

## Virtual Learning & Networking Session - Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July

### Operating Safely: The Return to Sport and Physical Activity

#### Sport Birmingham Staff:

Amy Bird- Senior Partnerships Manager (Wellbeing)  
Helen Corrigan- Senior Partnerships Manager (Community)  
Alice Trevallion- Community Projects Manager  
Sam Payne - Children and Young People Officer  
Adam Warden - Workforce Development Manager  
Tom McIntosh - Operations Director  
Becks Byrne - Project Coordinator

#### Attendees:

Geraldine Elgy- Midland Ski Club  
Emma Woolf- Friends of Cotteridge Park  
Lucy Gardner- YGAM  
Paul Holloway- Birmingham Goal Ball  
Bally Bhogal- Bhangra Blaze Xpress (BBX)  
Juma Begum- New Hope Global  
Sarah Lilly - Cerebral Palsy

#### Guest speakers:

##### **Murium Asim - Eidgah Academy CIC**

- Based in Perry Barr
- 180-200 children engaged on daily basis
- After school club – including informal learning and teaching, activities, support with homework. Also have people from the community come in and talk to the children.
- Provide fitness and football sessions online.
- Now phasing return of football sessions to face-to-face with a small group.
  - Targeted at age 10 and above to start as they have more understanding of social distancing etc. 18 children and 4 volunteers socially distancing outside across the park. Looking to continue for the next 4-6 weeks and to review throughout.
- Phasing coming out of lockdown and looking to open the facility gradually – need to make sure the children have readjusted.
- Readjustment project – community garden, children come one family at a time. Aiming to help get people back out and back to normal.
- Creation of Women's online support group - Much needed as a result of lockdown.

##### **Emma Smallman - 'Drum n Bounce'**

- Fitness instructor
- All classes online – 3 sessions a week on Facebook Live. Using a public view as a one way stream.
- Exercising with others was important – Feedback from participants included the benefits to their mental health, the social connection, even though it was online and general positive thanks saying how helpful it has been.
- With set times through the week it has helped people keep to some routine.

- Been very successful! Lots of people can access the class all over the country, including a new international reach!
- Will continue the online provision due to ask and the successes seen. It also helps to break down barriers to people accessing exercise, eg. childcare, travel time, exercising in front of others.
- EMD NGB for group exercise has provided lots of information - <https://emduk.org/>
- Been doing some classes in the park using 'silent disco' headphones.
- Not ready to think about indoor activity yet; mainly due to seeing the benefits of doing exercise outside and the online provision.
- Challenges - Obtaining permission from parks has been very difficult.

**Matt Tew - Sports and facility manager at Billesley Tennis Centre, Birmingham Leisure Trust facility.**

- Billesley Tennis Centre in Kings Heath
- All 10 venues across the city have been closed.
- Hit the business hard and also a big loss to the community. Focus on engaging the community and getting those back fit and healthy.
- 3 strand focus now – keeping engagement up with staff and partners, planning ahead and being prepared for opening - which came about at Billesley last Saturday (25th July)
- During lockdown they have kept up their connections with the local schools whom they worked with, but shifting their efforts to support and prepare the distribution of community boxes for families in need. - Along with Fareshare
- Challenges - losing workforce – lots of staff were self-employed. Looking to plan with them what the future looks like.
- Have been working closely with NGB's / UK Active.
- Prep for opening - Risk assessments of the venue – barriers, sanitising stations, one-way systems and how to make the building safe again. Using feedback from customers – learning as we go.
- Reinductions for every member of staff and all the new systems.
- Looking at a better way of working going forward.
- All venues are now operating and include a booking system.

**Questions and Discussion Notes:**

*Looking to go back to face-face – what do I need to prepare?*

- Advised to talk with NGB's about where to get PPE equipment, however Amazon seems to be popular. (Sport Birmingham does not endorse Amazon)
- Importance of risk assessments - Club Matters has relevant Risk Assessment templates on their website - [Risk Assessment](#)
- Thoughts around clubs who own assets and letting community club groups use them to run sessions - Especially where outdoor space is available. Encouraging partner working with clubs and groups within close proximity to support continuation and community engagement.

*Are you going to continue online provision?*

- Noted that several organisations have had increased reach and engagement with online sessions and so will be continuing.
- This online provision may adapt from its lockdown model to respond to audience and changing landscape along with new online options and virtual platforms.

#### *Priority of groups and concern of inclusivity?*

- Returning to play has to be a staged process as not all can return at once.
- Face-face provision will be staggered so eventually everyone will be back.
- Importance of keeping some online provision / sessions for those who aren't returning straight away so they still feel engaged.

#### *Face masks and exercise?*

- This is looking like something that we will have to get used to.
- Important to refer to NGB and national guidance.
- Possibility of just coaches wearing masks and so participants must stay in "bubbles" at opposite ends of a court.
- Face masks to be considered carefully - again look to NGB advise
  - Issues noted for visually impaired sports and the need for clear communication and close proximity to one another - Advised to focus currently on skills and training with distance and to postpone match play for team sports.

#### *How are disability groups running at this time?*

- Online provision and a focus on keeping it very social – a time to come together, engage in activity and have a chat - albeit virtually.
- Also, keeping contact with participants, even if they have not been engaging with online provision to check in.
- Some wheelchair sports are beginning to open up sessions focusing on skills based practices instead of team based exercises or sessions to allow for social distancing.

#### *Park Permissions have been very difficult to obtain - Is there any advice on how to get a response from the council?*

- It is important to note, that if you are not booked through the council's parks booking system, then you will **not** be insured.
- The council have been slow to restart their booking process and this is something which Sport Birmingham will look into,
- Emma Woolf from 'Friends of Cotteridge Park' - has now been able to set up their Swing Fit class and is both booked and risk assessed. So we would recommend adhering to the process, keeping mindful that they may be experiencing a back-log.
- Important to respect the park spaces as a free facility for people to use and therefore should not be taken over by paid activity if it means refusing facility use to the public i.e. Basketball courts, bowling greens, open tennis courts etc

