



8 April 2021

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the Association of Directors of Public Health, Public Health England and Sport England, we are writing to share a [joint statement](#) we have published in partnership with the Local Government Association to encourage the safe return of community sport and physical activity across the country.

As we progress along the Government roadmap out of lockdown, collaboration between local leaders and sports providers will be essential to both protect the public and support their safe return to sport and physical activity.

The dedication of local authorities to support sport and physical activity has been visible throughout the pandemic. We appreciate these efforts and know that you will want to support people in your area to enjoy the benefits of being active as far as they are able.

The important contribution that being active makes to our physical and mental health is one of the reasons why sport and physical activity has been prioritised for return. Research conducted by Sport England suggests that as many as 30% of people feel their ability to perform daily activities, such as taking the stairs or carrying shopping, has declined since the pandemic began.

We appreciate this is a challenging time. However, public outdoor spaces and facilities will continue to be vital for improving wellbeing, supporting positive health behaviour like maintaining a healthy weight, supporting young people and re-uniting communities.

What sports can do to return will change over time, but the exceptions to legal gathering limits provided by Government guidance are particularly important for children, families and older people whose activity levels have been disproportionately affected during the lockdown.

We recognise that more than just permission is required to provide much missed sport and activities in your communities. Each organised sport and participation event provider remains alert to local infection rates, Government guidance and is ready to follow the necessary steps to ensure the public and organisers keep each other safe before, during and after their activities. Our joint statement

includes more information about these steps that we urge councils to use and consider when providing for each activity's return.

As we progress along the roadmap out of lockdown our organisations will continue to work together to encourage the safe return of community sport and physical activity across the country. We know that you will continue to do the same in your local community.

Yours sincerely,



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