**3, 2, 1, Go for Parkrun in Totnes**

A Totnes Town Council Community Grant of £1,000 helped to provide some of the essential starter funding needed to get a new Parkrun in Totnes up and ‘running’. Just one year on since the first Parkrun took place on the Totnes to Sharpham path in April 2023, the weekly events have proved to be a real success story. They welcome over 100 participants and volunteers of all ages and abilities every week and the events are playing a positive role in boosting local residents’ fitness, wellbeing, and sense of community.

The Parkrun, which starts at the top of Sharpham Drive in Totnes, is co-ordinated by a team of local volunteers. However, £4,000 was needed to cover essential start-up items, ranging from technical equipment to record running times to high-vis jackets for the volunteers.

**Race Director Sara Mills said:** “The grant from the Town Council helped us enormously. We needed to raise £4000 for start-up costs and equipment and the grant helped us towards that goal. It was much appreciated.”

**Totnes Mayor, Cllr Emily Price, said:** “What Sara and her team of dedicated volunteers have achieved by setting up a Parkrun in Totnes is absolutely fantastic. There’s a really supportive atmosphere at these events with people smiling despite the fact they’re running or walking up a hill! I’m proud that Totnes Town Council can support our local community to get initiatives like this up and running and I congratulate everyone involved.”

Parkrun is an international initiative, which is inclusive and open to all ages. It is free and welcoming, there is no time limit and no one comes last. It focusses on encouraging more people to be active – whether they walk, jog, run or volunteer - to enhance health and happiness in the great outdoors, feeling part of the community and improving fitness and wellbeing.

Participants include local residents as well as people who come specifically to Totnes to take part in the run – including from as far afield as Australia and the USA. These ‘Parkrun Tourists’ provide another added benefit to Totnes – a welcome extra boost to the town’s economy as they enjoy exploring the cafes and shops after taking part.

Totnes Town Council’s community grants are funded by a portion of the Council Tax that is collected from Totnes residents. A grant fund pot of £25,000 has been allocated for 2024 to support local community initiative. Applications are now open until 9 May 2024. For more details, please go to: <https://www.totnestowncouncil.gov.uk/your-community/community-grants/>

**About Parkrun**

Parkrun organise free, weekly, 5km timed runs around the world. Parkrun has a very clear ethos and focusses on encouraging more people to be active – to walk, jog, run or volunteer. They are open to everyone, free, fun, safe and easy to take part in. Parkrun is a positive, welcoming and inclusive experience where there is no time limit and no one finishes last. Whether you walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate, Parkrun aim for people to be able to learn new skills, enhance their health and happiness in the great outdoors whilst making new friends, feeling part of the local community and improving their fitness.

**Sharpham Parkrun, Totnes**

The 5k route follows the Dart Trail from Totnes to Sharpham (The route goes from Steam Packet end of the cycle path (the start is about 50 metres up the path for safety reasons) along the cycle path until it forks (one lower path to Sharpham one higher path to Ashprington). The route continues about 100 metres up the Ashprington path and then there’s a turnaround at the top of the hill and back to the Steam Packet.)