

Weston Gymnastics Centre head over heels after receiving funding

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A gymnastics club in Weston-super-Mare has received £1,000 from housebuilder Persimmon Homes Severn Valley to buy new training equipment.

Weston Gymnastics Centre, based at The Potteries Centre on Langford Road, was awarded the money by the Portishead-based South West office of FTSE 100 firm Persimmon Plc, as it seeks to deliver more than £1m to good causes as part of its Building Futures campaign.

The North Somerset club, which has produced gymnasts that have represented Great Britain at international competitions, offers facilities including a sprung performance floor and hosts pre-school, recreational and competitive gymnastics, as well as free running.

During the national lockdown the club continued to provide online classes and underwent refurbishment work to its main gym hall, building a mezzanine level to give the club more spare.

Noreen Austen of Weston Gymnastics Centre said the donation was a “tremendous boost” to everyone at the club.

Ms Austen said: "We're extremely grateful to Persimmon Homes for their generosity.

"We provide an accessible, inclusive sport offering opportunities for children of all abilities, levels and ethnic groups to participate in gymnastics training within a controlled learning environment.

"Due to the current restrictions, we have recently extended our facilities to provide more quality training space in an upstairs area.

"This funding will help us to buy more training equipment including safety mats, benches, beams, springboards and a vault."

A total of 128 grants of £1,000 will be awarded across Persimmon's 32 regional businesses to improve local facilities and the delivery of community projects, with the initiative running until mid-August

Three finalists will go on to win £100,000 each through a national online public vote. The winners will be named at a gala dinner in November.

In each sector, education and arts, health and sport, as well as the £100,000 first prize, there will be a £50,000 second prize and a £20,000 third prize, while a further 87 shortlisted projects will each receive £5,000.

Carly Spear, sales director at Persimmon Homes Severn Valley, said: "We're thrilled to be able to support Weston Gymnastics Centre with this funding.

"It's a great club which is really benefiting young people by helping them stay active and social."

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