



Brundall Parish Council - Annual Meeting - 8th April 2023.

Brundall parkrun is a free, timed weekly running and walking event, put on by volunteers each and every week on a Saturday morning. We are delighted to have been part of Brundall's community since July 2015.



2023 became our second full year back after the lengthy enforced COVID break (of 71 weeks). 2023 saw just under five thousand people (4,981 to be precise!) walk, jog or run at Brundall parkrun. This is an increase in participant numbers of just under 7%.

We were pleased to start 2023 with an additional New Year's Day parkrun, and were able to hold an event for 49 Saturdays during the year. That this latter number is *not* 52 does sadly point to the difficult decisions that the

Run Directors have to occasionally make, with three events cancelled in 2023 due to adverse weather. The frequent 'named storms' of the Autumn and early Winter brought much rain! At times like these, the Run Directors always have to balance the desire to hold an event with both participant safety in slippery conditions, and the potential impact on the park itself. In this context, the annual increase in participant numbers is pleasing.

Some of the increase in participation has been due to the success of the parkwalk initiative – which we wholeheartedly embrace at Brundall parkrun. The parkwalk initiative promotes the clear message that walkers are very welcome, and reinforces that parkrun is NOT a race. My fellow Run Directors share an ethos that parkrun is inclusive, and whether you run, jog or walk, all participants are very welcome at Brundall parkrun – regardless of age, gender or ability.



We are fortunate to have a vibrant parkrun community at Brundall, but we are keen to stress that this would not be possible without the support of an active volunteer base. It takes a minimum of around 15 people to volunteer each Saturday to make parkrun the safe and fun event that it is. My fellow Run Directors and I are extremely grateful for this support. Through 2023, and into 2024, we have again supported several young people with their Duke of

Edinburgh Awards scheme ('DoE'). We are delighted to report that Brundall parkrun have successfully supported young people to achieving numerous Bronze and Silver DoE Awards. At the time of writing, we are supporting 3 young people in their 'Physical' DoE section (using parkrun to achieve physical activity and wellbeing goals), and 5 young people in their 'Volunteering' DoE section (where the young people undertake a range of volunteering roles with us over a 3 or 6 month period).



We continue to enjoy a good relationship with Yare Valley Churches, and are delighted that they have continued to support Brundall parkrun with their 'pod' serving coffee and snacks to both participants and volunteers. We are grateful that the Church volunteers continue to support us as often as possible, despite the Church's own ongoing recruitment issues. As a community, Brundall parkrun was delighted to give something back

to the Church, by supporting the Community Pantry with Donation drives in the Summer, and again at Christmas. We were humbled by the generosity of the parkrun community, and were pleased that the Community Pantry could put our donations to good use in Brundall.

At the time of writing, we have just completed the 365th Brundall parkrun, and in March 2024, we saw the 40,000th finisher of a Brundall parkrun. I am pleased to report that the event continues to thrive, and continues to make such a positive contribution to many people's physical and mental wellbeing, and in turn to that of our community.

I hope this gives you a flavour of what Brundall parkrun is all about. In finishing, I will reiterate that there remains an Open invitation to anyone who is interested in parkrun, to please come and see us. If you want to participate or volunteer, we will be delighted, but you don't have to do either – you are welcome to attend and just see what we do or have a chat. Brundall parkrun is at 9am, every Saturday morning, at the Countryside Park. It is the best way to start your Saturday!

James Howlett, Run Director, Brundall parkrun.