



Shrimps Trust Independent COVID-19 Supporter Survey

Between 14th August and 16th August 2020, the Shrimps Trust conducted a survey of supporters' views on several matters concerning the return of spectators to the Mazuma Stadium which is currently expected to be from October 2020.

The survey was completely independent and although targeted towards Morecambe FC supporters, it was open to anyone who accessed the link through our social media platforms - Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, in addition to members who received a link via email.

Total responses to the survey were **327**, although not all participants answered all questions. Based on our average attendance last season, our sample is considered to have a margin of error of **5%** (*).

Findings

At the time of conducting the survey **85%** of supporters would feel comfortable returning to the Mazuma Stadium to watch a football match, with **15%** not currently feeling comfortable in doing so.

This question was asked first to gauge what people's initial feelings were, before drilling down into what their expectations were for social distancing measures at the stadium on their return.

When asked whether they felt they needed more information about the conditions that face supporters before returning to the ground, **68%** suggesting that they did need more information but **34%** stating that they did not. We understand the Club are busy working through government and EFL regulations at the moment.

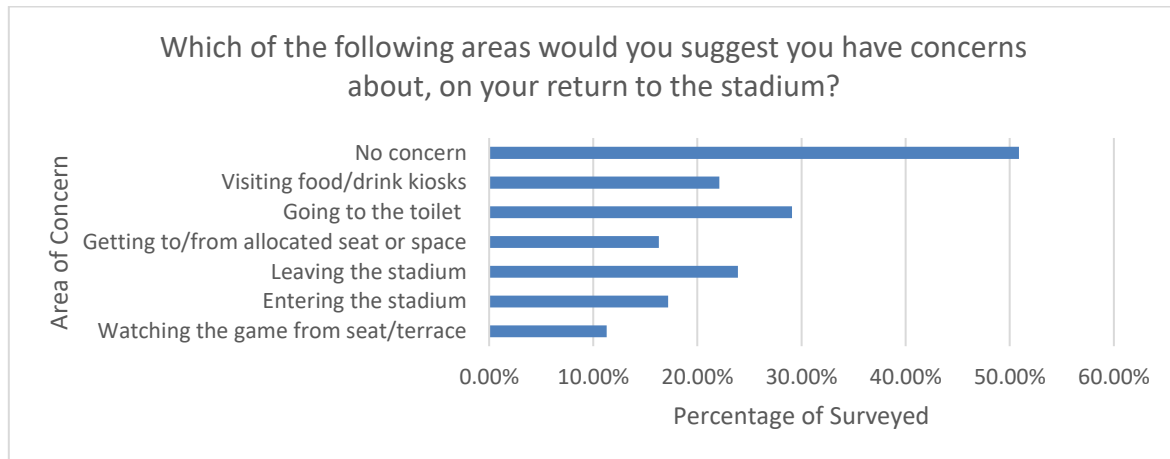
Risks within the stadium

We asked participants where their main concerns were for returning to watching football games.

Most notably, **51% of respondents told us that they had no concerns at all with returning to a football game.**



Of the areas of potential concern suggested, the following percentage of respondents identified the following worries:

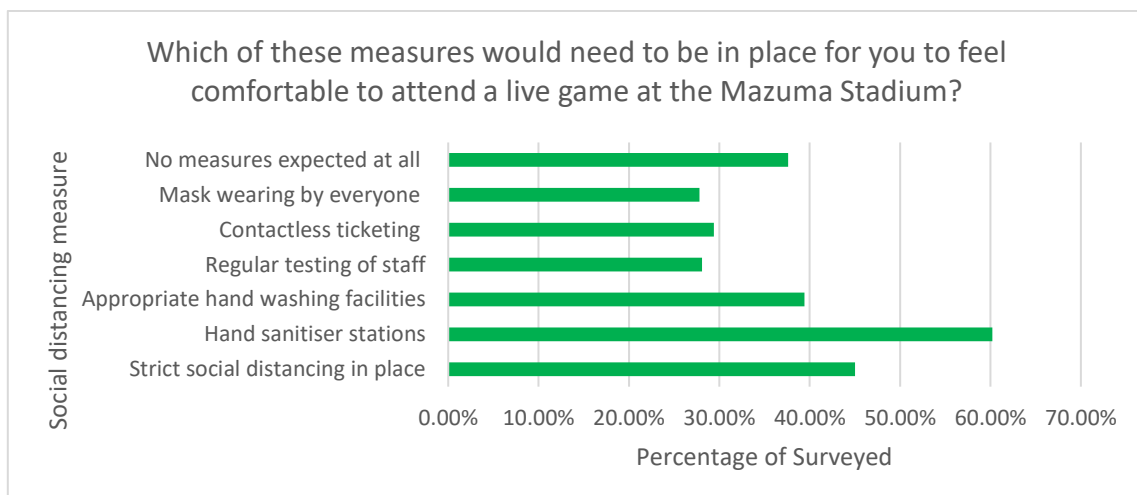


The results suggest that supporters generally have a low level of concern over returning to the stadium. The main areas of concern for those that do have doubts are in using toilet facilities (29%) and visiting food kiosks (22%).

Leaving the stadium (24%) is a greater concern to supporters than entering the stadium (17%), but over three quarters of supporters are not concerned about these at all. The lowest area of concern is actually watching a game from a seat or terrace area (11%).

Social distancing measures

We also explored what social distancing measures fans would expect to see in place at the Mazuma Stadium in order for them to feel comfortable attending matches again.





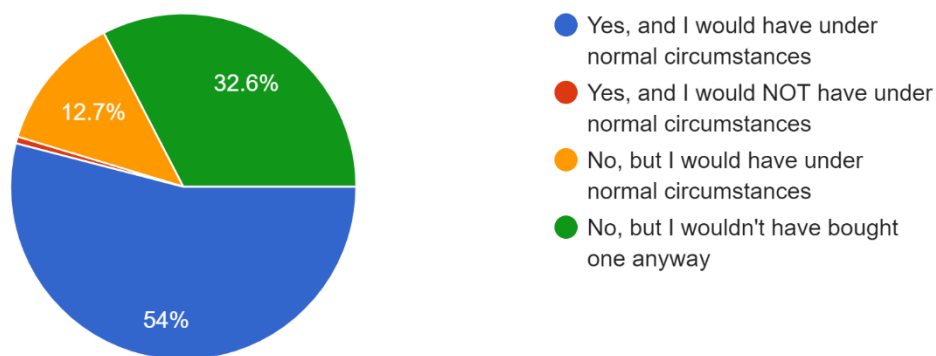
A significant percentage of supporters (**38%**) would be happy to attend the stadium without any form of social distancing. Notwithstanding that, **60%** suggested they would expect hand sanitiser to be available, and **45%** expected there to be social distancing in place.

Only **28%** of those surveyed would expect masks to be worn by everyone in the stadium, while the same percentage expect staff to be tested for Coronavirus on a regular basis (**28%**). Only **39%** of those surveyed expect there to be hand washing facilities - we presume this is only in addition to those provided in toilets!

We missed asking about contactless payments in our survey, but only **29%** suggested that they would expect a contactless ticketing system.

Season tickets

The Club extended its early bird season ticket offering at the end of July to allow people more time to consider committing to the coming season. We asked supporters in our survey if they had bought a season ticket:



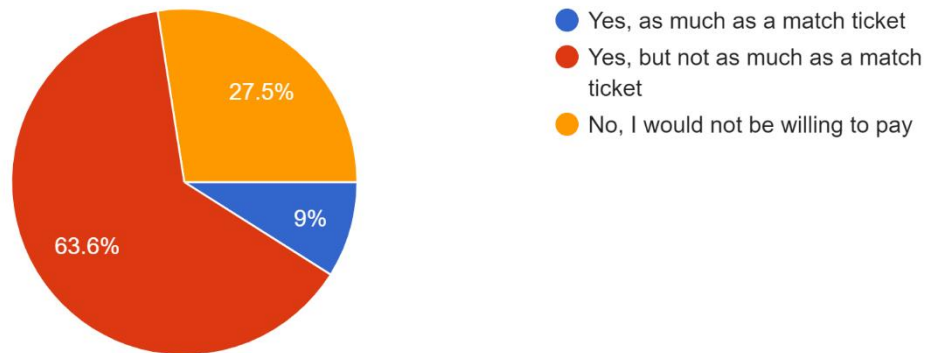
This suggests that most supporters have continued to buy a season ticket when they would have normally (**54%**), but **13%** of supporters have chosen not to when they perhaps would have previously.

Of those sampled, **33%** would not buy a season ticket in any case. Removing these from the equation equates to a sample suggesting that **of our normal season ticket buyers 81% have continued to buy their ticket, but 19% have not.**



Games without fans

As the season begins on 12 September, supporters will not be able to attend the first few games of the season. We surveyed supporters to see how receptive they were to paying for access to stream the games they cannot attend:



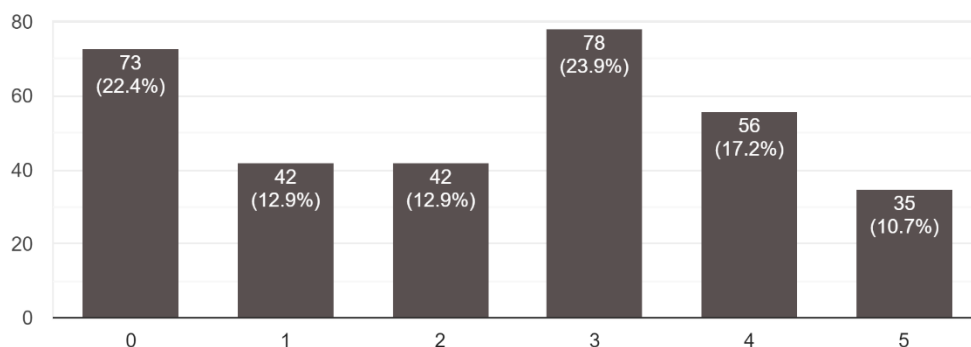
A significant proportion of supporters (**27%**) were not willing to pay for this service, but **73%** would and **9%** of supporters would even pay as much as a match ticket.

Mental Health

At the Shrimps Trust we are conscious that there are other health concerns beyond the risk from the virus, and our survey has attempted to benchmark how the shutdown and closure of sporting events has had an effect on the mental health of supporters.

On a scale of 0-5 (0 being "no impact", 5 being "huge impact"), how has the suspension of live sport impacted your mental health?

326 responses





The responses suggest that 52% of supporters feel there has been a measurable impact, with 11% suggesting that there has been a huge impact on their mental health.

The strength and benefit of our Morecambe football community to supporters' mental health is not underestimated and we are always #OnYourSide when things get tough. We all have mental health and we need to look after it, just as we would our physical health.

With 1 in 4 of us experiencing a mental health problem each year, we all know someone who needs support. If you're worried about the mental health of a mate, visit <https://www.mind.org.uk> for support and guidance. If you are struggling yourself, talking to someone who you trust is an important first step to getting help and support, this could be a friend, family member or professional.



Infoline: 0300 123 3393

Conclusions

On the whole it appears from our survey that most supporters are now comfortable with returning to watch games at football stadia. Concerns over safety at the stadium are relatively low, but social distancing measures appear to be expected or desired by a large percentage of supporters. Most supporters expect further clarification on what measures will be in place from the Club, which we understand will follow soon.

The suspension of live sport has had an effect on a significant proportion of supporters' mental health, and we should remember that sport can often form an important pillar in the lives of many people, including within the Morecambe FC Community.

*Based on a population size of last season's average attendance (2,264) with a confidence level of 95%. As the name implies, the margin of error is a range of values above and below the actual results from a survey. For example, a 60% "yes" response with a margin of error of 5% means that between 55% and 65% of the general population think that the answer is "yes".