



Groups and clubs have been unable to meet for many weeks due to the covid-19 lockdown

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## What do you need? Helping the sector survive the covid-19 lockdown



*Strategic Relationship Manager Lorna Leach explains how we're adapting to the ongoing disruption caused and why we're working with the sector to ensure physical activity and sport is available now and goes from strength-to-strength in the future.*

## **In times of crisis you need to play to your strengths.**

For some, that's bringing their creativity to the forefront to innovate and drive technology forward. For a Relationship Manager at London Sport, it means bringing your A-game to ensure people and organisations connect with the right opportunities for their needs.

And, at a time like this, that means filtering a lot of information that's out there to find the right options for all of our partners.

Throughout the last four weeks tools, [resources and funds](#) have been created and repurposed to respond to the needs and demands of the sport and physical activity sector.

We've seen webinars, workshops, guidance documents come out all over the place, each of them valuable and relevant to someone, depending on their situation.

It's our job to understand what each partner is providing, and who that's for.

For the sports clubs and community organisations that deliver physical activity and sport across London our job is to make sure they access the services that allow them to play to their strengths and ensure that limited resource and support goes to the whole sector.

That means knowing which funds are suitable for organisations who have capacity to develop their offer ([London Community Response Offer](#)), and which are right for those whose primary concern is survival (Sport England's [Community Emergency Fund](#)).

It's about ensuring that an organisation with its own volunteers is aware of and able to access self-help assets, like those on the [Club Matters](#) website, that can be supplemented with webinars from organisations like [StreetGames](#). For others, it might mean gaining bespoke support from agencies such as [Sported](#).

Sometimes it might mean signposting people to larger, national efforts, like Sport England's [#JoinTheMovement](#) campaign, which is successfully utilising open data to provide [activities to do from home](#).

But our real expertise comes from our deeply inbuilt understanding of the needs of less active Londoner, through years of research, project delivery and supporting collaborative programmes.

And It comes from working with agencies who know their audience needs but need assistance building physical activity into their offer and finding the activity that meets specific needs.

Our partners ask us about activities for long-term health conditions, for older adults, for deaf and disabled people, and for countless other communities of Londoners. We use our knowledge to find options. We whittle them down, so that the decisions become less overwhelming, and easier to navigate.

In times of crisis, it can be so easy to narrow our thinking, and to just deal with the immediate issues in front of us. It's the responsibility of leaders to think about the future.

London Sport consider all the evidence of need to look for gaps in provision and, through our own specialist advisors or in collaboration with national or regional agencies, we create solutions.

In the last few weeks that's meant putting the call out to the tech world to co-ordinate their products to support the sector or delivering a webinar for instructors and coaches to learn how to move their sessions online.

We've utilised [ukactive's](#) expertise in leisure facility management to help local authorities work with their leisure centre provider to prepare for business sustainability beyond lockdown.

And we've worked closely with industry leaders in London and nationwide to explain the needs and challenges of organisations working to make London a happier, healthier place to live.

In more normal times, we work hard to anticipate future needs of our partners, reviewing evidence from partners' data, reports and conversations. We look to bring together agencies with common purpose to make the most of their combined assets for the benefit of the communities they serve.

Now is no different.

We're reading the results from surveys asking different sectors what they need and predicting what will be necessary as London comes out from lockdown to positively impact on those who've been adversely affected by this period of isolation.

Now, more than ever, it will be vital that we influence those with the power to change policy, process and investment to ensure the sector remains strong and able to meet the mental health, societal and community outcomes that are positively impacted on by physical activity.

We need you to ask us for help; to tell us what you need to survive and thrive now, and what you think your biggest challenges will be for keeping your members, clients and service users active long beyond covid-19.

*We've created an [online form](#) that allows organisations working across London to explain their needs and challenges to us, so we can take action where necessary to continue supporting important work to do with physical activity and sport.*

*[Find more information here.](#)*

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## **About London Sport**

London Sport is a charity working to ensure more Londoners live happier, healthier lives through access to sport and physical activity. Supported by Sport England and the Mayor of London, we collaborate with those that share our vision, running and supporting projects that help children, young people and the least active adults to embed sport and physical activity into their lives.

For more information on London Sport, visit [www.londonsport.org](http://www.londonsport.org)

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