
CEO & Founder
of Gympanzees



The Build

Oakland Construction has now completed the strip-out phase of the project. The ground floor has been opened up, with internal walls removed to accommodate the new layout, ceilings taken down, and floors stripped away.

We were told to expect the unexpected when stripping back a building of this size and nature, and while there were a few surprises along the way, nothing of concern was found. This has allowed the work to be completed on time and on budget - long may that continue!



“As an organisation we have been following and supporting the Gympanzees journey for many years, and we are all incredibly passionate about the Gympanzees story and all of its people. To see what - for many years - has been a vision or goal coming to reality is incredibly exciting, and we are proud to be able to be a small part of what is a hugely important story.”

Tom Lee-Fox, Managing Director
Oakland Construction

What's Next?

A Whole Life Carbon Assessment (which measures the environmental impact of the building over its entire lifespan, from construction through to eventual demolition) has been completed, with recommendations being reviewed to enhance the building's sustainability. We are preparing for the removal of the existing lift to make way for a new one, while the Stage 3 design is close to sign-off paving the way for more detailed work in Stage 4.

The tendering process for the construction phase is soon to begin, and specialist contractors for Changing Places facilities, hoists, and flooring are being brought on board and integrated into the design process. Meanwhile, proposals for the outdoor play area are being presented by a range of companies, with the goal of creating an industry-leading, inclusive outdoor play space.



Bringing Cutting-Edge Equipment to Gympanzees

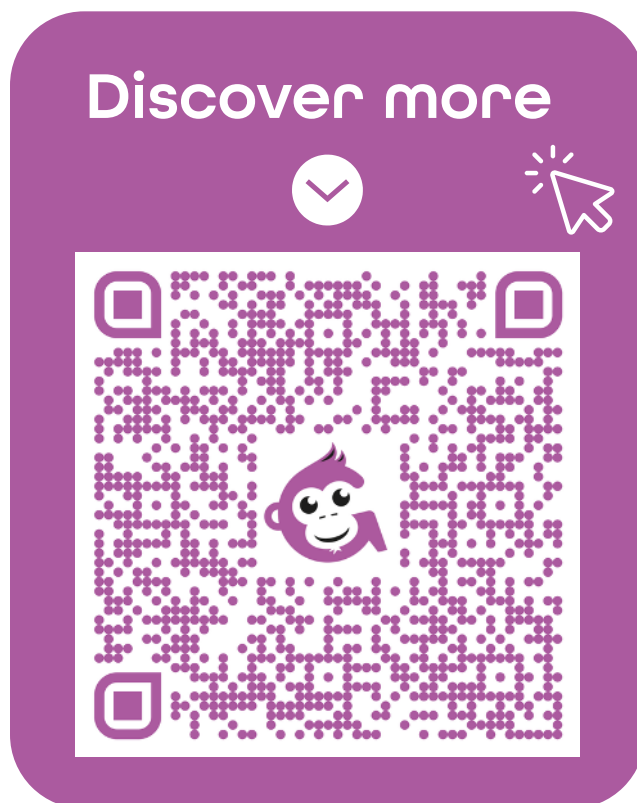
We're on a mission to find the very best inclusive equipment to kit out the centre, so the team have been out and about testing the latest innovations.

Our Operations Team had an inspiring day at the Kidz to Adultz exhibition, seeing Integrex, whose interactive screen is a Pop Up favourite, and exploring options for inclusive communication including eye gaze technology. The latest Innowalk from Made for Movement was another highlight, an incredible machine that was a part of the inspiration behind Gympanzees.

Steph was accompanied by Tom, a full-time wheelchair user and passionate member of our Youth Council, to try out the latest innovations from Sports Med and Thera UK in Birmingham. Tom put in a huge effort testing out specialist physiotherapy and rehabilitation equipment.

With so many exciting possibilities, we're carefully selecting the best and latest equipment to create an exceptional space where every child and young person can move, play, and thrive.

You can read more about our transformative equipment and the opportunities to support the campaign in our Kit Partner Brochure.



Fundraising Campaign

We are thrilled to have recently received a pledge of £230,000 from the Julia Rausing Trust to fund the creation of our Soft Play



room. This space will offer fun for the whole family, featuring a wheelchair lift so everyone can enjoy zooming down the slide, and built at adult height to allow parents and carers to fully engage and support their children. Welcoming, fun and accessible, the Soft Play room perfectly embodies our philosophy of 'stealthy health', encouraging physical activity through play.

This generous award, amongst the continued progress of the campaign, pushes our total raised to £4.8million. Work continues to secure the remaining funds, with some encouraging conversations being had with funders which would have a transformative impact on the campaign.

It has been an exciting few months for our corporate and community supporters. Having launched our new events programme for 2025, the first big event of the year was the Great Bristol Run in early May.



We had an amazing turnout with 60 supporters taking on the Half Marathon and 10K races. Thanks to the incredible runners and walkers who together raised an amazing £17,000 (at time of writing), and represented Gympanzees across the city!

The sun shone, energy levels were high, and there was a fantastic buzz amongst the whole team. We're already counting down to next year's event!

Next up we have our June Golf Day and Dragon Boat event in September. To get involved please visit [Gympanzees - Events and Challenges](#).



Discover more



The Lending Library

Supported by:



At the start of the year the first Gympanzees Lending Library Hub was launched in Kingswood (South Glos), since then four more have launched based in Stonehouse (Gloucestershire), Caerphilly (Wales), Newport (Wales), and Radstock (Somerset), with Abergavenny (Wales) to follow in May. These partner hubs allow for one delivery to be made to each location with kit then picked up by local families, enabling many more people to benefit from the service. We're delighted to have more children and families getting active and having fun with our kit at home!

Case Study: "Why the Gympanzees Lending Library Has Been a Game-Changer for Our Pupils"

We're a Moderate Learning Difficulties Resource Hub supporting 10 primary-aged children, working closely with our mainstream setting to create inclusive opportunities for learning and play. Many of the children we support are autistic, have cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, ADHD, or other physical and sensory disabilities.

We've noticed a real improvement in movement skills, regulation, communication, and engagement. The excitement that comes with new items sparks interest in ways we wouldn't see otherwise. And families love it too! When we use larger pieces outside, children can't wait to show them off at pick-up time.

The Lending Library has been a huge asset to our pupils and our staff. It supports physical development, emotional regulation, and engagement-and makes our job easier too. We can't thank you enough!

As always, please reach out to a member of the team if you have any questions, suggestions or introductions, we would love to hear from you.



We've got a building, now you can help us make it a home!



Charity Number 1189375