

Chelsea v Djurgården 8th May 2025 – Europa Conference League semi final 2nd leg at Stamford Bridge

Chelsea Supporters' Trust (CST) survey responses and key supporter recommendations

During Chelsea v Djurgården on May 8, a huge number of away supporters were able to infiltrate large areas of the home end at Stamford Bridge. Following the match, the CST invited members to submit written, photographic, and video evidence they captured during the fixture.

The following is a summary of the main themes captured.

1. Safety Concerns

Family & child safety repeatedly compromised:

- Numerous parents said they felt forced to leave early or relocate mid-match due to **verbal abuse, intimidation, or threatening behaviour**.
- Children were **frightened**, and several accounts involved children being **surrounded by away fans**, taunted, or forced to move.
- One long-time attendee said: *"This was the first time in 60+ years I've left a game early because I feared for my family's safety."*
- Another concerned parent said: *"Sadly, my son who has a diagnosis of Autism and having carefully structured our visits to Chelsea matches to the point that he was really confident in the match day experience now no longer wants to attend European games in the Westview after his Thursday night experience."*

Fear of escalation:

- Many expressed that **the only reason violence didn't erupt was the one-sided scoreline** (Chelsea FC was winning).
- Repeated references to potential **"tragedy"** or **"disaster"** if tensions had escalated.
- *"If away supporters are going to be facilitated by the greed of this club's American ownership to the detriment of home supporters both vintage and tourists alike then I suggest the club needs to look to reassess their ticketing policies and procedures before a death occurs at a match"*

Overcrowding and movement:

- Away fans **jumped railings/barriers** into designated away sections, filling areas beyond safe capacity.
- Some fans referenced **"Heysel and Hillsborough-like flashpoints"**, citing poor exit controls and congested concourses.



2. Ticketing System Failures

Mass infiltration of away fans into home areas:

- Dozens of Chelsea fans estimated that **hundreds to thousands of Djurgården fans** obtained home tickets.
- Entire **blocks in East Upper, Westview, and East/West Lower** were filled with away fans.
- *"These were apparently the questions stewards were asking Swedish fans last night.... Staff from Chelsea ask the following control questions that you must answer correctly to be allowed in: When was Chelsea founded? Who has scored the most goals of all time? Who faced Chelsea last weekend? Who is the team captain?"*

Failures in allocation and resale:

- Many Djurgården fans **openly admitted buying tickets via third-party resale sites** or through **Chelsea memberships bought in bulk**.
- Examples cited include:
 - *"My neighbour was a Swedish fan who told me he joined as a member just to get these tickets."*
 - *"One guy told me he bought 3 tickets on a resale site for £5 each."*
 - *"When I arrived at the ground around 4.30pm there were loads of Swedes purchasing tickets at the box office area"*

Chelsea FC's ticketing policies blamed:

- Critics highlighted that:
 - The club allowed **members to buy 3 tickets per person**.
 - There was **no loyalty point requirement**.
 - Tickets went on **general sale far too early**.
- These policies made it easy for away fans to exploit the system.
- Ticket prices were increased despite not selling out in previous round v Legia Warsaw
- *"The first question to be answered is how did so many Swedish fans gain access to home areas. This highlights a serious failing in the club's ticketing system."*

3. Stewarding & Policing Inadequacies

Stewards ill-equipped or passive:

- Many fans described stewards as “**kids who shrugged their shoulders,**” “**completely overwhelmed,**” or “**invisible.**”
- Stewards **refused or were unable to intervene** in key moments (e.g. verbal abuse, barrier-jumping, chanting).
- In several cases, **fans themselves removed away supporters** from their sections.
- *“It was evident coming through the Britannia Gate entrance that significant numbers of away fans were being waved through by the stewards. No attempts were made to prevent this.”*
- *“Stewards chatting and joking with them so clearly knew they were Swedish. None challenged as to the team they were supporting”*

Police response slow or indifferent:

- Supporters reported **a lack of police presence** during the game.
- In post-match comments, police reportedly **dismissed safety complaints** (“what do you want us to do?”).
- Riot police arrived **after** problems had escalated but did not take action to separate groups.
- *“Did the police not have any intelligence that 5000 fans flew from Sweden?”*
- *“I was anticipating problems in the stadium since before the game there was trouble in Putney (where I live) where Swedish fans were gathering in local pubs before the game and for a short time Putney Bridge was closed. Surely police intelligence could have been passed on to Security at Stamford Bridge?”*



4. Extent of Away Fan Infiltration

Widespread distribution of Djurgården fans:

- Away fans were present in:
 - East Upper Block 1, 3, 5
 - West Upper/Westview
 - East Lower Family section
 - Hospitality boxes
 - Matthew Harding Lower & Upper
- Some areas were so densely filled that **Chelsea fans felt outnumbered**.
- *"The dug out club behind the away dug out was completely full of Djurgården fans. This isn't unusual, as it was full of Polish Legia fans during the previous cup game. But these fans were openly chanting abusive songs, wearing colours/scarfs and basically taunting the Chelsea fans in the family end"*

Behavioural issues ranged from loud to hostile:

- While a few Djurgården fans were praised as polite, many were:
 - Heavily intoxicated
 - Chanting "F*ck Chelsea"
 - Making aggressive gestures
 - Standing on seats and obstructing views

- *“I met a 14 year old Chelsea fan who had been set upon by away fans, his jumper torn. His father had to fight off a number to get his son to safety”*

Fans noted absence of enforcement:

- Stewards rarely removed them.
- Some groups **openly moved from section to section**, especially toward the away end during the game.



5. Disrupted Matchday Experience

Long time fans and members disillusioned:

- Numerous season ticket holders said they'd **never seen anything like it** in decades.
- *“It felt like a regression to the bad old days of the 70s.”*
- Multiple supporters stated they'd reconsider renewing memberships if this continues.

Celebration of Chelsea's win ruined:

- Fans missed post-match celebration to **exit early for safety**.
- Others couldn't celebrate goals due to fear of retaliation from surrounding away fans.
- Several described the atmosphere as **“hostile,” “tense,”** and **“edgy.”**

6. Suggested Root Causes & Club Accountability

Profit over fan safety:

- Many accused the club of prioritising **ticket revenue over crowd control**, with quotes such as:
 - *"It's all about a quick buck."*
 - *"Last night was a huge failure on CFC's part, and highlighted their desire to make money over pretty much anything else"*
 - *"They knew what would happen and chose to sell anyway."*

Recurring failures (eg Legia Warsaw) ignored:

- The situation mirrored issues seen in previous matches but on a **much larger scale**.
- Fans highlighted a **lack of learning** from previous problems with fan segregation.
- *"I spoke to another steward at the end who said 'his hands were tied' and that they knew the game would be a problem as it was exactly the same at Warsaw but their concerns were not listened to at all."*
- *"The only screening they had to go through was to answer a few simple questions including who is Chelsea's top scorer. This was exactly the same process as the Legia fans went through so I would suggest the Club have not implemented any more stringent ticketing strategies since the Legia game"*

Digital ticketing and monitoring failure:

- Several fans questioned why the club didn't notice:
 - Sudden **surge in Swedish names/phone numbers**.
 - **Groups of new members from Stockholm**.
 - Calls for better **ID-linked digital ticketing for general sale tickets** and better **seat monitoring**.
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7. CST Comments

- This is the most serious breach of stadium security in recent memory, and it significantly undermines any security protocols Chelsea FC put in place ahead of the fixture.
- Club were warned beforehand due to problems at the Legia Warsaw played on 17th April 2025 - why was action not taken?
- The Legia Warsaw match did not sell out - 32,000 in attendance - so why did the club increase ticket prices for the semi-final, ie from £34 to £40 for MHU?
- How many new memberships were approved from the semi-final draw being made and match day and how many new members received tickets for this match only?
- When did the independent review start and when does the club anticipate it will be completed?
- What are the parameters of the review and will any of the CST evidence been part of the review?
- What steps have been taken to ensure this doesn't happen again?

- We would have recommended the club providing compensation to any supporter who has submitted a complaint to the club but we understand that complimentary tickets were provided for the either the AC Milan or Bayer Leverkusen games.

8. CST/Supporter Recommendations

- **Digital ticketing** tied to pre verified membership accounts for General Sale tickets.
- **Ban large-scale resale** of tickets near matchday.
- **Limit member ticket purchases** to one per account during European matches.
- **Membership scheme sales should be paused from draw being made and European games being played or for likely high risk European games.**
- **Stricter segregation at entrance gates and clearer steward authority.**
- **The club should use the match day programme and club media channels to share with Chelsea supporters their learning from this incident and what steps will be taken to ensure it is not repeated**