

Guidance for Tennis Coaches in England

COVID-19: RETURN TO PLAY

Version 6 – Published 2 December 2020 (updated 5th January 2021)

(Including guidance for all four tiers of local restrictions)



TENNIS
FOR BRITAIN

COVID-19 SECURE 'PLAY SAFE' GUIDELINES - RETURN TO PLAY

UPDATE: NATIONAL LOCKDOWN RESTRICTIONS

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 4 January

2021, unfortunately the Government requires all indoor and outdoor tennis courts to close.

There are two exemptions where courts are permitted to open:

- Outdoor courts are permitted to open for organised disability tennis activity. The LTA will publish updated guidance for open court disability tennis venues on our COVID-19 page.
- Elite tennis players are permitted to continue training and competition in line with strict protocols and Government guidance.

For more information and updates, visit the [LTA's COVID-19 page](#).

These COVID-19 guidelines apply to England only. They have been produced in line with Government announcements following the initial easing of lockdown and recent implementation of regional tiered restrictions (including the addition of Tier 4 restrictions), and the Government guidance for [grassroots sports guidance for the public and sport providers](#) published on 1 December, as well as the previous guidance for [providers of out of school settings](#) as published on the Gov.uk website.

The guidance in this document is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1: Venue Management
- Section 2: Venue Facilities
- Section 3: Venue Activity & Users
- Section 4: Permitted Tennis Activity by Tier
- Section 5: Additional Guidelines for Disability Tennis

Alongside these guidelines, coaches should read any updated information published by [Sport England](#).

Guidelines for playing tennis in Scotland can be read [here](#) and for Wales, [here](#).

Please note, this guidance is for non-professional tennis – elite tennis is subject to separate and additional strict protocols, and can continue in line with those across all tiers.

LOCAL RESTRICTIONS

This document now covers guidelines for tennis activity across all tiers of the [different tiers of local restrictions](#) that were introduced by the Government from 2 December and the addition of Tier 4 restrictions from 20 December. A summary of the four tiers can be viewed on the LTA website via the link below, and you can see which areas of the country fall under which tier on the [Government website](#) or via the [postcode checker](#).

- [VIEW SUMMARY GRID: Tennis Activity By Tier](#)

INTRODUCTION

We know tennis coaches are keen to offer a full range of sessions for customers in a safe and appropriate manner and in line with Government restrictions. By its very nature, tennis is an activity whereby close person to person contact can be avoided, with the Government saying tennis is a good example of an activity that can be undertaken in a way compliant with social distancing restrictions.

Based on our continued discussions with Government, the LTA has developed this updated set of practical guidelines for venues to follow so that tennis can be played in England, where the local environment allows.

We will be indicating any key additions and updates to these guidelines for future versions of this document with **[NEW]** and **[UPDATED]** on the following pages.

These guidelines apply to both tennis and padel, and outline adaptations and considerations so that tennis activity can be enjoyed in a way that is in line with Government advice and helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. They include measures to maintain hygiene and minimise unnecessary interactions with others.

As restrictions evolve, the LTA's guidance, in line with Government legislation and guidance, will focus on ensuring that venues and coaches can provide COVID-19 secure environments, recognising the different operating contexts that organisations face.

Coaches and coaching providers across the country are all different and operate in different local contexts. Making an assessment of whether a safe exercise environment can be provided depends on a range of factors, which apply differently at each venue. It is the responsibility of each tennis provider, coach and facility to make that assessment based on their local environment.

These guidelines complement the guidelines for players, venues, and officials/competition organisers, and all elements of the guidelines should be considered to ensure activity can be delivered safely.

Should you have any questions, [please refer to the FAQs on the LTA website](#). You can also read the updated [FAQs on the Sport England website](#), as well as access their broader [coronavirus support information and guidance](#) for sport and physical activity.

SECTION 1: GENERAL GUIDELINES

GENERAL GUIDANCE

- All activity should be consistent with the government guidance regarding health, travel, social distancing and hygiene at all times
- Coaches and coaching organisations must consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission. A thorough risk assessment must be undertaken (or updated if one previously completed), and appropriate measures put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are protected - you are advised to liaise with your venue when doing this. A risk assessment template is available from the COVID-19 section of the venue [Resource Library](#) on the LTA website. For larger group activity, venues should consider transmission risk based on three variables: droplet transmission and aerosol generation; fomite transmission; and population.
- Coaches who have had their normal activity disrupted and have a need to coach outside of their normal venue, should seek prior permission from the venue, local authority or operator who is in charge of the tennis facility, before undertaking coaching
- Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the different phases of Government measures – the LTA remains in discussions with Government and so we recommend you check the official LTA position at www.lta.org.uk/coronavirus on a regular basis to stay abreast of the latest recommendations
- Any measures coaches put in place to enable tennis activity to resume need to be capable of being flexed or changed quickly if tighter social distancing is reintroduced in the future or when the restrictions are further relaxed.
- You can meet with different clients/groups in a single day as long as you are maintaining social distancing
- The guidance set out for coaches covers both outdoor tennis venues and indoor tennis venues that follow COVID-19 secure guidance. Coaches should continue to work closely with the venues at which they are delivering activity, to ensure that all activity is COVID-19 secure

PRE-ATTENDANCE SYMPTOM CHECK

- All coaches and participants in your sessions should undergo a pre-attendance self-assessment for any COVID-19 symptoms [using the information on the NHS website](#) before leaving home.
- No-one should leave home to participate in tennis if they, or someone they live with, has symptoms of COVID -19, currently recognised as any of:
 - A high temperature
 - A new, continuous cough
 - A loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste
- Should an individual have demonstrated any such symptoms, they must follow [NHS and PHE guidance on self-isolation](#)

NHS TEST & TRACE

- If a player you have coached develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should be directed to follow the Government's 'test and trace' guidelines, which can be read on the Gov.uk website
- Please note, it is down to NHS Test and Trace to make decisions on close contacts. However, it is our understanding is that if coaches ensure they and

those taking part in their tennis activity adhere to the LTA Covid-19 Secure guidelines and maintain social distancing at all times, then it would not be anticipated that they would be classified as a close contact of a participant user who subsequently tests positive

TENNIS ACTIVITY

- Permitted tennis activity varies by tier, with what is allowed and group numbers also varying depending on if the activity is informal social play or organised group activity, if it is outdoors or indoors and if it is for a group with an exemption
- Full details of tennis activity by tier is provided in Section 2, with an overview provided in the [LTA's summary grid](#)

TRAVEL

- Detailed information on travel is provided in the LTA Guidance for Players, however, coaches should be aware of the following key points:
 - For all tiers, travel within an area to take part in recreational tennis activity is permitted
 - **[NEW]** For tier 4 areas: players should not travel into or out of tier 4 areas to play tennis
 - For tier 3 areas: players are advised not to travel into or out of tier 3 areas, including for playing tennis, unless this is necessary to enable individual exercise (or exercise for people from the same household or support bubble). Where this is necessary, or for example to access the venue a player is a member of, players should only travel a short distance and stay as local as possible
 - For tier 3 areas: travel is also permitted into or out of the area where it is necessary to enable sport for disabled people, sport for educational purposes, or supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s, to take place, but should still be minimised and kept to short distances only
 - **[UPDATED]** For tier 3 and tier 4 areas: travel is permitted into or out of the area for work or education purposes (e.g. coaches, elite athletes, officials)

EXEMPTIONS

- **[UPDATED]** Exemptions are in place for some groups to permit additional indoor tennis activity in Tier 2 and Tier 3, and additional outdoor tennis activity in Tier 4 (see Section 2), with these groups defined as follows:
 - **Disabled people:** Sport for people with disabilities has exemptions from legal gathering limits. This means that where activity is permitted, people with disabilities can take part in sport in any number
 - **Under 18's:** Supervised activity for children (including outside school) has exemptions from legal gathering limits, but permitted activity is subject to Department of Education guidance limiting group sizes to 15. This includes all organised supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s. In a change from the pre-lockdown guidance, **this now includes young people who were 17 at the start of the academic year, even if they turn 18 during the remainder of that academic year**
 - **Education:** Sport for the purpose of education also has exemptions. This means that school sport such as PE, and curriculum-related sport for students in further and higher education (e.g. a student studying a sport course being able to practice), are exempt from legal gathering limits.

However, for those who do not fall under the exemption below, this does not cover extra-curricular sport (such as playing for a college team) so these activities can only take place within the guidance set out above

MAINTAINING SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Social distancing between players, and between the coach and players should be maintained at all times – the latest Government advice on social distancing can be read [here](#)
- Coaches should ensure this is emphasised to participants at the start of each session, and that they are clear on how they should maintain social distancing for each drill before starting it
- Larger group sessions may need to utilise multiple full-size courts in order to maintain social distancing, depending on the local environment and risk assessment. Where space and number of courts available is limited, then based on your risk assessment only smaller group sessions may be possible. Coaches should refer to the [LTA's recommended coach:player ratios](#) for more specific guidance
- Adaptations to drills and how you provide feedback/instruction will be needed to ensure social distancing guidelines can be safely adhered to
- Coaches should encourage players to avoid running down balls within an exercise if it could compromise social distancing
- Coaches should encourage players not to congregate on or around the court before and after play
- Attendees should be advised to limit their interactions with anyone outside of the group they are attending the venue with (e.g. players on another court or in a different coaching group), and they should continue to maintain social distancing from those that they do not live with or are in a support bubble with

SESSIONS WITH ADULTS

- The LTA recommends no more than 12 players on one full-size tennis court and surrounding areas at any one time (**for adult activity indoors, this limit is six people**), in order to ensure social distancing can be maintained at all times. Most adult tennis sessions will have far less than this number per court.
- Depending on your risk assessment, programmes that might ordinarily be delivered in larger groups such as Cardio Tennis, may need some adaptations to ensure social distancing can be maintained, depending on considerations around venue and other general guidance

SESSIONS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

- Though the maximum permitted total group size for children's activity is 15, the LTA recommends no more than 12 junior players per full-size tennis court and surrounding areas/run-off space at any one time for tennis coaching, in order to ensure social distancing can be maintained at all times. This limit is most applicable for red stage tennis or younger children (tots), and it applies both indoors and outdoors
- The LTA has provided guidance as to how adaptations to LTA Youth Tennis for Kids drills can be made to maintain social distancing in [the LTA's coach secure area](#)
- Red court specific guidance: Consider using a safe barrier between red courts (e.g. line of cones, strips or barrier tape) and use spots/ground

markers to facilitate children maintaining social distancing as part of the session organisation

- If you feel your youngest groups would be unable to reasonably maintain social distancing, consider a) prioritising sessions with older children first for commencement, b) reducing number of red courts per full sized adult court, c) adding an assistant to help organisation or d) reducing number of participants in a group

HEALTH, SAFETY & HYGIENE

- Ensure usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained
- Injuries should still be treated, as participant safety is of the utmost importance – further details are provided in the LTA's guidance for venues
- Guidance on delivering first aid during the coronavirus pandemic is also available on the [St John Ambulance website](#)
- Further information for those who may need to act as a 'first responder' role in a sports setting is available on the [Government website](#)
- Hand hygiene is imperative - hand sanitise at intervals if you have to touch communal surfaces
- Avoid touching your face
- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve

EQUIPMENT

- Coaches do not need to use new or fresh tennis balls for each lesson, and are no longer advised to be the only person to touch the tennis balls
- Where new or fresh balls aren't used or where players handle tennis balls as well as the coach, then extra care must be taken to ensure the coach and players do not touch your faces during play, and you should all clean your hands before the session and immediately after finishing (use alcohol gel if required)
- Players should bring their own equipment where possible and sharing of equipment should be limited – however, use of communal rackets can be done subject to thorough cleaning processes between uses
- Any coaching equipment used (e.g. cones) should be wiped down and cleaned rigorously afterwards
- Ensure all equipment is removed from the court at the end of the session

BOOKINGS & PAYMENT

- Operate online booking for coaching sessions where at all possible, or alternatively phone bookings
- Take any payments online, and avoid handling cash
- There is now no need to have a buffer period between session booking slots, but coaches should still consider what appropriate measures can be implemented to allow participants to enter and leave the courts safely
- Depending on the set up of the venue, this may still involve finishing sessions slightly early to allow time for players to leave before the next players arrive – **this is particularly the case for session that involve larger groups**

COMMUNICATION & VENUE LIAISON

- Coaches should liaise with the venue to ensure an agreed approach to activity that is feasible to deliver safely, and explore how coaches can be supported to deliver sessions

- Coaches should make customers aware in advance that undertaking any activity, including tennis, has the potential for increased risk of transmission of COVID-19, and advise attendees to read the [Government's guidance on staying safe outside your home](#)
- Communicate with your customers clearly and regularly, making them aware in advance of the measures you are putting in place for your sessions, and guidelines they should follow when attending
- Clear instructions should be provided to participants ahead of the session so that they know which coach and which court to report to

SUPERVISION

- Guardian (non-participant) or carer attendance is permitted and is not counted as part of the maximum group size, but should be off court and limited to one per child where possible, with social distancing observed while watching the session

SECTION 2: TENNIS ACTIVITY BY TIER

SUMMARY GRID

- [VIEW SUMMARY GRID: Tennis Activity By Tier](#)

TIER 1 (MEDIUM)

Find out if your area is in this tier on the [Government website](#) or by using the [postcode checker](#).

OUTDOOR TENNIS

INFORMAL SOCIAL PLAY

- Both singles play and doubles play is permitted with people from outside of your household, as long as you remain 2 metres apart as far as possible – meaning that four people from different households can play doubles
- **For informal social play, group size is limited to a maximum of six people by law.** This means you can play tennis providing you only meet up with no more than 5 other people from different households and observe social distancing guidelines
- People should not go to a tennis venue socially in groups of more than six
- For padel, doubles play is also permitted but extra care is advised and it should only be done so where players are confident they can maintain 2 metres apart

1:1 COACHING

- Permitted in line with the LTA's Covid-19 Secure guidance for coaching activity

ORGANISED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Organised outdoor tennis activity for larger groups, including coached sessions, club nights and competitions is exempt from legal gathering limits and so is permitted by the Government as an [exception to the limit of six](#), provided that venues, coaching providers and event organisers follow LTA COVID-19 secure guidelines
- Organised group activity is defined as being activity organised by a national governing body, club, registered instructor/coach, business or charity, where in all cases organiser must conduct a risk assessment and take all reasonable steps to limit transmission of the coronavirus by reference to that risk assessment and all relevant COVID-19 Secure guidance
- For adults, group activity should be in line with the LTA's advised court limits of a maximum of 12 people per court
- Whilst Government guidance does not state an upper limit for sport and physical activity participation events for adults, coaches should liaise with the venue. For those venues that have taken steps to ensure they are COVID-19 secure, we recommend that all venues very carefully consider the maximum capacity that they can operate at safely and whilst ensuring social distancing

can be maintained at all times. All venues should produce detailed risk assessments and event delivery plans taking into account these factors

- For children, organised coach sessions should be limited to groups of no more than 15 children (plus coach(es)), in line with guidance from the Department of Education on out of school settings
- Coaching activity such as Holiday Camps that have two or more groups are permitted as long as the groups are kept completely separate and the sessions are delivered independently of each other. Clear instructions should be provided to participants in advance so that they know which coach and which court to report to, if there are two or more groups
- Participants must not mingle in groups of more than six before and after the activity, while maintaining social distancing with those from another household at all times. If an organiser is not able to ensure this (including when arriving at or leaving activity or in any breaks or socialising) then such events should not take place
- Attendees must avoid social interaction with anyone outside the group they are with, even if they see other people they know, at all times during their visit
- Depending on your risk assessment, some activity that might ordinarily be delivered in larger groups (such as Cardio Tennis), might still need to continue in smaller groups for now, to ensure the safety of participants
- A template event delivery plan that can be used by venues organising club nights can be downloaded from lta.org.uk/coronavirus

COMPETITIONS

- Singles & doubles competitions are permitted for both juniors and adults
- LTA approved competitions (Grade 2 to 6), team competitions (such as Club/County Fixtures) and recreational competition can be played as long as they adhere to the LTA's Return to Competition guidance. Please note competitions may be limited in draw size depending on a range of factors including the COVID-19 secure capacity of the venue
- Off-court, individuals should limit their social interaction with others and not socialise in groups of more than six
- More detailed guidance on the 'Return to Competition' for officials and competition organisers can be read at lta.org.uk/coronavirus

INDOOR TENNIS

INFORMAL SOCIAL PLAY

- Permitted as per Tier 1 outdoors

1:1 COACHING

- Permitted as per Tier 1 outdoors

ORGANISED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Organised indoor group tennis activity for adults (including coached sessions and club nights held indoors) can still take place in larger numbers in COVID-19 secure venues, however, participants should be organised into sub-groups of no more than six people per court (excluding coaches) and these sub-groups should not mix
- These sub-groups should stay separate and not mix for the duration of the session. A coach can however work across multiple sub-groups

- *Working Example: A session with 12 players and one coach would require 2 sub-groups of 6 to be created. These two sub groups cannot mix or swap courts, but the coach can work across both sub-groups. If a 13th player joined, a third court would be required*
- For indoor activity, no more than six adult players should be on one full-size tennis court and surrounding areas at any one time
- There is an exemption for activity for disabled people and tennis for education purposes, which can take place in any number, and organised group indoor activity for U18's which can continue in line with the limits for outdoors (max group of 15)
- Coaching activity such as Holiday Camps that have two or more groups are permitted as long as the groups are kept completely separate and the sessions are delivered independently of each other. Clear instructions should be provided to participants in advance so that they know which coach and which court to report to, if there are two or more groups
- Participants must not mingle in groups of more than six before and after the activity, while maintaining social distancing with those from another household at all times. If an organiser is not able to ensure this (including when arriving at or leaving activity or in any breaks or socialising) then such events should not take place
- Attendees must avoid social interaction with anyone outside the group they are with, even if they see other people they know, at all times during their visit

COMPETITIONS

- While restrictions on indoor sporting activity have been imposed, **organised indoor singles and doubles competition at COVID-19 secure venues can continue to take place for larger draw numbers**, given activity on court for individual matches is under six people (this also means activity such as Club/County fixtures can continue to be held indoors)
- Off-court, individuals should limit their social interaction with others and not socialise in groups of more than six

TIER 2 (HIGH)

Find out if your area is in this tier on the [Government website](#) or by using the [postcode checker](#).

OUTDOOR TENNIS

- **Restrictions for playing tennis in Tier 2 outdoors are the same as for Tier 1 outdoors.**

INDOOR TENNIS

INFORMAL SOCIAL PLAY

- Singles play permitted for adults
- Doubles permitted for two households playing against each other (no mixing between households)
- Singles & doubles for disabled people and supervised activity for U18s permitted

1:1 COACHING

- Permitted for a coach with one household/bubble
- It is also permitted for a coach to oversee two players from different households on opposite sides of the net playing singles
- A coach can oversee multiple sets of two adult players playing singles across several courts, as long as the players do not interact

ORGANISED GROUP ACTIVITY

- The majority of organised indoor group tennis activity for adults cannot take place
- Adults can however take part as an individual in an exercise class indoors, but only if they take place in a way that ensures participants avoid any inadvertent physical contact and proximity so that individuals stay separate and distinct from those from other households throughout the entirety of the activity, as well as before and after. Where that cannot be ensured, these activities should not go ahead
- Tennis exercise classes are therefore permitted to take place for adults indoors in Tier 2 on this basis. Cardio tennis, for example, is specifically recognised as a group fitness exercise version of tennis and so sessions for adults can take place indoors, but only on the proviso that they are adapted to be coach to player interaction only with no rally based drills taking place between players, and measures are put in place to ensure no inadvertent physical contact or proximity
- There is an exemption for all organised indoor group tennis activity for disabled people and tennis for education purposes, which can take place in any number, and organised indoor group activity for U18's which can continue in line with the limits for outdoors (max group of 15)
- Participants in these groups must still not mingle before and after the activity, while maintaining social distancing with those from another household at all times. If an organiser is not able to ensure this (including when arriving at or leaving activity or in any breaks or socialising) then such events should not take place.
- Attendees must avoid social interaction with anyone outside the group they are with, even if they see other people they know, at all times during their visit

COMPETITIONS

- While restrictions on indoor sporting activity have been imposed, organised indoor singles competition (not doubles) at COVID-19 secure venues can continue to take place for larger draw numbers, given activity for individual matches is limited to two people on court
- Singles and doubles competitions can take place for disabled people and U18s
- Off-court, individuals should not socialise with anyone outside of their own household or bubble

TIER 3 (VERY HIGH)

Find out if your area is in this tier on the [Government website](#) or by using the [postcode checker](#).

OUTDOOR TENNIS



- **Restrictions for playing tennis in Tier 3 outdoors are the same as for Tier 1 outdoors, but participants should be aware there are additional restrictions limiting travel in to and out of Tier 3 areas**

INDOOR TENNIS

INFORMAL SOCIAL PLAY

- Not permitted for adults other than those from the same household / bubble only
- Singles & doubles for disabled people and supervised activity for U18s permitted

1:1 COACHING

- Permitted for a coach with one household/bubble

ORGANISED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Organised indoor group tennis activity for adults cannot take place
- There is an exemption for activity for disabled people and tennis for education purposes, which can take place in any number, and organised group indoor activity for U18's which can continue in line with the limits for outdoors (max group of 15)
- Participants in these groups must still not mingle in groups of more than six before and after the activity, while maintaining social distancing with those from another household at all times. If an organiser is not able to ensure this (including when arriving at or leaving activity or in any breaks or socialising) then such events should not take place.
- Attendees must avoid social interaction with anyone outside the group they are with, even if they see other people they know, at all times during their visit

COMPETITIONS

- Organised competition for adults cannot take place
- Singles and doubles competitions can take place for disabled people and U18s
- Off-court, individuals should not socialise with anyone outside of their own household or bubble

TIER 4 (STAY AT HOME) **[NEW]**

Find out if your area is in this tier on the [Government website](#) or by using the [postcode checker](#).

OUTDOOR TENNIS

INFORMAL SOCIAL PLAY

- Singles play only permitted where players are not from the same household/bubble
- Where all players are from the same household/bubble then doubles can be played



1:1 COACHING

- Permitted in line with the LTA's Covid-19 Secure guidance for coaching activity
- There is no restriction on the number of clients a coach can see in a day

ORGANISED GROUP ACTIVITY

- Group tennis activity for adults cannot take place in Tier 4 areas
- There is an exemption for organised group activity for disabled people (which can take place outdoors in any number subject to COVID-19 safe capacity for that venue), and organised group activity for U18's which can continue in line with guidance from the Department of Education on out of school settings (max group of 15)
- Organised group activity is defined as being activity organised by a national governing body, club, registered instructor/coach, business or charity, where in all cases organiser must conduct a risk assessment and take all reasonable steps to limit transmission of the coronavirus by reference to that risk assessment and all relevant COVID-19 Secure guidance
- Participants in these groups must still not mingle before and after the activity, while maintaining social distancing with those from another household at all times. If an organiser is not able to ensure this (including when arriving at or leaving activity or in any breaks or socialising) then such events should not take place
- Attendees must avoid social interaction with anyone outside the group they are with, even if they see other people they know, at all times during their visit
- Coaching activity for U18s such as Holiday Camps that have two or more groups are permitted as long as the groups are kept completely separate and the sessions are delivered independently of each other. Clear instructions should be provided to participants in advance so that they know which coach and which court to report to, if there are two or more groups

COMPETITIONS

- Organised competition for adults cannot take place
- Singles and doubles competitions can take place for disabled people and U18s
- Off-court, individuals should not socialise with anyone outside of their own household or bubble
- More detailed guidance on the 'Return to Competition' for officials and competition organisers can be read at lta.org.uk/coronavirus

INDOOR TENNIS

- **Indoor tennis activity (including social play, coaching, group activity and competitions) is not permitted in tier 4 areas**

SECTION 3: DISABILITY TENNIS

COACHING DISABILITY TENNIS

- To support the resumption of the LTA's Open Court disability tennis programme, we have produced additional detailed tennis specific guidance for coaches running inclusive and disability-specific activity
- Although activity levels were at a record high prior to COVID-19, participation of disabled people in sport has been greatly impacted by coronavirus – running inclusive and disability-specific tennis activity is therefore particularly encouraged
- Be aware that disabled people as a group have been disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, and so there may be increased concern and anxiety about returning to play. If not already done, coaches should consider reaching out disabled players yet to return and finding out how people are, as well as discuss what their intention is for returning to play
- LTA survey data shows that while an increasing number of disabled people are excited and happy to return to tennis, a large proportion say they are playing less now than they have been in the past. Nearly half feel uncertain or negative around their own safety and anxious about returning
- Coaches should ensure details of how they will run sessions are updated and clear for disabled people, and involve them in the solutions to ensure the session is COVID safe, for everyone
- Communication is crucial, and coaches should continue to promote the hygiene and coronavirus safety measures you have in place to help reassure disabled players about their return.

WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

- Player/coach using a tennis wheelchair for activity should be either:
 - Able to transfer themselves from their day chair into a tennis wheelchair
 - A person from their household or bubble can transfer the player from a day chair into a tennis wheelchair. This person should remain available throughout the session in case of emergency or toilet break, if required support is needed
- Tennis wheelchairs owned by the venue should be sanitised pre and post activity by a nominated member of staff, using appropriate PPE
- A person accessing a sports wheelchair owned by the venue should only use the tennis wheelchair that has been assigned to them, no swapping of wheelchairs mid-session should be allowed

VI TENNIS

- If verbal guiding is not appropriate, and the player doesn't have appropriate support from someone from their household/bubble, then guiding people with sight loss for coached sessions can take place as long as both the guide and visually impaired player follow the mitigations outlined below:
 - Both people to wash hands / sanitise immediately before and after guiding
 - Both people wear a face covering
 - Use a tennis racket as a guiding aid, between the player and the guider. Player to hold grip end of the racket; guider to use head end of the racket
 - Volunteers that are supporting players with sight loss should stay with the assigned player for the duration of the activity. Volunteers should not mix with other players to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus

SECTION 4: ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

The [Department for Education recently unveiled its plan](#) for all pupils, in all year groups to return to school, full time, from the beginning of the Autumn Term.

The following extract relates specifically to physical education and school sport:

“Schools have the flexibility to decide how physical education, sport and physical activity will be provided whilst following the measures in their system of controls. Pupils should be kept in consistent groups, sports equipment thoroughly cleaned between each use by different individual groups, and contact sports avoided.

Outdoor sports should be prioritised where possible, and large indoor spaces used where it is not, maximising distancing between pupils and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene. This is particularly important in a sports setting because of the way in which people breathe during exercise. External facilities can also be used in line with government guidance for the use of, and travel to and from, those facilities.

Schools are able to work with external coaches, clubs and organisations for curricular and extra-curricular activities where they are satisfied that this is safe to do so. Schools should consider carefully how such arrangements can operate within their wider protective measures.”

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

- As the DfE does, the LTA encourages schools to refer to advice from [the Association for Physical Education](#) (afPE) and [the Youth Sport Trust](#).
- afPE’s guidance provides a self-review tool around nine areas including: protective measures and hygiene, teaching areas and self-distancing within lessons. The LTA would encourage schools to use this tool to plan and prepare for any physical education or school sport activity.

LTA YOUTH SCHOOLS TEACHER TRAINING

- LTA Youth Schools teacher training courses will become available again when wider guidelines allow, but only where there is local demand, recognising schools will have other priorities in the short term. However, we will fully and proactively re-launch the programme in early 2021
- Access to all the digital resources from this new programme remain freely available to schools via: www.lta.org.uk/schools and to coaches via the Coach Secure Area.

COACH COMMUNICATION TO SCHOOLS

- Given the above, the LTA advises that proactive communication and approaches to schools can take place
- However, whilst the relaxation of restrictions is hugely positive for PE and school sport, communication and approaches from tennis coaches to schools should be made empathetically, understanding the wider and significant challenges school leaders will be facing