

Quarterly Update

August - October 2025

It's been an incredible few months for Gympanzees. In our last report, we shared that conversations were ongoing with a range of funders. I'm thrilled to share that since September, we've received some pivotal pledges that bring our total raised to £6 million, an incredible milestone on our journey! You can read more about these recent awards later in this report and the life-changing impact they will have.

These achievements are the result of a true team effort. Every member of our team, along with our trustees and committees, has contributed their energy and talent toward our shared goal. They are aided by our wonderful donors, committees, volunteers, and supporters offering pro bono services. I cannot thank each of you enough for the part you play.

It's also been such an exciting time as final room designs and bespoke pieces of equipment come together. The Gympanzees dream is truly taking shape, thanks to you, our amazing community of supporters. I can't wait for the day we open our doors and welcome children and families inside.

Warmest wishes,

Steph

Stephanie Wheen
CEO & Founder
Gympanzees



The Build

Enquiries for room designs and bespoke equipment are progressing well, with conversations at various stages. We have chosen our playground provider and are in final design stages with them, a project the team is both proud of and excited to see come to life. Chief Operations Officer, Fran Garland, and the team have worked closely with suppliers to deliver an exceptional, inclusive playground that offers something, in fact lots of things, for every child! Encouragingly, several suppliers have already shared that the accessibility standards set by Gympanzees are influencing their own future designs, a positive ripple effect beyond our own project.

A similar process is underway for the soft play area, where the team continues to challenge suppliers to innovate and create truly accessible solutions. While this work brings its challenges, progress is strong, and the emerging designs are both creative and inspiring.

Oakland Construction have been undertaking the enabling works, including preparing the flooring throughout and raised ceilings above the trampolines, ahead of the next phase of construction to commence imminently. Around 500 tonnes of material have left the site during these works and has gone to the ETM recycling plant, continuing our efforts to be as environmentally conscious as possible.

Following our thorough tendering process, Oakland Construction have been appointed as our lead builders for the upcoming construction phase. We are delighted to continue this working partnership with such an excellent team to help deliver our vision.

Outside, measurements are being taken for fencing to secure the perimeter, approximately 400 metres in total, creating a safe and open space for our visitors to enjoy.



Team Update

Head of Marketing

We've welcomed Bryony Thomas to the team as our new Head of Marketing (Maternity Cover). Bryony brings a wealth of expertise and enthusiasm to help share the Gympanzees message far and wide as we move through the final stages of our capital campaign and take the exciting step towards opening as a leisure facility.

Leisure Centre Manager

We are also delighted to announce the appointment of long-standing Gympanzees team member Emily Thorn as our Leisure Centre Manager. After an extremely competitive process, Emily emerged as the standout candidate, and we are thrilled to see her step into this vital role.

Emily brings a wealth of experience and deep organisational knowledge to this pivotal role. Having led multiple Gympanzees Pop Ups, she has played a central part in shaping our services and understanding the diverse needs of the children, families, and professionals we support. Most recently, Emily has been a key member of our Operations Team, contributing to the development and delivery of the plans for our new centre.

As Leisure Centre Manager, Emily will oversee the centre's day-to-day running, ensuring the highest standards of accessibility, safety, and customer experience. Her passion, expertise, and commitment to our mission make her exceptionally well-placed to lead this next chapter.

Leisure Committee

We have assembled a fantastic team of industry-leading experts, representing a broad range of specialisms across the leisure sector, to advise and guide us over the coming months. Their insight will be instrumental as we finalise operational plans and ensure the safe, efficient, and high-quality running of the centre in line with our comprehensive business plan.

Fundraising Campaign

Key Gifts



Seneca Trust has pledged £264,000 towards our world-class outdoor playground, bringing our total raised to an incredible £5.8 million. This generous commitment is directly funding the accessible playground equipment, with a further six figure amount pledged as match funding for an exciting campaign to come in the Spring.

“We at Seneca Trust are great believers in what you are doing and in you as a team to achieve it. It is very much our hope that your vision for this first centre becomes a reality and that it will be replicated across the UK.”

The Clothworkers’ Foundation has also awarded

£150,000 towards our capital appeal, taking our total raised even further, marking another important milestone. The Foundation supports organisations across the country working to create a fairer, more equitable society making them the perfect partner for Gympanzees.



Corporate Fundraising

Business Breakfast

In October we’ve welcomed more than 50 representatives from both existing and prospective corporate supporters on site. This event, kindly sponsored by Enterprise Mobility, gave attendees the chance to experience the Gympanzees vision first-hand and explore how their companies can partner with us to make it a reality.

The morning was full of energy and engaging conversations. From discussions about financial contributions to offers of pro-bono expertise and discounted equipment and supplies.

We heard from our Director of Fundraising, Jack Lewis, that the 2025 Working Families Report states 11% of working parents have a disabled child, highlighting that these partnerships not only help us reach our goals and transform lives, but also demonstrate to employees that their families are seen, valued, and supported.

Welcoming New Partners

We are delighted to welcome the incredible generosity of local businesses who are answering the call for support from the business community. Ian Williams Property Services have come on board as Silver Kit Partners pledging £21,000 over the next three years.

Sweet Projects have pledged £60,000 over a three-year period making them Platinum Kit Partners.

This kind of multi-year support is incredibly important. Not only does it bring us closer to opening our doors, but it also provides vital stability as we begin our first years of operation, strengthening our ability to plan ahead and deliver our services confidently. In addition, both companies bring a wealth of volunteering support and expertise, which greatly enhances our work.

We're also thrilled to share that Forbo and Gollop have together confirmed an incredible 90% discount on our flooring, a gift-in-kind contribution worth £100,000.



Events

Dragon Boat Race 2025

The Dragon Boat Race was a fantastic way to round off this year's events calendar. The weather was kind, the competition was fierce, and the atmosphere was full of fun and team spirit! Together, our incredible crews raised £27,500, while also helping to spread the Gympanzees message far and wide through their companies and networks.

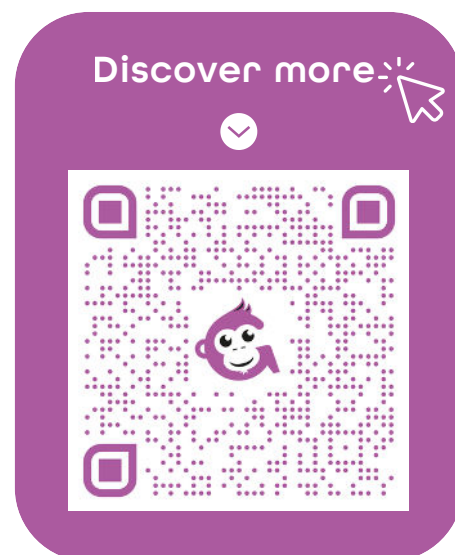
Hoggin 2025

More than 1,200 bikers took part in Hoggin 2025, setting off from the Gympanzees site before crossing the Old Severn Bridge and finishing at The Measure Inn in Caldicot. A huge thank you to Caldicot Motorcycle Club, every rider, volunteer and supporter who made the day possible and raised £2,000 for Gympanzees.

2026 Events

We're looking forward to an exciting programme of fundraising events in our opening year. We'll be kicking things off with the Bristol 10K and Half Marathon on Sunday 10th May 2026. With 60 runners fundraising on behalf of Gympanzees earlier this year, we're looking forward to another fantastic day including a walking group for the 10K.

We're finalising dates for the rest of our 2026 events programme and look forward to sharing details very soon.



The Lending Library

Supported by:



FOYLE FOUNDATION

October was one of our busiest ever in the Gympanzees Lending Library with more than 150 pieces of specialist equipment going out to families, schools and therapists. That means 150 new chances for children to exercise, learn through developmental and therapeutic play and 150 new chances to thrive.

We continue to receive incredible feedback including that physiotherapists are recommending the service and particular pieces of equipment whilst parents also tell us the impact of using the Lending Library is huge:



“It’s been amazing. My daughter is very specific about the equipment she uses and in the past I’ve bought lots of different things and she uses them once and that’s it. Being able to try out different items for an entire month has been so helpful to see what she actually likes and will use frequently.”

“It was great to be able to try out some expensive pieces of equipment to see if they suited my son...The trampoline and rowing machine assisted us in my son’s physio programme, improving his strength and fitness.”



Case Study: What if your child had nowhere to exercise and play safely?

Adam's Story

This video from Adam and his mum Kelly gives a great insight into barriers faced by disabled children and how Gympanzees will make a real difference to them and their families. Please take a moment to have a look and share with your networks to help spread the message of the impact that your support is having and will continue to have for many years to come.

Watch here!



Thank you for being part of our journey. We're always happy to hear your thoughts, questions, or ideas about our campaign, your input makes a real difference. Stay connected and follow our latest updates, stories, and behind-the-scenes moments on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube.

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

