



NEWSLETTER

'Safe standing' to be discussed in Parliament after campaign

Safe-standing in the Premier League and Championship will be debated in Parliament on June 25th following a petition to the government which was signed by more than 110,000 people.

The government previously said there were no plans to change the all-seater policy after West Bromwich Albion had a proposal to trial 'safe standing' in one of its stands rejected.

Standing in English football's top two divisions was outlawed by the Football Spectators' Act in 1989.

It came following recommendations made in the Taylor Report into the Hillsborough disaster, which claimed the lives of 96 Liverpool fans.

West Bromwich who were recently relegated from the Premier League, proposed a pilot scheme that would have meant 3,600 seats in the Smethwick End were converted to 'rail seats', which can be locked in an upright position.

The plan was rejected by the government, and the Football Supporters' Federation responded by saying sports minister Tracey Crouch was "declaring war on fans".

The Premier League asked for more evidence before it could be allowed at top-flight stadiums.

League One promotion chasers Shrewsbury received delivery of new safe-standing rail seats which they plan to install at their stadium this summer.

Sports minister Crouch said she was "grateful" for fans "expressing their views on this issue".

In a statement, the government reiterated their belief that "all-seater stadia are currently the best means to ensure the safety and security of fans". But they added that they would continue to "consider advances in technology and data that may enhance the existing policy".

The FSOA's statement following the decision:

"We have noted with interest that a petition in support of so-called 'safe standing' has gathered momentum among spectators and clubs following the Government's decision to reject a pilot scheme at West Bromwich Albion and will now be considered for a debate in Parliament.

"The issue of supporters persistently standing in seating areas is one that affects all-seater football stadia up and down the country and threatens to compromise the safety of thousands of fans every match day.

"Something must be done to tackle this issue, and the introduction of an alternative such as dual-purpose seating or other systems currently being developed to enhance safety should not be ignored.

"The FSOA was therefore disappointed with the decision to reject the trial, which would have provided the perfect opportunity to gather much-needed data and feedback on alternative systems that are not intended to encourage more fans to stand but instead create a safer environment for those who already persist in doing so.

"Only by allowing trials of dual-purpose seating to go ahead can enough information be gathered to enable the Government to make an informed decision on whether such an alternative is safer than the status quo.

The safety of spectators must always remain paramount, which is why it is pleasing that this issue will be given the careful consideration it deserves with the view of enabling positive change and enhancing match day safety at all grounds going forward."

Survey for members

The issue of fans standing persistently is one that affects grounds across the country. The FSOA will be conducting a survey among members to find out how this issue affects your club, how you try to combat it and what solution you think would work best. Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this to help us move forward with a resolution.

'Safe Standing' articles continue over page

Work begins to install rail seating at Shrewsbury Town FC

Work has begun on making Shrewsbury Town Football Club the first club in England and Wales to install safe standing.

In 2017, £65,000 was raised for the Supporters' Parliament-led initiative which will see 555 rail seats placed into the Salop Leisure South Stand.

The rail seats have been made by local company Ferco Seating and the fitters were at the stadium early on Tuesday morning to start the work, which is scheduled to take two weeks.

Town CEO Brian Caldwell has been involved with the process from the beginning and is delighted to see the installation begin.

"They were here at 7.30am", said Brian. "The plan is to get most of the seats out and then start working on installing the safe standing units, so it's a nice sight to see them starting the work.

"It's going to hopefully help the atmosphere going forward.

"Hopefully, having that big body of support behind the South Stand, cheering the team on, will help us in the long term as well.

"It's good for the town as well that we are putting Shrewsbury on the map.

"We've had unbelievable coverage for safe standing and what's happened with West Brom recently has highlighted it and had everyone wanting to speak to us again about it. The fact that we are getting the safe standing units to be the first installed in England and Wales is going to be huge and there will be media interest on the club again."

Roger Groves, joint chair of the Supporters Parliament said now was a great time to be a supporter of the club.

"It is really exciting to see the safe stands go in," he said. "We have done so much background work on this to see it taking shape is great. It is like buying a new house off plans and then seeing it all come together.

"It would not have been possible without the support we have from the fans and businesses who helped us raise £65,690. We had money from the club as well as £10,000 from Fansbet which really boosted the funds.

"I was down at the ground and was so proud to see it all go in. It has been brilliant to finally see it come to fruition."

Safety rails plan at Oxford United

Oxford United are continuing to investigate the possibility of introducing the Ox-Rails: Supporting Safer Spectators concept at the Kassam Stadium.

This would see the installation of a safety rail, independent of the seats, in sections of the East [Home] and North [Away] stands. The sections would remain as seated areas but the introduction of this additional safety control measure would prevent the risk of a progressive crowd collapse by supporters who have chosen to persistently stand.

In February 2018 the overwhelming majority of the Oxford United Safety Advisory Group members, including representatives of the Fire & Ambulance Services, supported the Ox-Rails concept. The club were informed, again in February, that the Stadium would receive a licence under the Football Spectators Act 1989 with the Ox-Rails: Supporting Safer Spectators concept installed. The stadium would remain a seated venue.

Ian Mixer, Head of Crowd Safety at Oxford United, who has worked on the project since October 2017 said,

"It is great to be able to update our supporters with information regarding the concept; one which grew out of a request for me to look at the feasibility of a dedicated area for the Ultras.

"Although a time frame cannot be placed on completion of the project the next stage will see the installation of a test build of an Ox-Rail, in front of a single row of seats in the East Stand, to allow the safety barrier to undergo rigorous testing.

"Analysis of the results will allow for the design, if required, to be amended. The safety of spectators, both home & away, is paramount and the club is committed to ensuring that this groundbreaking concept complies with the safety standards required by the regulating authorities.

"Running concurrent will be continued consultation with our supporters, including OXVOX and season ticket holders, to ensure that when installed the Ox-Rails: Supporting Safer Spectators concept matches their expectations of a safe and supportive environment in which to view matches.

"Oxford United are continuing discussions with the Sports Ground Safety Authority to allow the concept to continue within the Stadium should the club be promoted to the Championship."

Niall McWilliams, Oxford United's Managing Director said:

"First of all we would like to thank Ian for his hard work on this project. He has been very much the driving force and has done a fantastic job in getting it this far. We would love to see Ox-Rails at the stadium and will continue to work with all relevant parties to try and make this happen."

Details unveiled for FSOA's 2018 October Conference & Exhibition

Details have been unveiled for the FSOA's upcoming Conference & Exhibition, which will take place on October 16th and 17th. The event will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, in Stratford-upon-Avon, and will give FSOA members the opportunity to network with peers, listen to talks by experts and get a glimpse of the latest technology and services available to improve safety at stadiums. A full agenda of speakers, interactive sessions and presentations for the full-day conference on October 17th will be unveiled shortly, but the FSOA is delighted to announce the VIP after-dinner guest speaker as boxing legend, Frank Bruno MBE. The former world heavyweight champion boxer is one of the most well-loved and recognisable boxers in British history who has been candid about his personal struggles with mental health outside of the ring. The evening of entertainment will once again be compered by longstanding friend of the FSOA, Andy Ashworth.

Ahead of the conference and exhibition, guests are invited to take a boat trip along the River Avon on October 16th. Two boats are being sponsored by Dallmeier and Event Detection Dogs, leaving the jetty at 5.15pm and 5.30pm, and will include free drinks. There is limited availability for 80 people so places need to be booked early to avoid disappointment. The boat trip will be followed by a curry or fish 'n' chip supper.

John Newsham, FSOA Business Development Manager, said: "We are delighted that preparations are already well under way for our October 2018 conference, which will see us return to the Crowne Plaza Hotel, in Stratford-upon-Avon, where we enjoyed our 25th anniversary event. We are once again lining up a packed agenda, filled with informative presentations, talks by industry experts and activities that will give our members the chance to expand their knowledge to help them in their working lives. The event will also give members the chance to network with peers to share their expertise and experiences, whilst giving FSOA Corporate Partners the chance to showcase the services and solutions they have available to improve standards of stadium and spectator safety.

"But of course our conference events are not all work and no play, which is why we are delighted to be running two boat trips on October 16th, thanks to sponsorship from our partners Dallmeier and Event Detection Dogs. We are also delighted to have secured boxing legend Frank Bruno MBE as our after-dinner speaker following the conference & exhibition on October 17th. He has never been shy of talking about his personal struggles outside of the ring and I am sure he will provide a fascinating insight into the life of one of boxing's most recognisable and well-loved champions.

"As always, we listen to feedback from our members as conference preparations take shape and are happy to receive any topic suggestions you would like us to consider including on the agenda. We look forward to seeing all of you there."

Thank you to members and guests who raised hundreds of pounds for charity during our Spring Conference & Exhibition

We are delighted to reveal that a charity collection from our Spring Conference & Exhibition has raised £500. Donations were taken during the evening dinner, which was attended by cricket legend, Geoff Miller OBE. The money will be presented to Prostate Cancer UK. The organisation selects a different charity to receive funds from every one of its conferences and has raised tens of thousands of pounds for good causes over the years. Thank you to everyone who donated money to this incredibly worthy cause.



Conference & Exhibition October 16th & 17th 2018

Crowne Plaza Hotel || Stratford-upon-Avon || CV37 6YR

Talk to high-profile experts in football safety and the events industry ||
Network with peers and expand your client base || Listen to expert
guest speakers || Learn more about the latest technology and solutions
available to improve stadium safety || Share experiences and
knowledge to use in your everyday roles

Plus: Boat trips along River Avon



Enjoy a boat trip along the River Avon on October 16th.
Two boats, sponsored by Dallmeier and Event
Detection Dogs, leave the jetty at
5:15pm and 5:30pm prompt.
LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE!
Enjoy FREE DRINKS on board before
returning for a quiz night
& curry/fish'n'chips

AND
*Special Guest
Speaker...*
BOXING LEGEND

FRANK BRUNO

Early booking discounts available.

DON'T MISS OUT! BOOK NOW!



To book your place at the conference, on a boat trip, at
the evening dinner, or overnight stay, please email
info@fsoa.org.uk to request a booking form

Event Detection Dogs - Providing Safety, Assurance and Security in an Uncertain World

The security of arenas and sports stadiums across the UK is being enhanced thanks to a new company specialising in the provision of explosive and drug detection dogs, launched by international detection dog specialists, Wagtail UK Ltd.

Event Detection Dogs (EDD) handlers and dogs are specialists in explosive, pyrotechnic, firearms and drug detection, providing safety, assurance and security in an uncertain world.

Stadiums and arenas require robust security to protect fans, players, event participants, staff and the venue. Explosive threats have become more prevalent, requiring an effective security solution. The use of detection dogs, or sniffer dogs as they are more commonly known, in crowded places provides an extra layer of security, enhancing existing safety measures at stadiums/arenas.

EDD help to ensure stadiums and arenas are safe and secure before, during and after an event. They provide highly visible qualified detection dogs and qualified professional handlers to support and enhance the existing security measures in place at stadiums and arenas. EDD carry out vehicle screening, pedestrian access/turnstile screening and stadium/arena searches.

Wagtail UK Ltd was established in 2003. It provides detection dogs and related services for government agencies such as UK Border Force, HM Revenue & Customs, Police, Trading Standards and Armed Forces. EDD forms part of the Wagtail Holding group of companies along with Conservation Dogs, who provide specialist detection dogs for protected wildlife and ecological surveys.

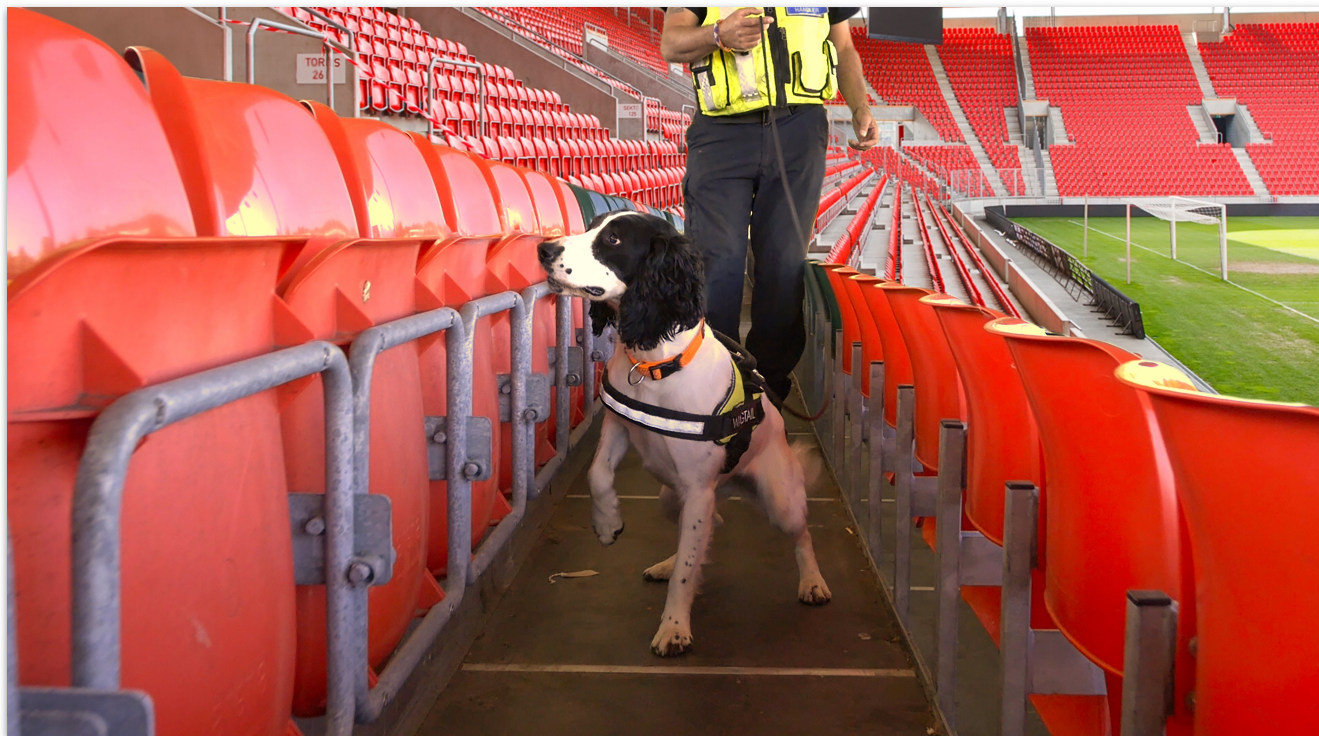
Managing Director of Wagtail UK Ltd, Collin Singer added: 'We created EDD as we wanted to develop a part of the business which was solely dedicated to ensuring safety and security in crowded places. So far, our handlers and dogs have helped secure over 20 arenas and stadiums around the UK. We consistently meet the highest level of performance standards and are members and preferred partners of the Football Safety Officers Association. Our philosophy is simple: Only the Best is Good Enough.'

EDD only select the best dogs - 25% of them are unwanted pets or are from rescue centres, ensuring they are given a good home and life. During training the dogs are exposed to as many different environments as possible, ensuring the dog is adaptable and flexible to new situations. The Company is Home Office-approved to hold real explosive and drug training samples and has a full suite of training aids, believing that training on real substance is best practice and a superior option to pseudo scent samples.

The majority of EDD dog handlers come from military / police backgrounds. They are self-motivated, professional and highly-trained. All handlers are experienced and well trained in knowing how to navigate complex scenarios. They have experience of working in a variety of environments including Afghanistan, Iraq, The Balkans, Northern Ireland and the UK mainland. EDD are constantly evolving their staff training and continuation training in order to stay ahead of emerging threats and advances in perpetrator techniques.

EDD also offer a consultancy service and training, including the training of in-house detection dog teams at venues.

For more information please call 01745 561166 or email info@edd-uk.com



Consultation into 6th edition 'Green Guide' extended

A consultation into the much-anticipated 6th edition 'Green Guide' has been extended to give people chance to put forward their comments.

The SGSA is seeking views from across the safety and sports grounds sector. People were initially given until April 27th to respond but now have until 1pm on May 24th to put forward their views.

The Green Guide is used mainly by ground management, their professional advisors and the regulatory authorities to inform safety at sports grounds. The primary purpose is to provide guidance on the safe capacity, such as the number of spectators who can be accommodated during an event.

The Guide's secondary purpose is to identify good practice and standards against which existing and proposed structures and systems can be assessed and if possible improved. As well as being a practical document for clubs and their professional advisers, it has become an international design guide and is widely used by designers of stadium around the world.

The 6th edition, which will be published in summer 2018, takes into account of the improvements in the design and safety management of sports grounds since the current edition was published in 2008. It is not intended to alter the fundamental principles and purpose of the Guide or be used to ratchet up minimum standards, unless this is necessary on safety grounds.

Some of the new areas which are covered in the guide include:-

- Extension of management responsibility from all spectators in the ground to all people present at the ground (including sports ground and sub-contracted, staff, media personnel, medical providers)
- New guidance on the circulation and movement of spectators in those areas of the public domain that lie beyond the outer perimeter of the sports ground, but which are integral to the safe management of spectators and other personnel, both before and after an event, known as Zone EX.
- Crowd modelling is now used by stadium designers to improve crowd flows in and around the stadiums. The new Green Guide sets out the parameters by which crowd modelling is used.
- Fire engineering is used by stadium designers of the Green Guide, there will be more detail in an annex to follow, however there is a note of when and where fire engineering is best used.
- More detailed guidance on concourses, plus an understanding of levels of service, density and loading on concourse wall.
- Inclusion of smart stadia or lightbulb moment
- Recognition of the role played by mobile devices and social media in safety management and communications in general
- Concept of 'invacuation'. Stadiums must consider the implications of an incident outside the ground. Safety management options such as lockdown, partial evacuation and horizontal phased evacuation are explained.

Those wishing to comment on the draft should click on the link below:

[**Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds 6th Edition Draft Consultation**](#)

The 6th edition of the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds will be published in Summer 2018.

Premier League clubs make significant improvements in standards for disabled supporters, says report

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has published its report on the progress Premier League clubs have made into achieving the standards for disabled supporters as set out in the Accessible Stadia guidance.

The EHRC report finds that most Premier League clubs have made significant improvements in the provision they provide for disabled supporters.

The SGSA welcomes the progress made by clubs in meeting the standards and making grounds more accessible and welcoming for all supporters.

The SGSA welcomes the recommendation by the EHRC for the SGSA to continue to work with the Commission, the Premier League and other stakeholders to create guidance which clarifies how hospitality areas should be considered in relation to accessible provision.

Karen Eyre-White, Chief Executive Sports Grounds Safety Authority said "Premier League clubs have made considerable progress in making their grounds accessible for all their supporters since the commitment in 2015.

"We all have a part to play in ensuring all supporters can follow their team in safety and comfort. We will continue to work in partnership with the Premier League, the EHRC and the sector to ensure advice and guidance on accessibility at sports grounds enables all supporters to enjoy live sport".

EHRC The State of Play: progress on Premier League clubs' accessibility Accessible Stadia

Liverpool fan fighting for life following attack

Liverpool fan Sean Cox remains in a critical condition after being attacked before the Champions League match against Roma.

The 53-year-old businessman from Dunboyne in Ireland, suffered serious head injuries in the attack outside Anfield prior to the Champions League semi-final first leg on April 24th.

Attending the match with his brother, it is believed Mr Cox, who is being treated at the Walton Neurological Centre in Liverpool, was hit with a belt.

Two Italian men have been remanded in custody after appearing in court charged in connection with the incident. The case was sent to Liverpool Crown Court, where both men will appear on May 24th.

Following the attack, Liverpool players made a touching gesture by requesting Mr Cox's St Peter's Dunboyne jersey - from his local sports club GAA - be sent to them. They hung it in the dressing room between the shirts of Salah and Firmino before the team's game against Stoke City (pictured right)

The Cox family have issued a statement on the official Liverpool website, expressing their thanks for the support following the incident, with tributes coming from across football including from Italian club Roma.

The statement reads: "As a family we have been overwhelmed and humbled by the support we have received since Sean was so badly hurt two weeks ago," the family statement read.

"From the wonderful medical staff at the Walton Centre who continue to care for Sean to the highly dedicated officers of Merseyside Police who have assisted us from the moment we arrived, it has been a great comfort to know that we are in such good hands."

Liverpool won the first leg 5-2 and went on to secure a place in the Champions League final despite losing the second leg in Rome 4-2, as the Reds progressed 6-7 on aggregate.

The family statement added: "There are no words to describe the gratitude we feel to the ordinary people of Liverpool and Ireland who have taken Sean to their hearts in a way that underlines why those places have such a deserved reputation for generosity and solidarity," the statement continued.

"Every day letters and cards arrive from this country, from Ireland and beyond. Every one of them wishes us well and the accompanying offers of support have reminded us, even in our darkest moments, that we are not walking alone.

"Sean remains in a critical condition but he is a fighter and that, coupled with the medical and spiritual support he is receiving, gives us hope in our hearts and we long for the day when our husband, dad and brother returns home to Dunboyne so we can be together as a family once more.

"In the meantime, we would ask that our privacy continues to be respected and when we have news we will share it at the appropriate time. Until then, all we can do is hope and pray for Sean in the knowledge that he is receiving the best possible care."



On behalf of everyone at the FSOA, we would like to extend our thoughts and prayers to Mr Cox and his family at this incredibly difficult time. Football is a sport that brings people together and should never be about life and death. The well wishes and touching gestures from across the world following this attack show how much support there is for Mr Cox and his family. We join them in wishing him a speedy recovery.

NEWS FOR MEMBERS

*We are delighted to announce new Corporate Partner, Reddrum IT. Please also join us in welcoming back Centre Circle as Corporate Partners

*Congratulations to Eileen Williams, who has been appointed as the Safety Officer at Tottenham Hotspur.

*The East Midlands regional meeting will be held at Derby County FC on May 24th. Please contact regional chair Paul Lewis to confirm your attendance.

*The North West regional meeting will be held at Wigan Athletic FC on May 15th. Please contact the Office on info@fsoa.org.uk to confirm your attendance.

Membership warning over failure to fill in match reports

Members are being reminded of the importance of completing match reports after every game, and warned that membership could be removed for clubs who persistently fail to do so.

The sharing of expertise, knowledge, intelligence and best practice is at the core of the FSOA's work to improve the standards of stadium and spectator safety, and match reports provide a vital tool for Safety Officers to best prepare for upcoming matches.

Despite weekly reminder emails, a handful of clubs are still failing to complete match reports, which is a condition of FSOA membership.

John Newsham, FSOA Business Development Manager, said: "Firstly I would like to thank all the members who have posted their match reports again this year. We try to encourage this every week through a reminder to all members via email.

"However, there are still some clubs that are still not submitting their reports. I personally do not understand the logic in this as the sharing of information on these reports is a vital tool for all Safety Officers.

"The sharing of best practice and information to all regarding what happens at each ground on match days must be seen as common sense as we are all seeking the same result (off the pitch) and that is that everyone arrives to the match/event safely and goes home safely.

"I therefore ask those clubs that are NOT submitting reports to please submit them starting next season and to thank those that are.

"I would also like to note that the information submitted should be in detail and not just one or two words. Please take time to write the reports with as much detail as possible.

"Please note that clubs that do not submit their reports going forward from next season run the risk of losing their association membership.

"The situation will be monitored by the FSOA office and clubs that are not supporting the match reports system may have their membership suspended and discussed at future management board meetings."

EDD to sponsor FSOA newsletter

Many thanks to our Corporate Partner, Event Detection Dogs (EDD), who will be sponsoring the monthly FSOA newsletter for 12 months, commencing from the June 2018 edition.

For more information about the FSOA, to learn more about the benefits of being a member or to enquire about advertising in this newsletter for as little as £50 per month (+VAT) visit www.fsoa.org.uk, email info@fsoa.org.uk or call 01254 841771