

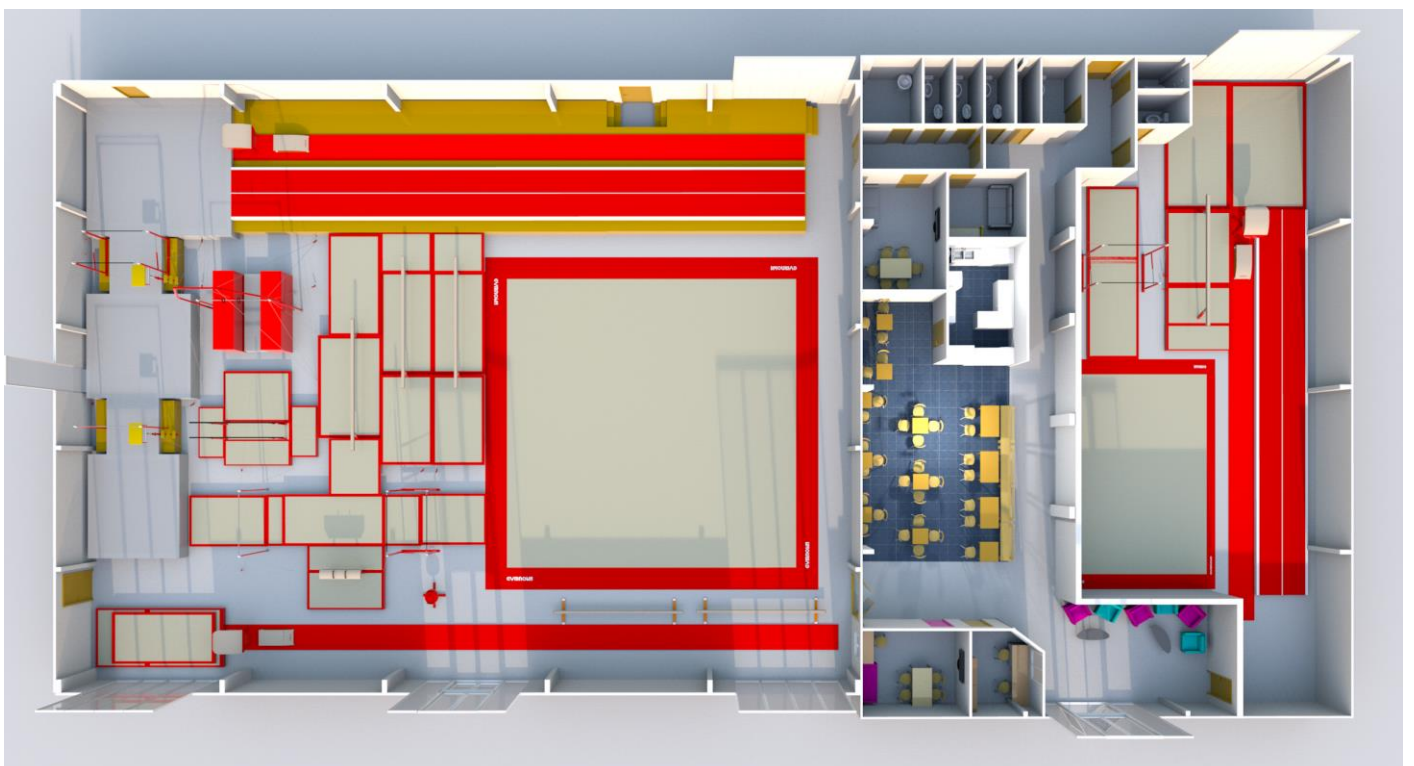
Dear Friends,

What a year! So much has happened. So much has *not* happened. So much has been learned. So much has been lost. We've never been ones to dwell on the downsides – and we believe in silver linings – so I wanted to share all our best news with you and celebrate the good things that have happened in the last 12 months.

As a Community Interest Company, Carterton Gymnastics Club is a not-for-profit organisation that believes every success should feed directly back into our community: the community we serve. We believe that Carterton deserves a fitness facility that is open to everyone, and that Covid-19 has made this even more of a necessity. We believe that everyone, regardless of age, ability or disability should have easy access to a safe fitness facility that can nurture, coach and support everyone on their fitness journey.

Now, don't let the name fool you: whilst gymnastics is our speciality, we are excited at the prospect of being able to offer a tantalising menu of classes once we get into our new facility. We have grand expansion plans and there are a wide range of services we can offer once we have our new high specification premises. From Parkour and Kickboxing to Ballet and Pilates, Carterton Gymnastics Club will have something for everyone – gymnastics and beyond!

Since I last asked for your help, so much has happened, and we are so excited about it, that it is tough to know where to begin. It all started with a dream: A dream of a bigger, better, custom-built premises for our fantastic gymnastics club. We have served the Carterton Community for over 30 years now and have loved our home at Carterton Community College. However, our club is so successful, so sought-after and so prestigious that the college premises is not big enough for us anymore: we are over-subscribed and have had a long waiting list of aspiring gymnasts for over 10 years. The pandemic has not decreased our numbers. If anything, our family has grown in strength and purpose. We are excited about training an RAF Men's Gymnastics Team, raising the profile of adult gymnastics in Oxfordshire, and coaching even more young gymnasts to competition-level success. But, as Carterton grows, with more housing developments and more families moving into the area we are aware of a growing need for more than just gymnastics in our community – and we are here to help! We will offer safe, family-friendly spaces, easy disabled access and quiet classes for autistic, differently abled sports enthusiasts – and so much more.



So where are we at? Well – hold onto your hats: it's been a whirlwind 12 months! We needed to raise a whopping £370, 000 and have raised over half that amount already! I want to say a HUGE THANK YOU to our community for their contributions. Without you we would not be so close to the next exciting phase for our rapidly growing club! We have had grants from Sport England, West Oxfordshire and are supported by Carterton Town Council, The Lions Club, A-plan Insurance, Solid Structures, Ace Training, Affinity Structures, G&Ts, Jim Cousins Trust and more. It's inspiring to have your support and belief in all that we can achieve. I can't lie and tell you it has been smooth sailing. We have suffered catastrophic losses. We have weathered stormy, tough times – as I'm certain you all have. The last 7 months has been far from plain sailing – but we have not allowed ourselves to sink. Instead of bemoaning the bad times, we refuse to dwell on the negatives and won't be beaten. We are stronger and more determined than ever.

This update would not be complete without small mention of a personal achievement... As much as I don't like to blow my own trumpet, I am delighted, proud and honoured to share with you that **I WON** the BBC Sports' Personality Unsung Hero Award for the whole of the South Region – and appeared on TV last Christmas: it was certainly the best present I could have hoped for! The nomination was a huge surprise, and when the cameras turned up at the gym I was overcome with emotion. I am so proud to have been recognised and honoured for my contribution to the Carterton Community and am proud and honoured to continue to fly the flag for local fitness as Carterton Gymnastics Club continues to thrive and develop.



More recently, the Unsung Heroes filmed a socially distanced single with none other than the legend, Rick Astley! We all continue to have exciting plans and dreams for our own communities. Even in a pandemic, we are ambitious, we are tenacious, we are conscious that in these pandemic times, our communities need support and safe spaces more than ever. You can watch us, with Rick Astley, singing 'Every One of Us' on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/7ZjBiDVoTTE> - The song sums up how we all feel, and lockdown has reminded us that we are all in this together, and if we stick together we can achieve anything. Filming the single and video was yet another reminder that even with new ways of working, it is truly amazing what we can achieve when we all work together.

So, what (I hear you all ask) is next? We are entering the final phase of fundraising so that we can get our new home painted, furnished and adapted for accessibility. We have a 'Moving-In' target of March 2021 and can't wait to open our doors and welcome you all. We are excited to welcome new members to our new premises for the start of an exciting new year! Our pre-registration lists are already bulging (if you are interested and want to join us you can sign up here: <https://www.cartertongym.co.uk/contact>) with new members – but we can't open our doors and welcome you all until we are in ourselves – and there is still so much to be done.

We are lucky to be part of such a generous and supportive community, one that will continue to blossom and grow as more people see how wonderful Carterton is. Would we ever want to relocate? No. Never! We are lucky that so many of you have already donated and helped us on our journey, and I can't thank you enough. I know you are as excited as I am by the great things we can achieve together.

If you have not yet made a donation, but would like to support us, there are several ways you can help. Donations can be made online by visiting: <https://www.cartertongym.co.uk/donate>

£20	Buys a chair for the cafe
£100	Buys a table for the cafe
£350	Buys a small landing mat
£400	Buys a 1m section of raised foam pit
£650	Buys a spring board
£1000	Buys one competition beam
£1300	Buys a competition pommel horse
£2400	Buys competition asymmetric bars
£14000	Buys our Pre-school equipment
£20000	Buys our 12m x 12m competition sprung floor

Any contribution you can make is valued and appreciated. Any contribution – no matter how small - will make a real difference to the Carterton families who are so valued by our Club. With your help, we can achieve so much more and offer so much back to our community in return.

All major supporters will be featured on our website, and when we arrive in our new home your name will take pride of place on our heroic Wall of Superstars! If your contribution is significant, or you would like to donate a specific item, goods or services (a list of what we need is attached separately), then please, please contact us directly on 01993 883300 or by emailing [cartertongymnastics@outlook.com](mailto:cartertongymnastics@outlook.com)

Please do visit our website for the latest information, updates, and more detail about our plans. We look forward to hearing from you, and we hope to see you in our new home very soon! Best wishes, and with all my thanks,  
Debra Courtenay-Crane  
07702 123654



PS since writing this, we have now started building in the Vault!

