

PRESS RELEASE

High Wire Antics Help Charity Celebrate £5 Million Milestone

Young people from Torbay's Leggit and Scarper youth group has helped local charity Devon Community Foundation celebrate awarding £5 million in grants.

Legit & Scarper - which enables young people with physical disabilities and learning and behavioural difficulties to share activities with their friends and siblings - is just one of 1,300 small community and voluntary groups across the county which has received a grant from Devon Community Foundation over the last five and a half years.

Josie Hall from the group, who is wheelchair bound, helped the charity to celebrate by successfully attempting a 15m high zip-wire on a three day activity break at the River Dart Country Park, whilst Chairman of the Group, Rhys Morgan-Vale, who is on the autistic spectrum, joined in with some mud-sliding activity.

Angela Neil a support worker with Legit and Scarper explains, "Without a grant from Devon Community Foundation the group simply wouldn't be able to do something like this. As a small voluntary group, we often miss out on major grants like Lottery funding. With a grant of just £6,980 from the Foundation we've been able to go on a whole range trips and enable the young people to take part in activities from which they'd usually be excluded."

Devon Community Foundation's £5 million grants programme has supported everything from youth clubs to lunch clubs for the elderly, new play areas, rural transport services, activities and equipment for disabled people, arts music and drama projects, help for the those with mental health problems, the homeless, young carers and vulnerable and isolated young people - to name but a few!

The Foundation is one of 55 across the UK fighting social deprivation and helping tackle disadvantage at grass-roots level.

Despite its chocolate box image, 27 neighbourhood areas in Devon are amongst the top 10% of most deprived in the UK – including four in Torbay. The recent Rowntree Report also highlighted the growing problem of social exclusion, with the gap between rich and poor being at its highest for 40 years.

Melanie McLoughlin, Director of Devon Community Foundation explains,

“There are hundreds of volunteers and small local groups working at the very heart of our communities making life better for those who need help most and building stronger communities for everyone.

“Most of these small local charities and groups are often forgotten and miss out, as 90% of charitable donations go to just 7% of charities.

“Devon Community Foundation provides a way for businesses and individuals to pool their giving and make a lasting impact on local causes and their local communities. Unlike many charities, we build endowed funds which mean any money donated keeps on giving for many years.”

Legit & Scarper is just one of over 162 small charities, voluntary and community groups which have been helped by Devon Community Foundation in Torbay to date with over £750,000 of funding.

Any group or business which would like to carry out a fundraising event on behalf of the Foundation or make a donation to help local groups like Legit & Scarper should call Melanie McLoughlin on 01884 235887.

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