

Ready, set... Celebrate!

parkrun UK is collaborating with the NHS to help celebrate their milestone anniversary by hosting several special events across the UK, as part of their mission to encourage participation to make the world a healthier and happier place.

Hundreds of parkruns take place in parks and open spaces across Wales and the rest of the UK every Saturday. The community-led events are designed for people of all ages and abilities – including walkers and are all free of charge.

Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. It can help control your weight, it reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. This is why increasing levels of physical activity is an important commitment within the national strategy Prosperity for All.

To stay healthy, the Chief Medical Officer guidelines say that adults should try to be active daily and aim to achieve at least 150 minutes of physical activity over a week through a variety of activities. Yet at present only 54% of adults in Wales get enough exercise.

Before making his way to the start line, Dr Atherton said: “Participating in your local parkrun is a great way to get fit, for free.

“As a nation, we need to be healthier and more active to help reduce the risk of a range of conditions such as obesity, heart disease and to improve our mental health. These are issues that are putting pressure on the NHS, but that we can take steps ourselves to try and improve.”

Double Olympic gold medallist Dame Kelly Holmes, who is supporting the parkrun NHS 70th birthday celebrations this year, said: “There is no doubt that increased levels of activity lead to improved mood, self-esteem and a wide range of health benefits. I know from first-hand experience how sociable and welcoming parkruns are, so it’s fantastic to see it join forces with the NHS to encourage even more people to get active in this special year.”