

Press release: 29 April 2020

For immediate release

# Record release of funding helps secure future of thousands of sporting organisations

* Community Emergency Fund sees the fastest rate of applications and cash approvals ever for a Sport England fund
* Fund was launched to support those with a role in helping the nation to be active but are experiencing hardship or ceasing of operations due to COVID19
* Over £8.5million awarded so far with cash covering areas like rent, insurance, maintenance and utilities

The future of over 2000 sports clubs and community organisations have helped to be secured as part of Sport England’s response to helping the sport and physical activity sector through the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The £20 million Community Emergency fund, powered by National Lottery funding, is part of an overall [£195m package](https://www.sportengland.org/news/195-million-package-help-sport-and-physical-activity-through-coronavirus) of support set up in response to the current crisis, and was designed to help sporting organisations across England facing immediate financial need.

Working at speed, Sport England has already given out over £8.5 million of funding to those most in need with the numbers showcasing the urgent need for funding and support within the sector.

It also highlights the pace of change in demand. For example in the entirely of 2019, Sport England received 4,000 applications across all of its funding programmes but the Community Emergency Fund has had over 6,500 in less than a month.

Examples of organisations and operators to have received approval for funding so far include East Liverpool RDA (Riding for the Disabled Association), a charity that provides horse riding lessons and therapy sessions for children and adults with disabilities, and the Emerald Centre in Leicester, a facility that serves to help over 10,000 people of all ages take part in sport and physical activity each year.

Across the community and grassroots sport sector, lockdown conditions have had a significant impact on clubs and organisations - particularly for those with cash-generating facilities who are no longer able to open their doors or summer activities facing short-term losses due to loss of membership fees or competition income.

From the thousands of applications so far to the fun, the areas of most immediate pressure for orgnaisations include the costs of covering rent, insurance, maintenance and utilities bills.

The emergency fund has been focused on getting money to those in the most need, recognising that the closure of services or folding of organisations would significantly limit people’s ability to lead healthy, happy and more active lives, and would have a drastic impact on England’s community infrastructure.

**Tim Hollingsworth, Sport England’s Chief Executive, said:**

“We’re incredibly proud to have been able to help close to 2,000 organisations so far see a way forward through the Coronavirus crisis following the roll-out of our support package around a month ago.

“Sport and physical activity’s ability to bring individuals together and to unite communities will be of critical importance to our nation once the restrictions of lockdown begin to be lifted and so this fund is vital in helping grassroots organisations who might have cash-flow issues for a variety of reasons to survive.

“Whether an organisation needs £300 or £10,000, the Community Emergency Fund is there for those who are in need of support to navigate this difficult period.”

**-ENDS-**

**Notes for Editors**

A public dashboard showing updates relating to the number of applications and amount of money awarded via the Community Emergency Fund is available to view via <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-emergency-fund> (scroll towards bottom of page to find **‘How the fund is progressing’**).

**For further information and interview opportunities please contact**: media.team@sportengland.org, Tel: 020 7273 1593

### About Sport England

Sport England is a public body and invests up to £300 million National Lottery and government money each year in projects and programmes that help people get active and play sport.

It wants everyone in England, regardless of age, background, or level of ability, to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. That’s why a lot of its work is specifically focused on helping people who do no, or very little, physical activity and groups who are typically less active - like women, disabled people and people on lower incomes.

**About the Sport England Community Emergency Fund**

Part of [Sport England’s overall £195m support package](https://www.sportengland.org/news/195-million-package-help-sport-and-physical-activity-through-coronavirus) to help the sport and physical activity sector through COVID-19, the £20m Community Emergency Fund

aims to deliver immediate funding to those most in need. It's specifically targeted at organisations, including those not currently supported by us, who have a role in supporting the nation to be active but who are experiencing short term financial hardship or the ceasing of operations due to the ongoing crisis.

Awards will be between £300 and £10,000, and in in exceptional circumstances we’ll consider awards of more than £10,000. The types of organisations eligible include local sports clubs forced to close at short notice but who are facing ongoing costs around maintenance and utility bills, and voluntary and community sector organisations who deliver or enable sport and physical activity.

This £20 million fund of National Lottery money is designed to complement other sources of funding from the government, such as funds targeted at small businesses.

Further information on the Community Emergency Fund – including seeing if your organisation is eligible and the application process - can be found via <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-emergency-fund>.

**About National Lottery**

National Lottery players raise £30m every week for good causes, funding arts, heritage, sports, voluntary and charity projects around the UK. For more information on good causes in your area go to [www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk](http://www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/)