

**Press release**

02 November 2021

**Every Step Counts in second year of rural fundraiser.**

Organisers of the mental health fundraiser, Run1000, are looking to set a new record in January 2022, when the initiative will return for the battle of the nations across the UK and, for the first time, New Zealand.

Launched in 2021 by founder Sheena Horner, who started running again in lockdown for the first time in 20 years, the campaign was joined by over 1,200 participants who walked or ran during the month of January. Each step counted towards their country’s collective miles, ultimately raising £51,545 for charity.

With teams this year from Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland and New Zealand, the team captains are not only competing to be crowned winners but also raise more money for their chosen charities - RSABI, DPJ Foundation, Embrace Farm, YANA, Farmstrong New Zealand, Farming Community Network, The Gamekeepers Welfare Trust and Vetlife.

Sheena explains why Run1000 is so important:

“Rural mental health affects us all but we don’t always realise it, nor appreciate that we are not alone. In rural areas many of us are working in isolation or live in remote areas that can result in little contact with the outside world. I wanted to create a community that could support each other, regardless of where they are based, whilst having a little fun and raising money for charity.

“With the pandemic impacting so many charities and their ability to organise events or fundraisers, we are hoping to get more people involved than ever this year and give something back to the organisations that support so many in their time of need.”

Each team will be led by a captain who has faced their own battles with mental health.

**Team England** - farmer and keen runner Richard Heady learnt first-hand the merits of getting out in the fresh air when he started running just five years ago to help give his mind a new focus.

**Team Wales** - founder of Welsh mental health charity, DPJ Foundation, Emma Picton Jones will lead her team for the second year after winning in 2021, with 24,397 miles.

**Team Scotland** - Sheena Horner took up running when lockdown started to impact her own mental health and she participated in a park run, which soon led to the idea of Run1000.

**Team Ireland** - dairy farmer Peter Hynes is founder of #AgMentalHealthWeek, ambassador for Tackle Your Feelings and depression survivor.

**Team New Zealand** - Born in Wales and now farming on the other side of the world, farmer Sam Owen has faced his own battles with mental health and found a strong support network essential for supporting him.

The competition is open to all, whether or not you have been affected by mental health and costs just £20 to participate, with the money divided equally between the charities.

Individuals can take part by registering via the fundraising platform Enthuse, kindly donated by RSABI, and selecting the team they would like to join. All activity is recorded via Strava, ensuring every step is counted.

New this year is also a dedicated Strava support group where participants can share top tips and advice on how to make the most of the time outside, a shared Spotify playlist to provide some added motivation and branded Run1000 merchandise that can be ordered online.

Sheena is keen to stress that whether you run 1 mile or 10, walk for 10 minutes or 1 hour, Run1000 is flexible and open to all levels of fitness and experience:

“If you enjoy running or walking and want to support and raise awareness of rural mental health why not sign up to your team and help banish those January blues! It’s not about the distance you can cover but about taking part and raising awareness of rural mental health.”

To register to take part, visit <https://www.run1000.org>

-Ends-

To find out more or arrange an interview with one of the captains, contact Rebecca Dawes at Jane Craigie Marketing via rebecca@janecraigie.com or 07792 467730.

To download a copy of this press release, please click here

**Notes to Editors:**

* Run1000 will take place from 1st to 31st January 2022.
* Full biographies of the captains can be found here.
* Prizes and donations are kindly donated by Uddermint, Shearwell Data and Quality Meat Scotland.
* The PR is supported by Jane Craigie Marketing.
* The coordination is supported by Sheena Horner and Food from Farming.
* Merchandise is managed by Tees R Us.