

# RESUMING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & SPORT

IN OUR COMMUNITIES

AUGUST 2020






## LOCKDOWN BIKE CLUB COMPETITION BMX JUNK

#lockdownbikeclub

Are you ready for some competition?

Can you create a BMX out of recycable materials?

# Bike Loan Scheme



At the Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel

**What?**

The Bike Loan scheme is offering bikes for key workers to get in and out of work safely.

**When?**

Available throughout the covid-19 pandemic.

**Who?**

For female key workers at The Royal London Hospital.

# KEEPING MOVING IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

“

We knew how much value they get out of meeting up once a week, what an outlet it gives them socially. When the lockdown came we were very keen to find a way we could keep bringing them all together.

This has proved far more successful than we thought possible. They all seem to love it.

- TW Flyerz Club Leader

”



## THE LOCKDOWN BIKE CLUB



BY THE MAKING TRAX PROGRAMME

## ADAPTIVE MARTIAL ARTS!



**NEW BEGINNER ONLINE SESSIONS!**

Tuesdays 7-8pm  
Zoom  
To sign up, email:  
[info@adaptivema.co.uk](mailto:info@adaptivema.co.uk)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The whole population has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sadly we know from research and first-hand experiences that people facing the greatest deprivation and health inequalities have been hit harder by the pandemic. COVID-19 has highlighted existing systemic inequalities in society.

Demographic groups and audiences such as disabled people, people from lower socio-economic groups, girls and women and people from some BAME communities were less likely to be meeting the UK Chief Medical Officers' physical activity guidelines prior to COVID-19. These groups and audiences are still finding it harder to be active during the pandemic, with many reporting that they have become less active since lockdown.

This report explores the impact COVID-19 has had on local community sports organisations and their participants. The inability to access local physical activity and sport opportunities has had a significant impact on physical and mental wellbeing of individuals/families. This report highlights the importance of these local organisations in providing people with the opportunity for socialising and friendships.

We have witnessed some exceptional efforts from local community clubs to support their local communities, either through repurposing volunteers to deliver food to vulnerable people or delivering sports equipment and online activities for inclusive groups. We want to harness these experiences and learnings to establish a 'new normal' and bring our communities back together safely.

# OVERVIEW

Access Sport is a charity meeting the urgent need to improve children and young people's health and wellbeing, working to engage deprived and disabled young people in their local communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges to the charity. We had to adapt how we worked with sports clubs and community organisations; supporting them to adjust and reimagine their activities so participants and families could stay connected and be active at home.

As lockdown restrictions ease, we wanted to find out how participants and families, as well as clubs, coaches, and volunteers were feeling about resuming activities and being active again in their community.

This report details key themes and challenges from the point of view of participants, families, club and volunteers.

We also showcase some innovative examples of how organisations have adapted, with practical advice for organisations to plan and resume activities in their communities.

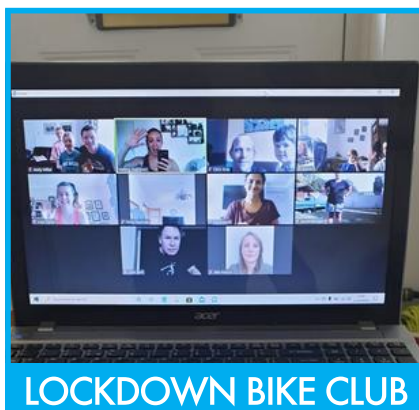
The study focused on two key topics:

1. Understanding clubs/organisations, coaches and volunteers' perspectives
2. Understanding the feelings, and views of participants and their families.





# OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19



# PARTICIPANTS & FAMILIES

## SURVEY RESULTS



# INTRODUCTION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Access Sport has continued to support club participants and their families to navigate the challenges that have arisen. This report looks in to the affects that COVID-19 has had on vulnerable groups and from this, the necessary steps that clubs need to resume activity safely.

We conducted interviews and online surveys with 144 participants, parents and carers from across the Access Sport's programmes and cities. This report presents information about who completed the study, the impact of COVID-19 and considers recommendations for clubs to re-engage their participants safely.



# IMPACT OF COVID-19

The closure of sports clubs has had a detrimental effect on participants physical, mental and emotional wellbeing, with a greater impact on those from vulnerable groups.

“

The whole population has been affected, but not affected equally. Demographic groups and audiences such as women, people from lower socio-economic groups, older adults, people with a long term condition, illness or disability, and people from some BAME communities are still finding it harder to be active - Sport England

”

## According to parents/carers<sup>iv</sup>:

Just **19% of children** under 16 were doing an hour or more of physical activity (meeting CMO guidelines) on a typical day\*.



\*Sport England, June 2020

## THE FACTS...

94%

of families said the health and wellbeing of their disabled children had been negatively affected by COVID-19<sup>1</sup>

32%

of women couldn't prioritise exercise during lockdown as they had too much to do for others<sup>2</sup>

1/5

of BAME children had considered suicide or self-harmed as a result of the pandemic<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Family Fund, June 2020  
<sup>2</sup>Women in Sport, June 2020  
<sup>3</sup>The Guardian, June 2020



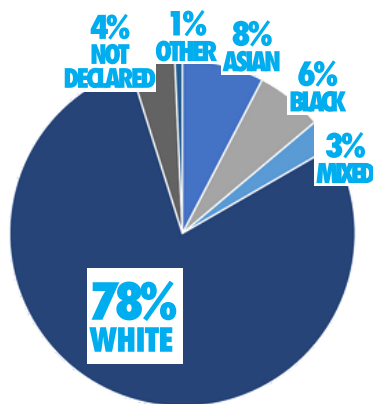
# PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

We support local community organisations to become more inclusive and diverse, with a strong focus on lower socio-economic groups, disabled people, women and girls and people from BAME communities. We surveyed people from across our programmes, providing a good representation across demographic groups.

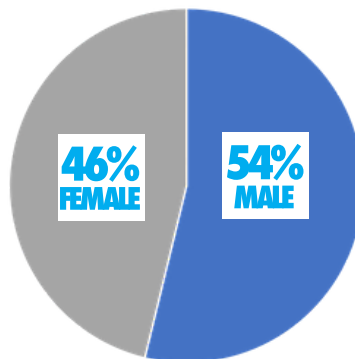
“

The challenges for those with a disability or lifelong health condition has been significant, they will continue to feel the effects of COVID-19 for longer than others in society - Sport England - The Sport for Development Coalition (SfDC)

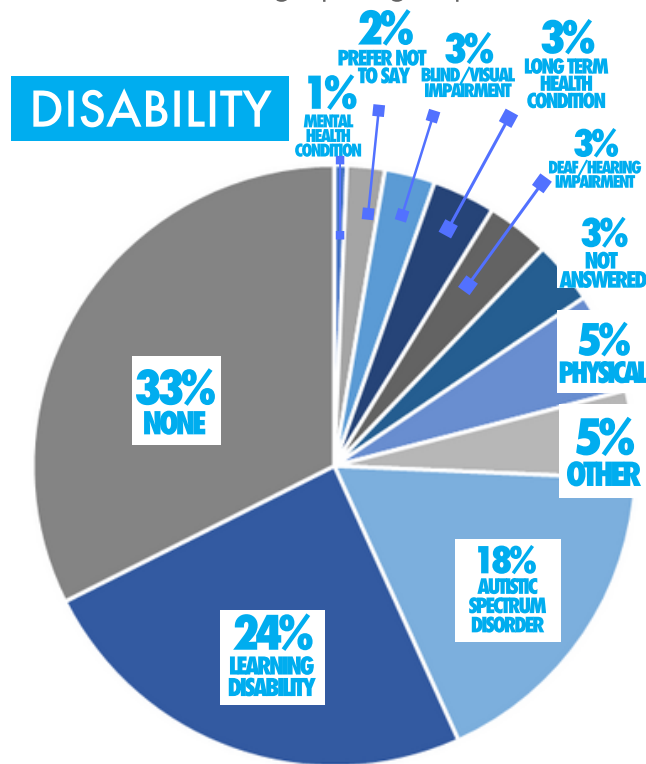
## ETHNICITY



## GENDER



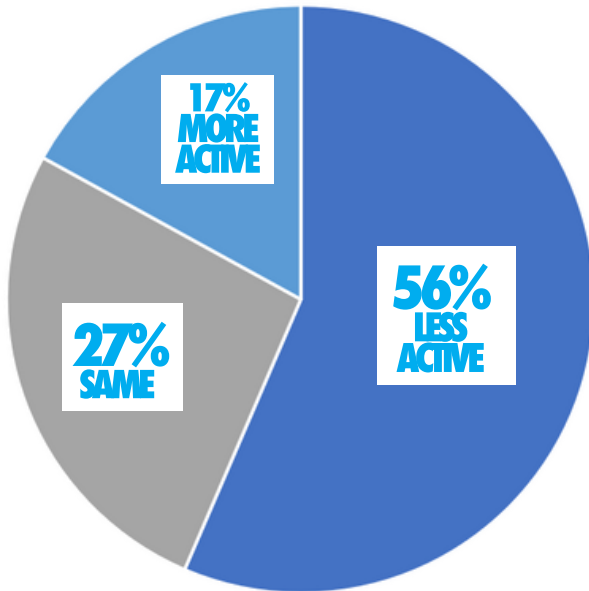
## DISABILITY



# STAYING ACTIVE IN LOCKDOWN

In order to plan for participants and families to safely return to community activity, we first asked a series of questions to find out their current situation and what impact COVID-19 and the lockdown had had on them.

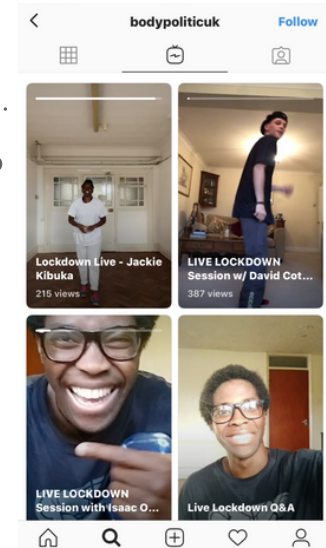
What best describes your current activity levels during lock down compared to before/normal?



## BODY POLITIC LIVE SESSIONS

During lockdown, dance group Body Politic have delivered free monthly Instagram live dance sessions. Young professional dancers have taught beginner hip hop classes encouraging people to dance and be active at home.

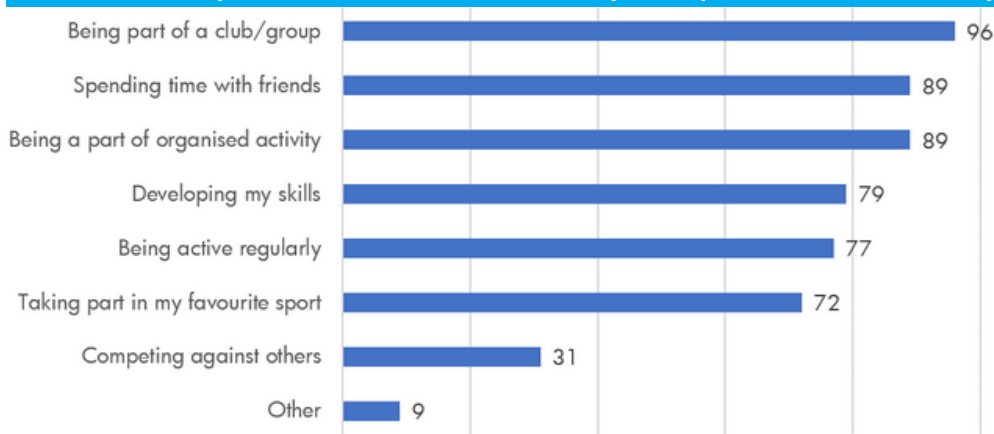
Though the club is based in Oxford, the online dance sessions have reached the young people who usually attend their sessions, as well as people across the country looking for something new and fun to do during lockdown.



"Loved this live, it was so fun to try!"

# THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY

What have you missed the most about your sports club, or activity whilst in lockdown?



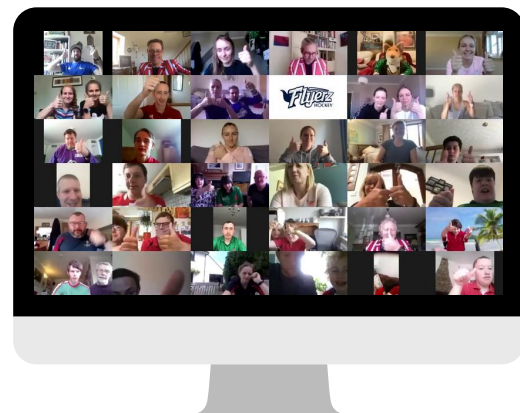
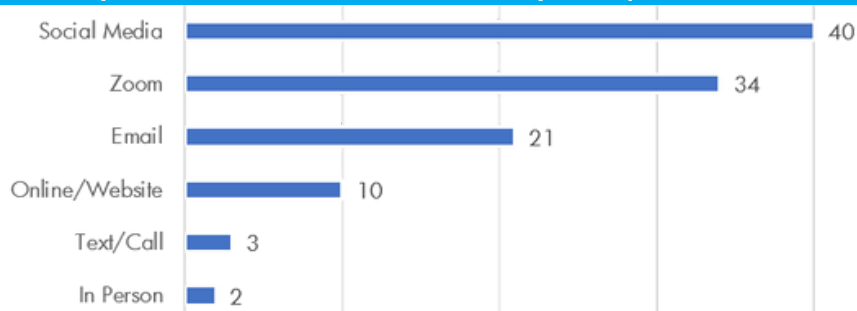
Technology has brought a sense of equality to inclusive activity...

“

This is an hour of doing stuff sitting down, it is a case of welcome to my world. He's loving it. - Parent

”

How have you remained connected with your sports club/activity?



# NHS BIKE LOAN SCHEME

“What we've found really successful is staff using the bikes when they're really stressed – we call it 'having a wobble'. The opportunity to take a bike, have a ride around the site and burn off some of that stress and energy is fantastic. - NHS Nurse”

When our popular 'women on wheels' (WoW) sessions were unable to run at Royal London Hospital, the bikes were repurposed to bike loans in order to allow front line hospital staff to continue cycling. Nurses used the bikes to commute to and from work, during their lunchbreaks and also to cycle in between hospital sites and were also given support with route planning.



## **NHS Bike Loan Scheme with Access Sport | Winners & Good Causes**

Coronavirus has placed strain on NHS staff, but a hospital in East London has a new way of easing stress - borrowing a bike for a spin around...

Due to the success of this initiative, similar schemes have been launched with hospitals in Oxford and Essex to help alleviate some of the strains on mental health that came with their jobs during this challenging time.

This is a great example of re-imagining how sessions were usually running and adapting the format so participants could still access the benefits that they would usually get from the sessions.

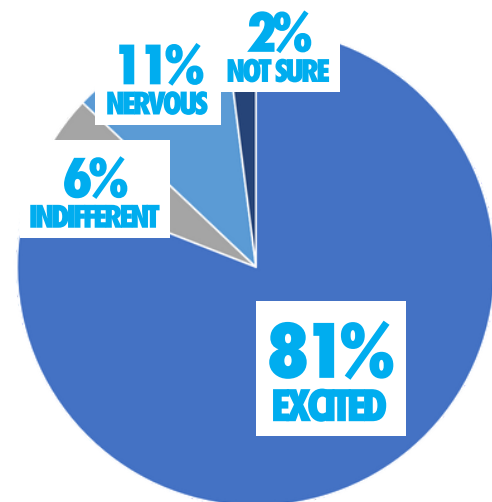
< Read more about the bike loan scheme on our website [here](#)



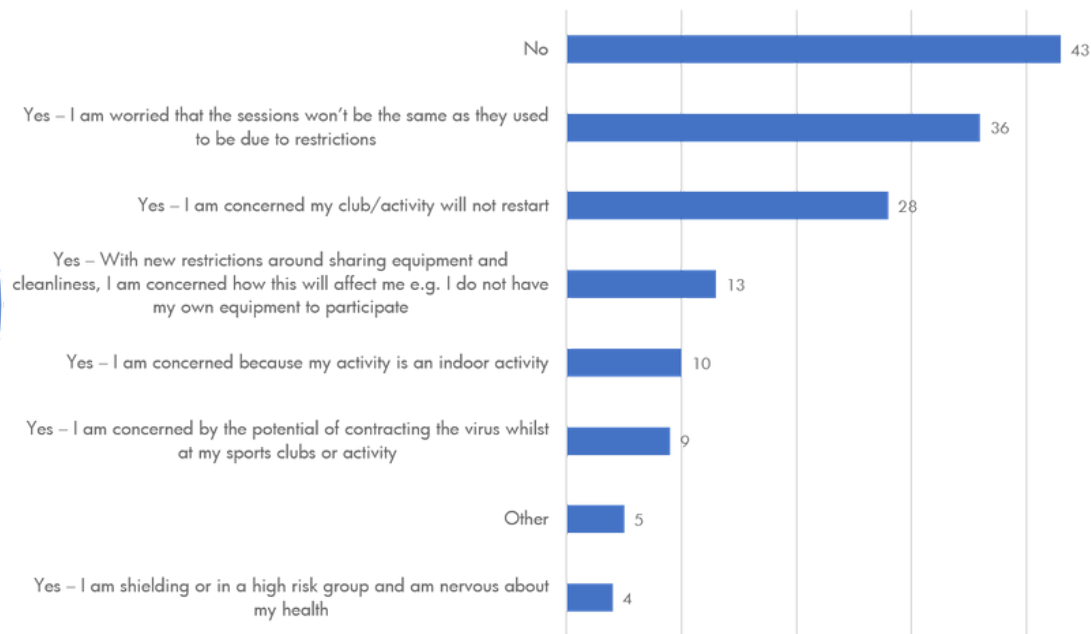
# RETURNING TO ACTIVITY

The overall consensus is that people are eager to return to activity. However, it is essential to consider what actions and adjustments will help participants and families feel safe when returning.

How do you feel about returning to sport and physical activity?



Do you have any concerns or additional barriers about returning to your sports club or activity that you did not have before lockdown & COVID-19?



# RETURNING TO ACTIVITY

What can your club do to support you return to your activity?



## BOWDON HOCKEY CLUB

Bowdon Hockey Club re-started small group sessions (5:1), adhering to social distancing guidelines. Booking systems were implemented by volunteers and over 300 young people have taken part in sessions over the past 6 weeks since lockdown has eased.

The club has been a beacon of good practice in the community with other local clubs visiting to see the set up and speak with the volunteers and coaches.

The resumption plan was made available to all involved and included:

- Participation information
- Parent information
- Map of the site & relevant zones
- Feedback information
- Safeguarding

# KEY CONSIDERATIONS

From the results of the study, there are some key take away messages for clubs and organisations to consider when planning and delivering your sessions in the future.

1

The social aspect of participation is the thing that was most missed. Many clubs overcame this during lockdown by connecting via online platforms with the most popular being social media and zoom.

2

Participants are excited to get back to sport and physical activity and have low concerns around their health upon returning. This means clubs will have a big responsibility to ensure that appropriate safety and hygiene measures are in place and communicated effectively.

3

Participants are most worried about 'things not being the same' and therefore making sure that new rules & regulations are introduced in an emphatic way is important.

# COMMUNITY CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS

SURVEY RESULTS





# INTRODUCTION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Access Sport has continued to support community sports clubs and organisations. Up and down the country, coaches and volunteers have had to adapt how they deliver to ensure their participants remain active and connected.

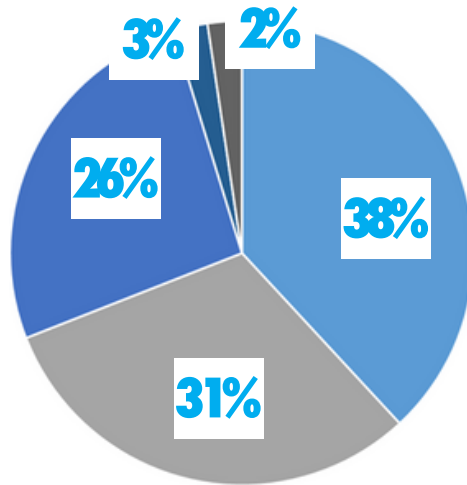
Now Government Guidelines have updated; allowing community sports clubs and organisations to begin to reimagine and resume their activities, we wanted to speak to clubs, coaches and volunteers to see how they are feeling, and how we can best support them.

We conducted informal interviews and online surveys with 43 different community sports clubs and organisations from across Access Sport's programmes and cities.



# UNDERSTANDING ORGANISATIONS

What best describes your organisation?



- Competitive Sports Club
- BMX Club or Cycling Hub
- Non-Competitive Sports Club
- Fitness Session or Class
- Other

Different Sports/Activities Represented

Boccia Yoga  
Athletics Cricket Dance  
BMX/Cycling  
Multisport Climbing  
Basketball Hockey  
VI Football Martial Arts  
Tennis

# STAYING CONNECTED IN LOCKDOWN

Throughout lockdown, local community organisations have adapted and continued to engage with their participants. We have seen fantastic online sessions delivered via Zoom, YouTube and Facebook live, whilst other clubs have donated and delivered equipment to families to be active together. Many have engaged outside their usual sport provision, delivering social and wellbeing activities like quizzes and 'tea & talk'; supporting participants to stay connected during the unsettling time.

What challenges have there been to engaging your members during lock down? (Tick all that apply)



“

For now the normal has changed.  
It's not about what we cannot do, it is  
about what we can do.

Francis Bridgeman,  
TW Flyerz Club Leader

”

# COMMON CHALLENGES

From the results of the study, there are some shared challenges for clubs and organisations when trying to engage participants and deliver activities during lockdown and COVID-19.

1

Change in priorities; during the midst of the pandemic, everyone was dealing with their own personal circumstances and so for our club leaders and volunteers it was difficult to manage an ever-changing community club at the same time as their own personal circumstances.

2

COVID-19 lock-down effected our coaches and volunteer workforce; either from furlough, change in time and availability, or the inexperience of delivering and engaging online.

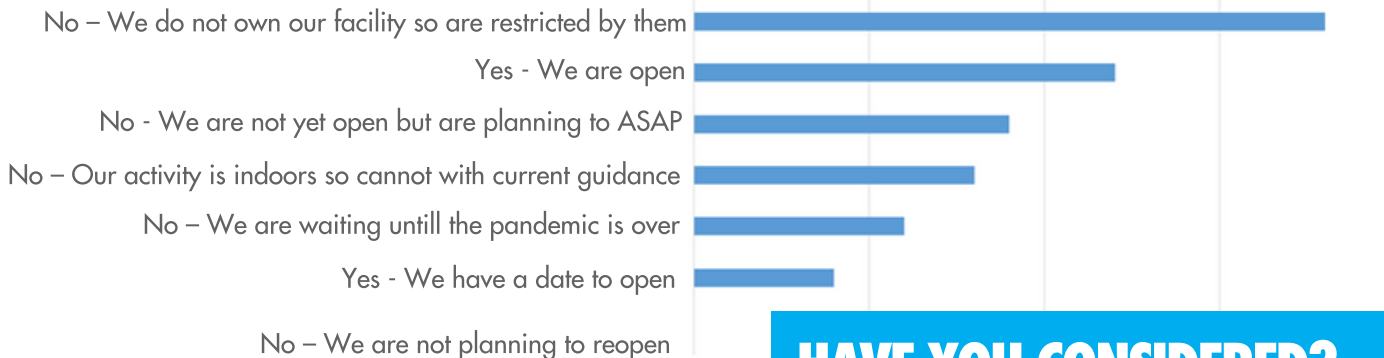
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Whilst there was some fantastic online content being delivered via Zoom and social media, our clubs recognised that these resources were not fully accessible to all their members and had difficulties finding alternative options - live captioning/subtitles was and remains a challenge.

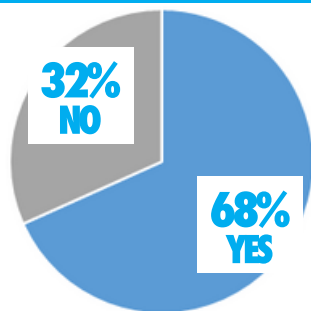


# RETURNING TO ACTIVITY

## Is your organisation open or due to re-open?



Does your club feel you have the knowledge, capacity, energy to resume actively safely with current restrictions?

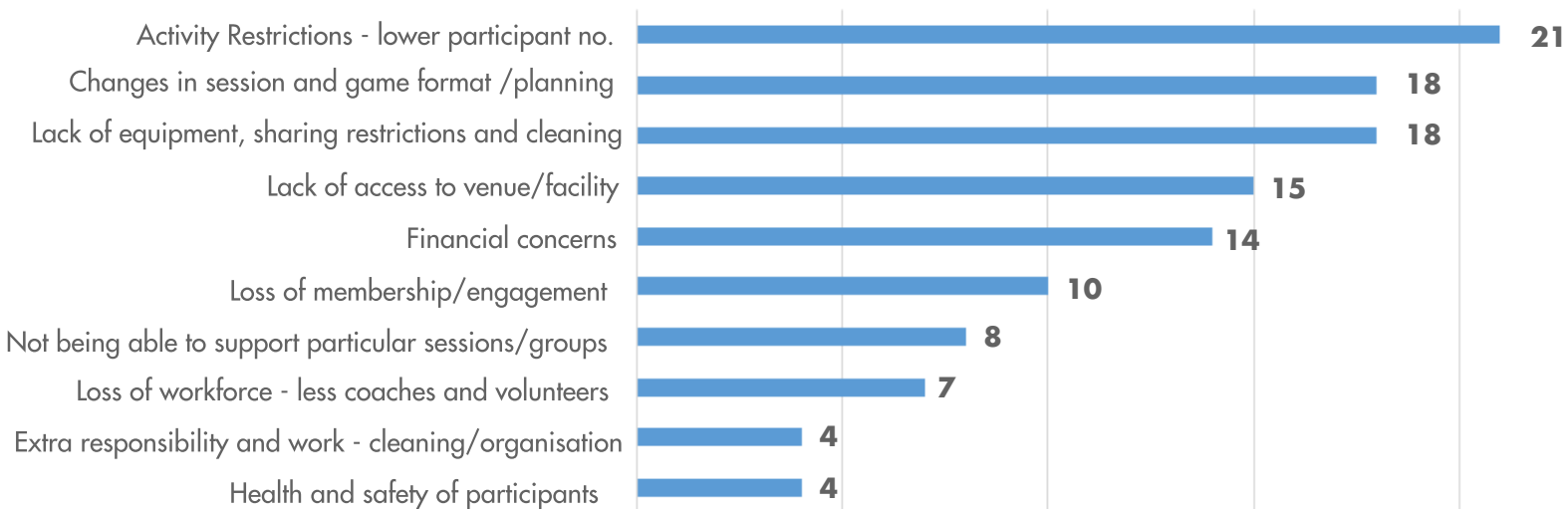


## HAVE YOU CONSIDERED?

- If you do not have access to your facility, consider open access spaces like parks for now
- If your activity is usually indoors, can it be adapted to be outdoors, or instead could you deliver more multisport or fitness activities?
- If you are waiting, try to maintain contact with participants and find out what platforms work best for them.

# RETURNING TO ACTIVITY - CHALLENGES

What challenges, barriers or concerns does your organisation have for resuming your usual activity? (Tick all that apply)



# KEY CONSIDERATIONS

## HAVE YOU CONSIDERED?

- **Activity Restrictions** - Please refer to your National Governing Bodies guidelines on returning to activity for your sport to check what group sizes are recommended as it varies between activity
- **Changes in Games Format** - use risk assessments and a phased approach to delivering your activities. Think outside of the box, use good practices from other sports, and remember many members are there to just be active and socialise so you can be flexible with what you deliver for now
- **Lack of Equipment /Sharing & Cleaning** - We know that not all organisations have enough equipment for everyone to have their own. Instead you can assign equipment to participants in pairs or smaller groups to minimise sharing. As well as washing hands and equipment between uses, consider using gloves too.
- **Financial Concerns** - There are emergency funds out there to support so look at Sport England, Comic Relief and National Lottery etc. Also consider smaller local charity trusts. It is a great time to fundraise as a club too - consider virtual quiz nights, local bake sales, challenges?
- **Loss of Workforce** - If participants usually have 1:1 or extra support, encourage parents & siblings to support their child during the session. This also helps families get active together!

# SAFE HAVEN BASKETBALL CLUB

“Zoom sessions are important because many of our members find disruption to routine very difficult. The sessions have allowed them to have some routine which helps to stabilise their anxiety during a time when many other changes have been occurring - Club Volunteer”

Safe Haven Basketball have kept their participants engaged throughout COVID-19, from online lockdown sessions to now resuming small group sessions at an open court.

During lockdown, volunteer Emma organised for participants to receive basketballs so they could stay active at home. Club participants missed the social element they usually get from their sessions, so online zoom sessions were organised with coach Josephine; delivering basketball-related fitness exercises as well as quizzes and social chats.

Safe Haven Basketball sessions usually occur within sports halls so under current restrictions, sessions cannot go ahead. Emma and Josephine organised for small groups from the club to meet up at their local open access park or court to be active together. This will be the plan until restrictions are eased further and they safely return to their indoor courts.

Watch the video on Safe Haven here: <https://youtu.be/D1b2jRT8arl>





# TOP 5 TIPS FOR RESUMING ACTIVITY

## 1. Check Guidelines

- Government
- National Governing Body (NGB)
- Local / Regional Restrictions



## 2. Use STEP Principle

Use STEP to consider how your sessions and activities can be adapted within guidelines

- SPACE
- TASK
- EQUIPMENT
- PEOPLE

## 3. Inform & Listen

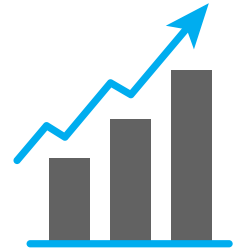


- Provide clear, relevant and accessible information
- Consider participants, parents, volunteers and coaches
- Provide an opportunity to feedback



## 4. Be Flexible

Your approach should be phased and flexible to change either with the easing and lightening of restrictions



## 5. Hybrid Approach

- Can you support those who are not ready to come back through online sessions?
- Make sure no one is forgotten!



# USEFUL LINKS



## SPORT ENGLAND

Sport England's coronavirus hub has information and support for the sport and physical activity sector, including funding and the latest research on activity levels.



## CLUB MATTERS

Check out Club Matter's 'Restarting Sport and Physical Activity' which includes a great range of resources to support clubs and organisations to get back to activity.

## GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

The UK, Scottish, and Welsh governments are continuously updating their respective guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19) – please refer to the following links for the latest information:

UK: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Scotland: [www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19](https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19)

Wales: [www.gov.wales/coronavirus](https://www.gov.wales/coronavirus)



HM Government

# USEFUL LINKS



## MIND

Mind, in partnership with Believe Perform have created a series of infographics that support people with mental health problems to return to physical activity post lockdown.



## ACTIVITY ALLIANCE

Reopening activity: An inclusive response. Considerations for community sport and leisure providers on including disabled people and people with long-term health conditions.



## UK COACHING

UK Coaching has launched a new 'Duty to Care' toolkit aimed equipping the nation's coaches with the knowledge and skills to provide great coaching experiences as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.



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