

# Mixed Ability: an introduction

Nathan Webb – IMAS Trainer  
Tom Beattie – IMAS Trainer  
Aron Robinson – IMAS Development Manager  
Mark Goodwin - IMAS Director

 [mixedabilitysports.org](https://mixedabilitysports.org)



## Today's IMAS Dream Team



Nathan



Tom



Gooders



Aron



# Who we are

IMAS is a not-for-profit organisation promoting the Mixed Ability model around the world.



# What is Mixed Ability

Mixed Ability is a social movement within sports, actively promoting inclusion and equality through a sense of belonging and membership to a group, team or club.

Mixed Ability enables people of all abilities and life experiences to take part in community sports, without being separated, classified or labelled.





# The Dream

“

I supported my local team for years. They would not let me play, they thought I would get hurt. Of course we get hurt, it's part of the game!

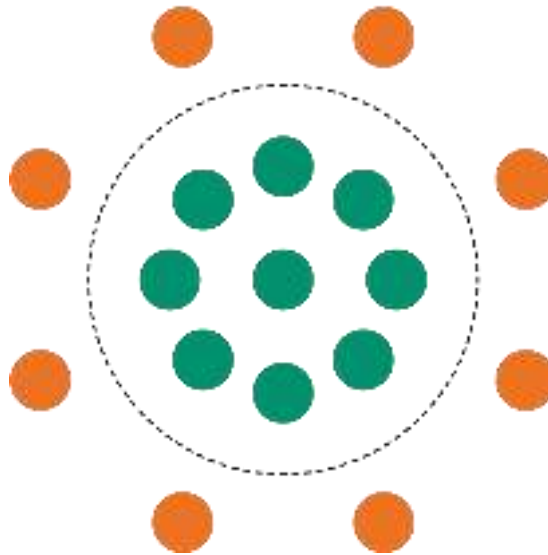
”

– **Anthony Brooke**  
Bumble Bees RUFC founder

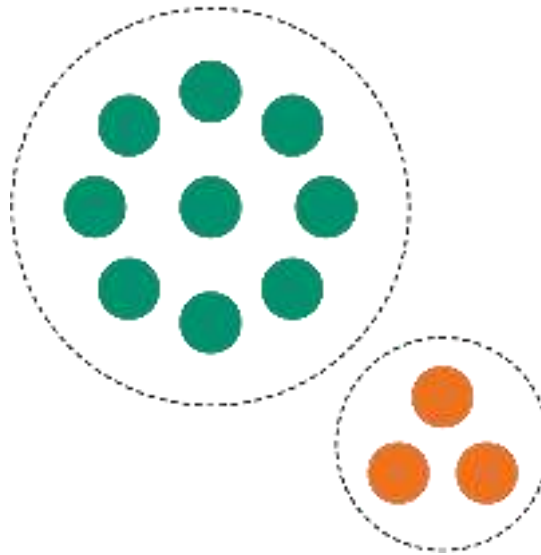


# What sport historically was usually available for disabled people?

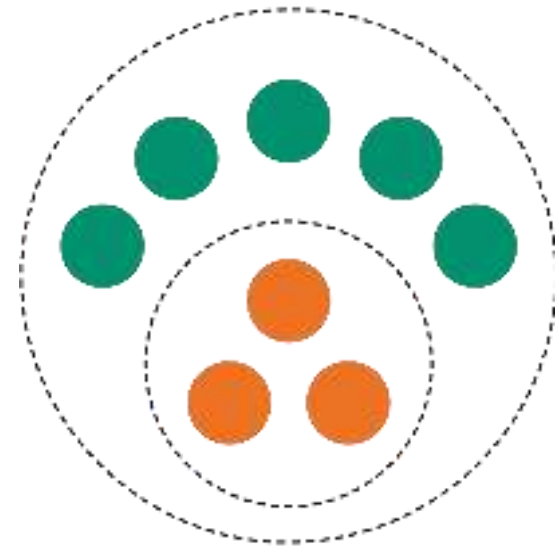
Disabled people  
can't play sports



Disabled people can only  
play disability-specific sports



Disabled people should use  
adapted rules or equipment



● Disabled people

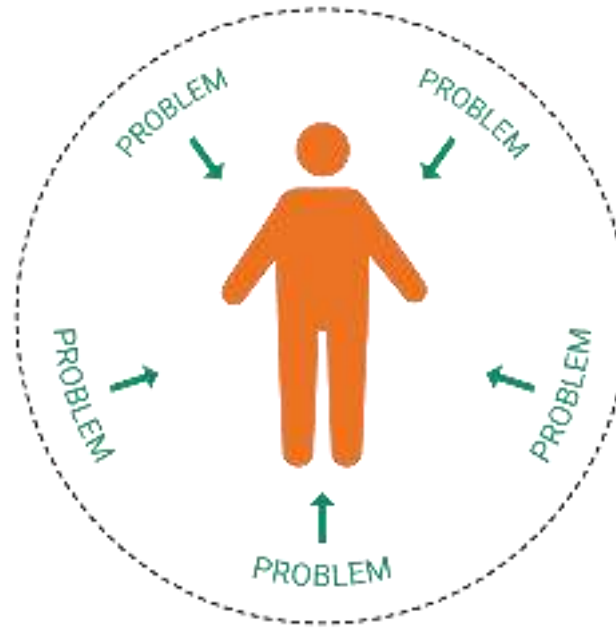
○ Barriers

● Non-disabled people

## What sport is usually available for disabled people?

The Mixed Ability model starts from the assumption that anyone, at some point in life, can experience disability for a short or long term, whether due to social, physical or mental constraints.

Individual

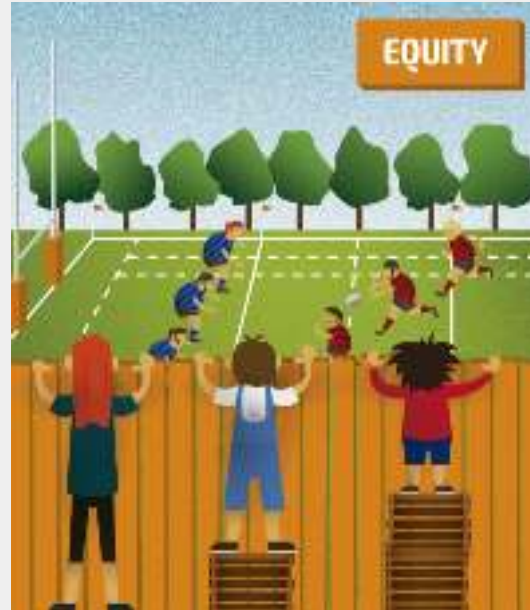
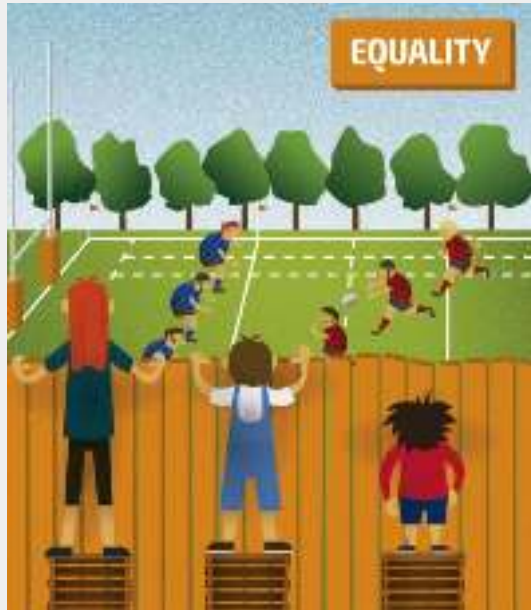


Society

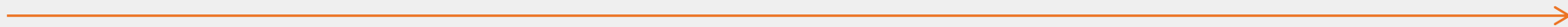


# Equality doesn't mean equity

**Liberation = breaking down barriers**



Non-inclusive



Inclusive



# Our vision & mission

## VISION

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**To radically change the way we think of, join in and enjoy sports, leading to a fairer and more equal society.**

## MISSION

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**Bringing people of all abilities together to play sports and learn from each other, giving everyone the opportunity to fulfil their potential.**





## A problem

- Health inequalities are most marked in disabled people.
- People with learning disabilities or long term mental ill health live with more comorbidities, are limited more by ill-health and on average die earlier, often from preventable illnesses.
- Less than 33% of people with a learning disability have some choice of who they live with, and less than half have some choice over where they live.
- The pandemic has worsened challenges and increased nervousness about participation



## How we don't help

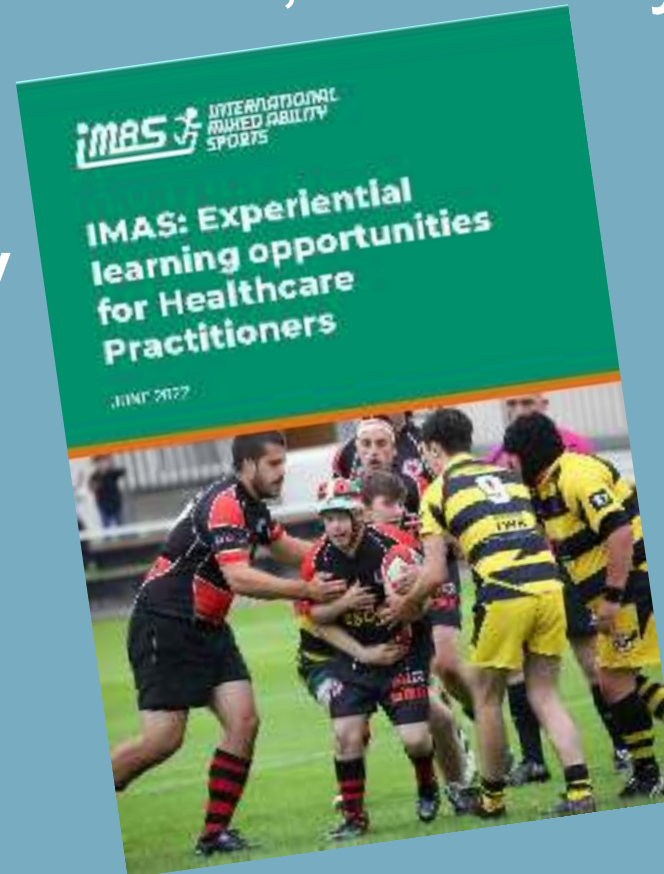
- Creating and maintaining barriers to active and healthy lifestyle for people with severe enduring chronic disease and learning disabilities.
- These include attempts to categorise and pigeon-hole disabilities into a “special” category.
- Making the problem “go away” by not even recognising it is a problem.

# Instead of starting with problems...

- Take an asset based approach: help people do the healthy things they already want to do
- Frame risks appropriately (risk of not taking part in exercise and benefits of participation)
- Focus on building capacity and promoting consent

Start where you are, use what you have, do what you can!

**"I'm more aware of inequalities and disadvantages within the community and able to communicate better with people. Also, having an idea of the options that are out there in the community to support patients."  
Emma, 3rd Year Medical Student,  
Sheffield University**





# A.B.C. of IMAS for Healthcare Practitioners



AUTONOMY	BELONGING	CONTRIBUTION
<p>Creating opportunities to make decisions, have control, have choices and a say in your life. We do this through sport and beyond, we create chances for IMAS participants to live congruent with their beliefs and values</p>	<p>IMAS promotes meaningful relationships. Our participants feel part of something (a team or family), have a sense of membership and are connected, respected and listened to. Our participants have an identity that gives them a sense of self in place and time.</p>	<p>IMAS promotes recognition of all participants in Mixed Ability sports, where participants are valued for their influence. We develop chances to lead, show, demonstrate abilities and deliver meaningful outcomes. We believe in ownership, co-production and co-design.</p>



**Nathan**

# IMAS trainers meet weekly





# Mixed Ability offers in Bradford and Calderdale

## MIXED ABILITY MULTI-ACTIVITY

From arts and craft – boccia and badminton!  
Something for everyone!

- 🕒 Wed 4-6.30pm
- 📍 Heston Tennis & Squash Club,  
Off Emri Lane, BD9 5PH.  
Next to St Bede's school
- 💷 £3 per session
- 📧 [info@bdsi.net](mailto:info@bdsi.net)  
[loana.purcell@bdsi.net](mailto:loana.purcell@bdsi.net)
- 👕 Sports clothes and trainers recommended.



## MIXED ABILITY TENNIS

Children's Club

Children's Mixed Ability Tennis Academy (age 8-16). Teaching racket and ball skills to progress from beginner to competition.

- 🕒 Sat 4-6pm
- 📍 Grange Interlink Community Centre,  
Sumnerville Road, BD7 1PX
- 💷 £30 per month
- ☎ Call or Text 07869 578162
- 👕 Please wear sports clothes and trainers. Equipment is provided. All abilities welcome.
- 📧 [Nalatt@tuckersunwahsportsacademytrust.com](mailto:Nalatt@tuckersunwahsportsacademytrust.com)



## MIXED ABILITY ROWING

Mixed Ability Rowing at Bradford Amateur Rowing Club (BARC). Learn to row in a friendly environment.

- 🕒 Rowing weekly or alternate Sun 11am-12noon. Possible extra land fitness sessions during the week.
- 📍 End of Coach Rd, Lower Baldon, Riverside, BD17 5SF
- 🚢 625 Boats
- 💷 Concessions available. Annual membership.
- 📧 [nalatt@barcrowingclub.co.uk](mailto:nalatt@barcrowingclub.co.uk)
- 👕 The club is currently oversubscribed please contact for further details on how to register on our waiting list.



## NON-CONTACT BOXING

Unorthodox, non-contact boxing skills and fitness, punch bags and pads but not each other.

- 🕒 Age 7-16 yrs: Tues 5-6pm  
Open age (17 yrs+): Tues 6.30-7.30pm
- 📍 Heston Tennis and Squash Club,  
Off Emri Lane, BD9 5PH
- 💷 First session FREE, then £6 over 18's, £5 under 18's.
- ☎ Call Sarah on 07769 359612
- 📧 [info@unorthodox.co.uk](mailto:info@unorthodox.co.uk)
- 🌐 [www.unorthodox.co.uk](http://www.unorthodox.co.uk)
- 👕 Equipment is provided. All abilities welcome. Also available in Leeds – contact Unorthodox for details.



## MIXED ABILITY KICKBOXING

Suitable for all abilities. Non-contact and contact sessions to suit participant needs. We will support you along your journey.

- 🕒 Junior 7-12 yrs: Sat 1-2pm & 2-3pm  
Teens: Tues 3-4.30pm, Thurs 7-8.30pm & Sat 1-2pm
- 📍 Physical Impact Kickboxing Academy,  
182 Harris Street, BD6 5AA
- 💷 FREE trial session. Monthly fee
- ☎ Call Shah on 07400 016416
- 📧 [physicalimpactkickboxing@hotmail.com](mailto:physicalimpactkickboxing@hotmail.com)
- 🌐 [www.physicalimpactkickboxing.com](http://www.physicalimpactkickboxing.com)
- 📱 Find us on Facebook and Instagram
- 📍 3 locations across BFD call for further details. Other classes an 6PT session available.



## MULTI-SPORT FOR KIDS

Children's (age 6-12) Mixed Ability Multi Sport Sessions Fun introduction to different sports.

- 🕒 Sun 11am-12noon
- 📍 Grange Interlink Community Centre,  
Sumnerville Road, BD7 1PX
- 💷 £15 per month
- ☎ Call or Text 07869 578162
- 👕 Please wear sports clothes and trainers. Equipment is provided. All abilities welcome.
- 📧 [Nalatt@tuckersunwahsportsacademytrust.com](mailto:Nalatt@tuckersunwahsportsacademytrust.com)



## RACKET BALL AND PICKLEBALL

Mixed Ability Racket ball and Pickleball. Two brand new sessions suitable for people of all ages and abilities.

- 🕒 New sessions, times to be confirmed. Email Terry Wassall for details.
- 📍 Heston Tennis & Squash Club,  
Off Emri Lane, BD9 5PH.  
Next to St Bede's school
- 💷 New session fees to be confirmed
- ☎ call reception on 01274 541508
- 📧 [terry.wassall@gmail.com](mailto:terry.wassall@gmail.com)



## MIXED ABILITY SWIMMING

We're back and would love you to join us in the pool, come on in the water is perfect!

- 🕒 Tues 7.30-8.30pm
- 📍 Pool at Targ Leadership Academy,  
Westgate Hill St, BD4 6MT
- 💷 £3 for participants, others swim FREE
- ☎ Call Helen on 07966 089526
- 📧 [helen@helenhewes.co.uk](mailto:helen@helenhewes.co.uk)
- 🌐 [facebook.com/thetwinhab](https://facebook.com/thetwinhab)
- 👕 Welcoming non-judgemental swim for all



## NON-CONTACT BOXING

WOMEN ONLY

Ladies (14+) Mixed ability Non-Contact Boxing. Boxing skills using pads and fitness based exercise.

- 🕒 Sun 11am-12noon
- 📍 Grange Interlink Community Centre,  
Sumnerville Road, BD7 1PX
- 💷 £3 per session
- ☎ Call or Text 07869 578162
- 👕 Please wear sports clothes and trainers. Equipment is provided. All abilities welcome.
- 📧 [Nalatt@tuckersunwahsportsacademytrust.com](mailto:Nalatt@tuckersunwahsportsacademytrust.com)



## IMAS TEAM DAYS

Co-produced teambuilding and inclusion sessions delivered by IMAS trainers.

- 📍 Sessions available through advanced booking
- 📍 Suite 3, Cathedral House,  
26-28 Church Lane, Bradford,  
West Yorkshire BD1 4DZ
- 💷 Sessions fees to be confirmed
- 📧 [contact@mixedabilitysports.org](mailto:contact@mixedabilitysports.org)





## ACTIVITIES IN CALDERDALE

### MIXED ABILITY RUGBY

Join Halifax Magpies and enjoy competitive, exciting and inclusive Rugby.

**Touch Union:** Thurs 6-7pm  
Sat 12-1pm

**Halifax RUFC,** Overden Park,  
Keighley Road, Halifax, HX2 6AR

£20 Annual Membership

**Halifax Magpies** 07851 487234

**CarlHindson@protonmail.com**

No experience required - all abilities welcome



### MIXED ABILITY RACKET BALL

Fun and friendly racket ball sessions.  
Join us for a social and a knock about!

For more information contact Aron

£5 per session. Concessions available.  
Annual membership.

Call Aron on 07794 734592

**aron@caldercommunitysquad.co.uk**

No experience necessary! All equipment  
provided. Comfortable clothing and sports  
footwear required.



### MIXED ABILITY BOWLS

Learn to play with our welcoming team and experienced  
coach Ken. Gentle exercise for all abilities.

**Mon 10.30am-12 noon**  
Playing Season April to September

**Myrtle Park, Ringley, BD16 1HL**  
Behind the Lidl on main street

16/2 bus

£15 per person, per season

Call Ken on 07891 632699

**kpollard2008@hotmail.co.uk**

Please wear trainers or flat, solid shoes.



### MIXED ABILITY RUGBY

Mixed Ability Rugby with the Bumble Bees. Inclusive rugby  
for all abilities. Coaching is energetic and enjoyable.

**Training:** Sat 11am-12.30pm  
**Matches:** Once a month on Wednesdays

**Baldon Rugby Club or**  
**Bradford G. Ringley Rugby Club**

£10 annual membership

Call or Text 07869 578162

**phil.wilson@whiterose rugby.com**

**www.bumblesrugby.com**

No experience required - all abilities welcome. Matches  
on weekends and additional touch rugby sessions.



### MIXED ABILITY FOOTBALL

WOMEN  
ONLY

Women only Mixed Ability Football.  
Social drop in and play.

**Sat 3-4pm**

**Orange InterLink Community Centre,**  
**Summersville Road, BD7 1PX**

£5 per session

Call or Text 07869 578162

Please wear sports clothes  
and Trainers. Equipment is provided.  
All abilities welcome.

**NaetteLucker@summersportsacademytrust.com**



### MIXED ABILITY GOLF

Be active and make new friends in the beautiful  
surroundings of the Bingley St Ives club.

**Alternate Mondays 4-6pm**

**Bingley St Ives Golf Club,**  
**Harden, BD16 1AL**

£250 per session

Call Alan on 07359 003287  
or Graham on 07855 009540

**alan.thornton@yarnconsult.co.uk**

Equipment is provided. All abilities welcome.



### MIXED ABILITY FOOTBALL

OVER 18'S  
ONLY

Over 18's Football for well-being. A fun session for all abilities  
to enjoy playing some social football and the opportunity to  
brush up on your skills and drills.

**Time:** TBC

**Venue:** TBC

£3 per session

**info@bds.net**  
**laura.purcell@bds.net**

Astro boots or trainers.  
NO studded boots. A collaboration with Mind in  
Bradford to offer wellbeing support for carers and  
participants who may be struggling.





Tom



Disability Awareness.  
When we deliver training to the  
public we give examples of the  
prejudice we have to face  
everyday.



# Mixed Ability training through play





# IMAS Trainers working with NGB's to raise awareness of the Mixed Ability Model



# Mixed Ability Squash at the National Squash Centre, Manchester





# MENS WELL-BEING SESSIONS

FOR MORE INFO AND TO BOOK YOUR PLACE PLEASE CONTACT - ARON  
[info@caldercommunities.co.uk](mailto:info@caldercommunities.co.uk)



# Growing Mixed Ability Activities in the North West





# SQUASH UNITED! BEGINNERS MIXED ABILITY SESSION

MONDAY 4TH APRIL  
2-4 PM

AT  
BIRMINGHAM NEW  
STREET STATION



**FUN, INCLUSIVE  
AND FREE  
COACHED  
SESSIONS**



## BEGINNERS INCLUSIVE TASTER SESSION

Join us at Birmingham New Street  
Station and try Mixed Ability Squash 57

### RULES

1. Pick up ball
2. Hit ball against wall
3. Have fun
4. Repeat

Equipment provided, just wear comfy clothes and trainers

[contact@mixedabilitysports.org](mailto:contact@mixedabilitysports.org) for further info'



# IMAS support and education

Research

Healthcare  
placements

Accessible  
resources



Ongoing advice and support

Club  
networking

Regional  
Development  
Managers

Disability  
awareness training

# International Growth

	ENG		IRL
	SCO		ESP
	WAL		ECU
	ARG		BEL
	NED		NZL
	ITA		
	CAN		



Introduce IMAS to relevant partners

Share our research on the benefits of Mixed Ability

Add IMAS to the Thriving Communities programme

Try one of our Mixed Ability taster days

Plan with us to map who would be receptive to new Mixed Ability activities



**What can  
you do to  
support the  
movement?**



# Sign our manifesto

## 1. HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

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Transforming lives through exercise and social interaction.

## 2. INCLUSION AND EQUALITY

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Allowing everyone to enjoy sport without being separated, classified or labelled.

## 3. MEMBERSHIP & BELONGING

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Building a culture of belonging through community groups, teams and clubs.

## 4. EQUAL PARTICIPATION

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Creating opportunities for marginalised groups to participate on a level playing field.

## 5. RULES & REGULATIONS

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Adopting the same rules as mainstream sports with only minor adjustments for individual participant needs.

## 6. BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

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Challenging the elitist norms to overcome segregation and prejudice within sport.



# Thank you, we're happy to take any questions...

 [mixedabilitysports.org](https://mixedabilitysports.org)

 [contact@mixedabilitysports.org](mailto:contact@mixedabilitysports.org)

 [@IMAS\\_Sport4All](https://twitter.com/IMAS_Sport4All)

 [@imas\\_sport4all](https://www.instagram.com/imas_sport4all)

 [Mixed Ability Sport](https://www.facebook.com/MixedAbilitySport)

