In October 2015, Warburtons and parkrun embarked on an exciting new partnership focusing on improving healthy lifestyles across Great Britain.

Warburtons is the UK’s leading independent baker and was established in a grocery shop in Bolton in 1876. Today the business is run by the fifth generation of the Warburton family – Brett, Jonathan and Ross. Warburtons operates across the country with the support of 4,500 people, producing more than 2 million products every day. It is the largest baker in the UK and was recently named the UK’s most-chosen FMCG brand by Kantar World Panel.

parkrun is an organisation that facilitates 5km running events every Saturday morning around the UK. All events are free to participate and are organised by teams of local volunteers. junior parkrun is a new initiative that has recently evolved, providing a 2km run for children aged 4–14 years every Sunday morning.

What’s the challenge?

Physical inactivity is the fourth largest cause of disease and disability in the UK. Lack of physical exercise affects both genders with around one in two women and a third of men in England damaging their health as a result. People living in the most deprived areas are twice as likely to be physically inactive

What are Warburtons and parkrun doing to meet the challenge?

To tackle this challenge, the focus of the Warburtons/parkrun partnership is to grow junior parkrun participation in the most deprived areas of Great Britain.

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1 Public Health England: Everybody Active, Every Day. September 2014
How are they achieving this?

- Warburtons are providing funding which has enabled parkrun to appoint a full-time member of staff to focus solely on driving this initiative forward.
- parkrun are identifying target areas, actively engaging these communities, and generating new running events.

What is CAF’s role?

Warburtons required support in identifying a new charitable partnership that would meet their goal to help families lead healthier lifestyles. As we have worked closely with Warburtons for a number of years to help them design and deliver their Community Investment Strategy, our advisory team was asked to identify a charitable partnership to fit Warburtons Families Matter strategy.

Following in-depth research and engagement, we identified parkrun as a potential partner organisation and facilitated an introductory workshop. Further involvement included establishing the terms of the partnership and developing the implementation approach.

Warburtons use a CAF Company Account, a tax effective giving vehicle providing transparency and clear reporting for their charitable donations. They use this account to manage their Community Investment budget, from daily disbursement of community grants to the administration of matched funding for employees.

As parkrun do not have registered charity status, CAF’s validation services provided an additional layer of due diligence to ensure that Warburtons could support them. Any donations made through their CAF Company Account follow a robust process that manages any reputational or financial risk for them.

Over the next three years, thanks largely to the support of Warburtons, we expect to introduce junior parkrun events to another 72 locations in Great Britain and more than triple our weekly participation figures. Most importantly, informed by a detailed piece of pre-project insight work, we will significantly increase engagement in hard-to-reach communities where the need for increased physical activity, particularly as part of a family unit, is greatest.

Tom Williams, Managing Director, parkrun

We’re here to help

To find out more about CAF’s work on charity partnerships, please contact:

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