

## JOINT STATEMENT

In recent months a wide range of partners across the sporting system, including the Scottish Government, **sportscotland**, Scottish Governing Bodies of Sport (SGBs), local authorities and leisure trusts, the third sector, as well as the further and higher education sector have been working together to progress plans for the safe return of sport, in line with the latest public health guidance.

Today's announcement by the First Minister that indoor sport facilities and gyms can reopen from 31 August onwards, is the latest step forward in relation to the phased return of sport at all levels, as we continue to follow the Scottish Government's route-map through and out of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The reopening of facilities, which will play a key role in Scotland's recovery from the pandemic, will be widely welcomed by clubs, individuals and the wider public. However, it is important to recognise that several challenges including the current economic landscape still need to be overcome before the delivery of sport in local communities and at a club level will be considered in any way back towards anything like normal.

While the desire from all partners to reopen facilities is clear, the difficulties presented by COVID-19 means that it is unlikely that all venues will be able to do so on day one, or for some time to come. Reduced capacities due to the required physical distancing will have a direct impact on the operational capabilities of venue operators and the economic viability of some facilities.

We understand this will be frustrating for many people but while we all continue to work towards our shared goals and objectives, the continued support, patience and understanding of everyone involved, is more important than before.

As a sector we are committed to working together to address the challenges that still lie ahead. We want to see more progress made in line with the latest public health guidance at all levels of sport, to ensure that clubs and local communities have access to facilities, and that will remain our number one priority.