



29 May 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Remove ‘No Ball Games’ Signs to Unlock Sport, Play and Physical Activity for All

We, the undersigned organisations, call for immediate action to remove outdated and restrictive **‘No Ball Games’** signs that stifle play, physical activity, and community connection across London and England. These signs—commonly placed in housing estates where children live, parks, and public spaces—send a damaging message: play is not welcome. This discourages children and young people, particularly those in deprived areas, from engaging in play, physical activity, and sport, worsening health inequalities and limiting opportunities for active childhoods.

Sport, play and physical activity are essential for healthy, thriving communities. Yet, the data shows that in London:

- **Over half of young Londoners don’t meet recommended activity levels** and are missing out on the vital benefits of play, movement, and wellbeing.
- **Communities with high levels of deprivation** are disproportionately affected by limited access to play and recreation.
- **Every ‘No Ball Games’ sign removed helps 80 children be more active and play outside.** Over 7,000 remain in place in London alone, reinforcing barriers to play and physical activity for around 560,000 children and young people.

We emphasise the need for urgent action to ensure that children and young people—regardless of their background, household income or postcode—has access to free spaces where they can play, move, and be active close to home. However, this will not be possible without policy shifts that remove barriers, starting with the removal of ‘No Ball Games’ signs.

We call on policymakers, local authorities, and housing associations to:

- **Take down ‘No Ball Games’ signs** and actively promote play as a fundamental right, alongside the benefit’s of being active.
- **Reimagine public spaces** so they are open, inclusive, and accessible for all forms of play and movement, ensuring opportunities for both structured and unstructured activities.
- Engage in the debate and **commit to removing systemic barriers** to play, sport and physical activity, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

Removing these signs is just the first step. **We must drive a culture shift that places play, sport and movement at the heart of healthy childhoods, thriving communities, and public wellbeing.** Play is not a luxury—it is a necessity for every child’s development, happiness, and future success.

We invite your office to meet with us to discuss how we can work together to remove individual and systemic barriers to sport, play and physical activity in London and England, and create a future where everyone—no matter their income or postcode—has the right to play, move, and thrive, and in turn lead longer, healthier and happier lives through being active.

We look forward to your response and stand ready to collaborate to make this vision a reality.



Sincerely,

Emily Robinson, Chief Executive, London Sport.

Alice Ferguson and **Ingrid Skeels**, Associates and Board Directors, Playing Out.

Eugene Minogue, Executive Director, Play England & Founder, Know Ball Games.

Fiona Sutherland, Director, London Play

Paul Lindley OBE, Chair, The Raising the Nation Play Commission

Co-Signatories:

Sarah Dickson	Director of Communications	Active Partnerships National Organisation
Ian Carey	Chief Executive Officer	Active Black Country
Mike Watson	CEO	Active Cheshire
Richard Johnston	Senior Manager	Active Cumbria
Tom Beasley	CEO	Active Gloucestershire
David Gent	CEO	Active Humber
Liz Davidson	Partnership Director	Active Kent & Medway
Josh Lenthall	Chief Executive	Active Oxfordshire
Gareth Davies	Director	Active Suffolk
Lawrie Baker	Interim Head of Active Surrey	Active Surrey
Adam Blaze	CEO	Activity Alliance
Charlotte Gage	Network Director	Adfree Cities
Tania Shaikh	Operations Director	The Attlee Centre
Guy Lawrence	Managing Director	Awesome ELM CIC
Clare Fitzboydon	Director	Be Active
Andy MacRae	General Secretary	Bealonians Football Club
Brandon White	Director	Blanco Activities
Amelia Mather	Creative Content Writer	Birth to 19
Clare Greene	Education Consultant	CDA Education
Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP	Lead Member for Sport	City of London Corporation
Chantelle Rowe	Sports Administrator (Social Sport)	City St George's University of London
Peter Ackred	CEO	Disability Sports Coach
Julie Amies	CEO	Energise me
Richard Gould	CEO	England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB)
Dan Feist	CEO	Essex Cricket
Roger Rebelo	Operations Manager	Finsbury Park Sports Partnership
Hannah Mallatratt	Make-up Artist	Freelance
Brett Nicholls	CEO	Get Berkshire Active
William Robertson	Head of PE	Haberdashers' Borough Academy
Luke Billingham	Youth Worker & Researcher	Hackney Quest & Open University
John O'Callaghan	Partnership Director	Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership
Dr William Bird MBE	CEO	Intelligent Health
Katherine Knight	Director	Intelligent Health
Wendy Jeeves	Managing Director	Islington Play Association
Jo Heath	Sports Development Manager	Kingston University
Syed Uddin	CEO	Leaders in Community



Paul Bickerton
Andrew Shields
Janine Coates
Cath Prisk
Rick Jenner
Andy Farr
Tim Gill
Clare Morley
Chris Lawton
Chris Lawton
Charlene Kemp
Tracey McCillen
Tim Lawler MBE
Catherine Sinclair-Smith
Ian Nagle
Bryn Llewellyn

CEO
Senior Consultant
Senior Lecturer
CEO
CEO
Strategic Director
Independent Researcher
CEO
Community Development Officer
Co-Founder
Growth Lead - Sports Tech
Chief Executive
Chief Executive
Sports Partnership Manager
CEO
Director

London FA
LookUp Communications
Loughborough University
Outdoor People
ParkPlay
Parkwood Leisure
Rethinking Childhood
Rise North East
Skateboard GB
Skate Nottingham CIC
Spond
Sport Excel UK
SportsAid
Sutton Schools Sport Partnership
Swing Fitness
Tagtiv8