



VERSION 7 - Last Updated 6.8.23 [20:05]

Chelsea Supporters' Trust Ticketing Survey - June 2023

Introduction

Hello,

We are delighted to publish the results of the Chelsea Supporters' Trust (CST) Ticketing Survey - June 2023.

Ticketing remains one of the most important and problematic issues that Chelsea FC (CFC) supporters face on a weekly basis.

With approximately 95k members vying for 5-6k general admission tickets for Premier League fixtures and an extremely high Season Ticket renewal rate, tickets are more limited than ever before. This has been exacerbated recently as the number of tickets in General Admission areas has unfortunately dropped.

This set of comprehensive results will guide the CST over the next 12 months and help us accurately represent our members and drive our discussions with the club.

The purpose of this survey was to gauge opinion on the current ticket system, processes, and policies. Our aim is not to simply criticise the existing system but rather highlight current issues faced, issues supporters have, and suggest how things can be amended to improve the experience for supporters.

Many of the key findings of this survey have found that some of the frustration towards the ticket system is linked to a lack of insight and information on ticketing. As part of our key recommendations, we have suggested that CFC runs a series of ticketing 'myth-busting' sessions to inform people about the system and answer questions.

As a democratic organisation, all CST members were invited to fill out the survey, with 2551 respondents.

- 27% were Season Ticket Holders (of which, 5% were also Away Season Ticket Holders).
- 51% were Chelsea FC Members.
- 5% classed as having an ambulant or non-ambulant disability.

We received a significant number of comments across the survey. In this report, we have summarised the common themes that came from these submissions. We will also be providing CFC with a separate document containing all the comments verbatim.

We wish to thank everyone who responded to this survey. The Chelsea Supporters' Trust remains committed to pursuing the issue of fair ticketing and we will provide further updates on this issue in due course.

CST members with any feedback are encouraged to contact the Trust: enquiries@chelseasupportertrust.com

Yours faithfully,

The Chelsea Supporters' Trust Board

Table of Contents

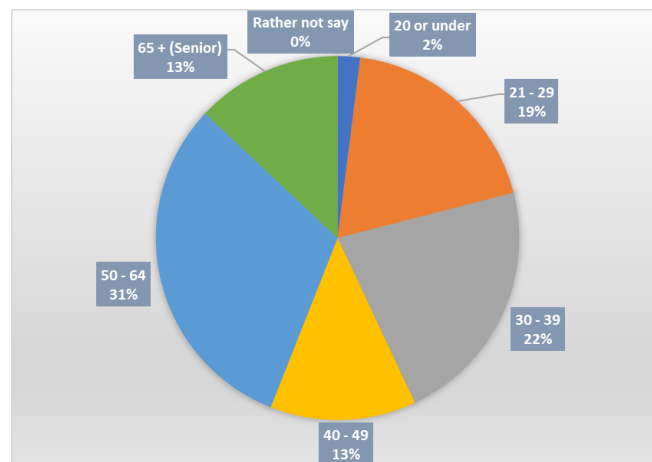
Introduction	1
Table of Contents	2
Key Recommendations & Action Points	3
Respondent Age	4
Season Ticket Holders	5
CFC Members	7
Disabled supporters	10
Virtual Waiting Room	13
Ticket Selection	15
Concession pricing	16
Ticket Exchange	17
Loyalty Points	21
Away Season Tickets	23
Secondary Ticketing	27
Mobile Ticketing	27
Closing Remarks	27

Key Recommendations & Action Points

1. Many of the key findings from this survey have found that some of the frustration towards the ticket system is linked to a lack of insight and information on ticketing. The CST recommends that Chelsea FC runs a series of ticketing 'myth-busting' sessions to inform people about the system and answer questions.
2. Set out a clear and achievable plan on how the club intends to attract and retain the next generation of younger supporters.
3. Significantly improve the number of members who see the membership as good value for money from 26%.
4. Chelsea FC to work with disability forums and groups to make meaningful change to the way that disabled people buy tickets. Club to also reduce the percentage of people who expressed having difficulties with the current access service for tickets.
5. Chelsea FC to review its policy on the ticket exchange and create a system that works better for those purchasing listed tickets.
6. Chelsea FC to consult with supporters before making any significant changes to the way that away tickets are sold. This is especially noteworthy as 70% of respondents said that the club should continue to use a loyalty points system.
7. Chelsea FC to set up a better mechanism for supporters to provide feedback on the VWR and any issues that they encounter.
8. Chelsea FC to address and reduce the percentage of away tickets that are allocated to Club Chelsea.
9. Chelsea FC to become actively more transparent regarding ticketing issues and improve communication between Ticket Office and supporters.
10. Chelsea to significantly improve communication on how they are preventing and pursuing tickets being listed and sold on secondary selling sites.

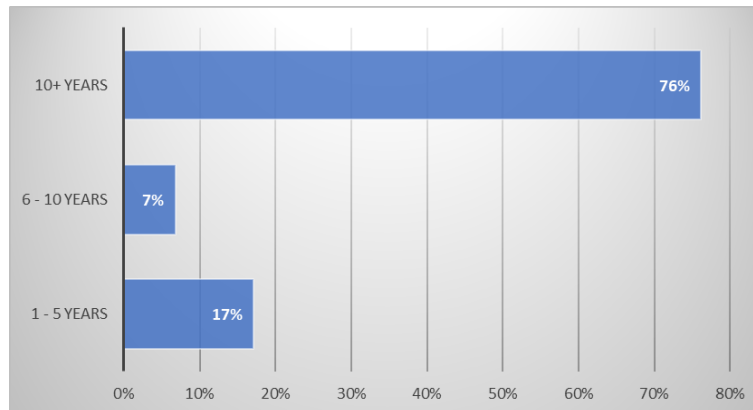
Respondent Age

- 63% of Season Ticket holders are aged over 50.
- 21.5% of all respondents are aged under 30.



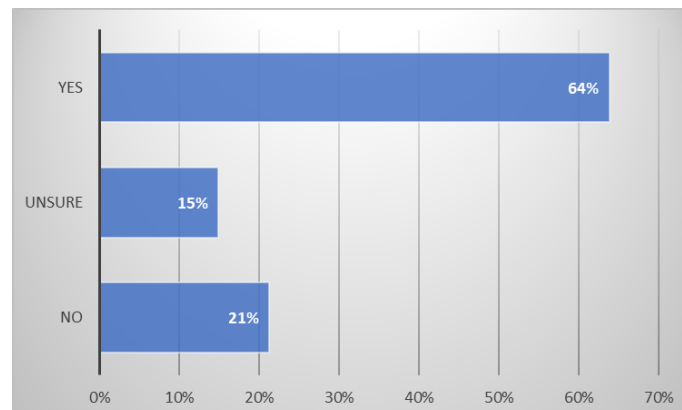
Season Ticket Holders

- 27% of respondents are Season Ticket Holders (STH).
- The majority of STHs have held their season ticket for 10+ years.



Would you consider an 'every game' system, where all cup home games for your seat are automatically purchased for you?

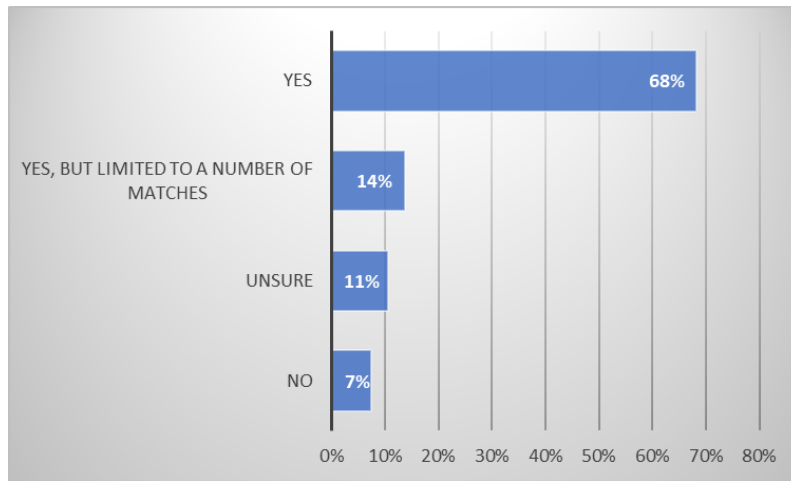
- 64% of STHs would like to have cup games automatically purchased.
- This increased to 75% of those STH under the age of 30



If you wish to give your season ticket to somebody else, should there be the ability to 'upgrade' your seat to a full adult ticket by paying the extra amount?

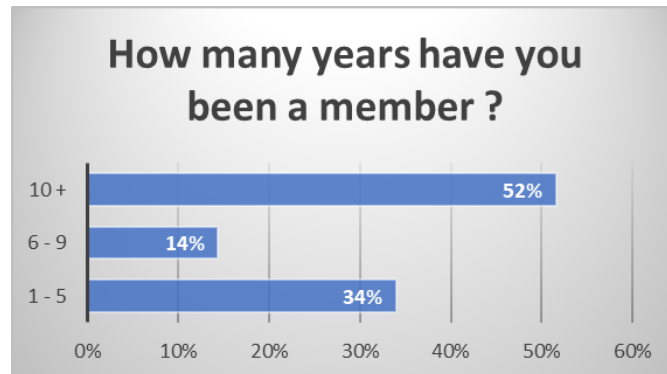
A concession season ticket currently can only be used by someone else who is within the same concession category. E.g. A senior season ticket seat can only be used by somebody else who is over 65.

- 68% of Season Ticket Holders would like the ability to give their ticket to somebody that is not in the same category as themselves by paying the difference.
- 14% said that if implemented, it should be limited to a certain number of matches.



CFC Members

- 27% of respondents are CFC members.
- 66% have been members for 6+ years.



Is the membership still value for money?

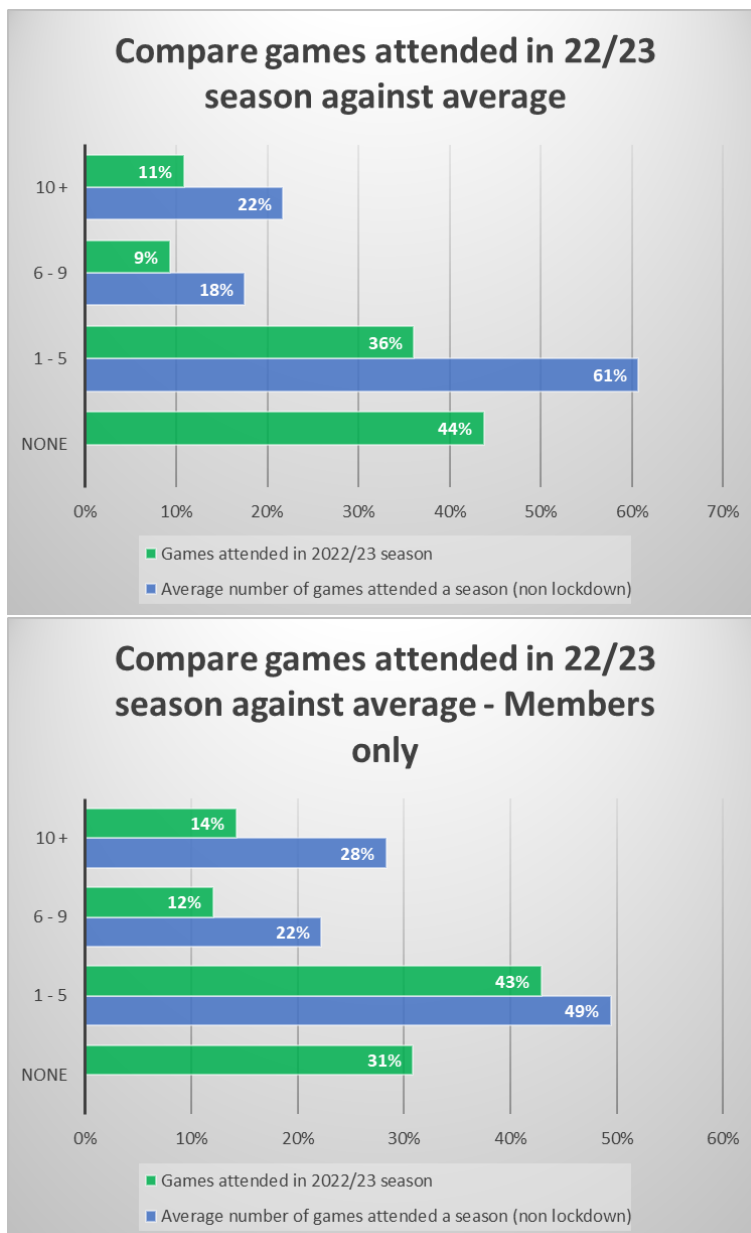
- Only 26% see membership as being value for money.
- This rises to 33% for those under the age of 30.
- Despite these low percentages, only 21% said they were unsure or will not renew their membership.



Average number of games attended a season - Members

We asked for the average number of matches attended at Stamford Bridge over the last 3 seasons that were not impacted by lockdown. We then asked how many games they attended during the 2022/23 season.

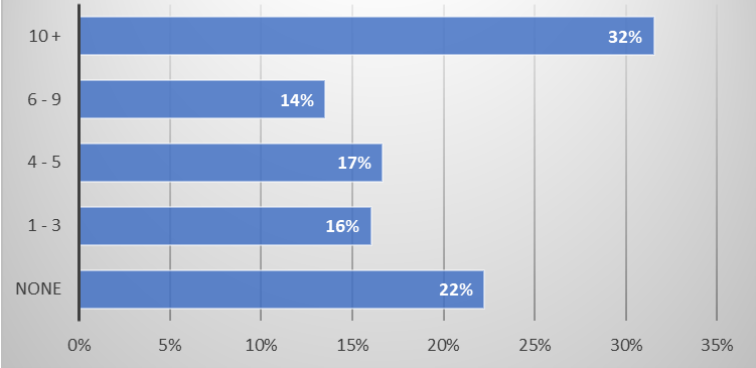
- Before 22/23, 40% of non-season ticket holders attended an average of 6 or more games a season. This figure rose to 50% for those that were members.
- This figure dropped dramatically for 22/23.
- During the 2022/23 season, those that attended 6 or more games halved to 20% and 26% respectively.



How many home matches did you miss during the 22/23 season because you were unable to buy a ticket?

- Most general sale tickets were only available to members before they sold out, the following figures are based on the responses of those that said they were Chelsea FC members.
- 78% said that they had missed games last season because they could not purchase a ticket.
- 32% said they missed over 10 games because they could not purchase a ticket.

How Many Games - Members



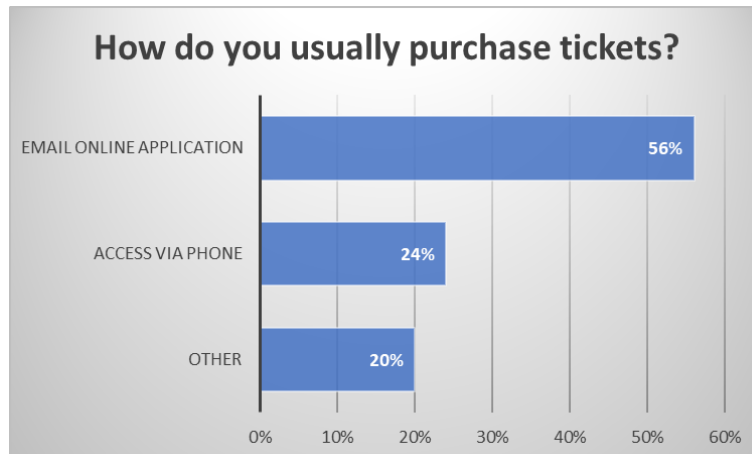
Disabled supporters

Do you class yourself as having a disability, either Ambulant or Non-Ambulant?

- 5% (112) respondents classed themselves as having a disability.
- Of those, 25% have a personal assistant included on their Season Ticket or Membership

How do you usually purchase tickets?

- 56% purchase tickets online, 24% Access via the phone.
- Of those that chose 'other', tickets were mostly either a season ticket holder or had a friend or family purchase for them.



Access Service

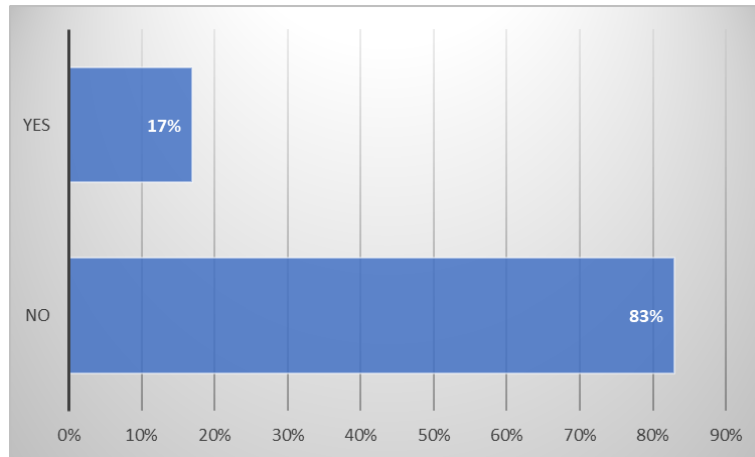
- 25% of respondents expressed difficulties with the current Access service.

Summary of Access Service comments

22 respondents left a comment, of which 41% were STHs and 41% were CFC Members.

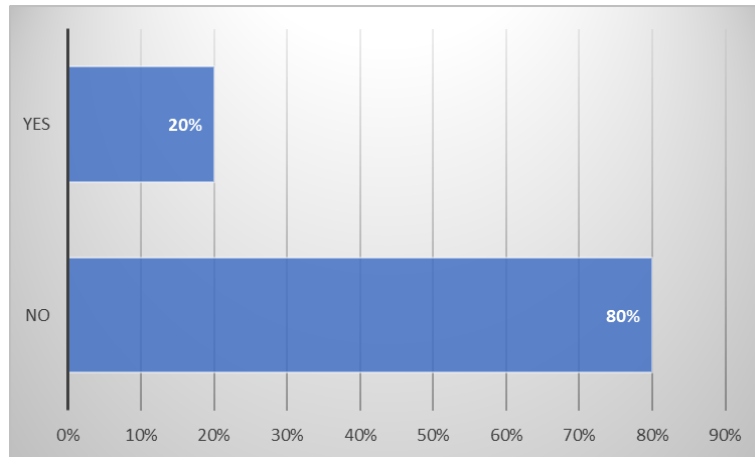
- Contacting access for tickets via phone or email is challenging. Access line can be a significant waiting time to answer, to then find tickets have sold out.
- When emailing into access (specifically for tickets) the return outcome also too long.
- Email responses may have sold out, however sales over the phone are still happening.
- Those with hearing impairments who have contacted the club via email, get return calls, that they cannot hear, they should rather have an email response.
- There seems to be confusion with the access line getting mixed up with other supporters, there is definitely a specific access number for disabled supporters, but it seems this is not as well know. Contact points for access should be highlighted better.

Have you or your PA ever forgone Access to use the VWR in the better hope of purchasing tickets?



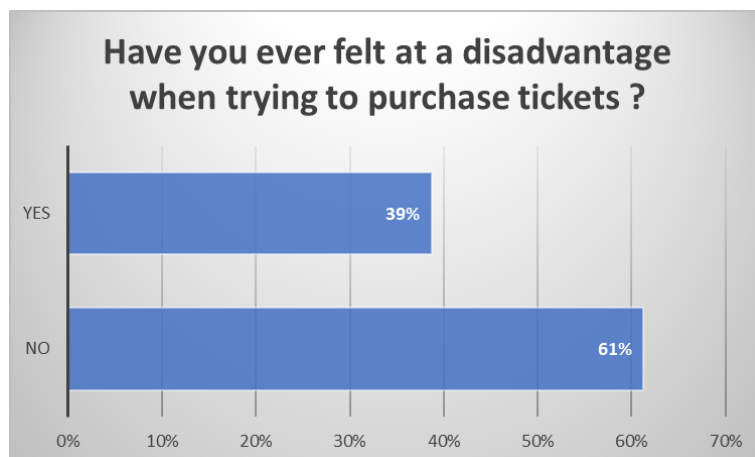
If all purchasing and issuing of tickets became completely digital, would this be detrimental to you attending games?

- 20% of respondents say it would be detrimental if tickets were only issued digitally.



As a disabled Chelsea supporter, have you ever felt at a disadvantage, compared to non-disabled supporters when trying to purchase tickets?

- 39% of disabled supporters felt they were disadvantaged when trying to purchase tickets.



Summary of disadvantaged comments

28 respondents left a comment, of which 39% were STHs and 39% were CFC Members.

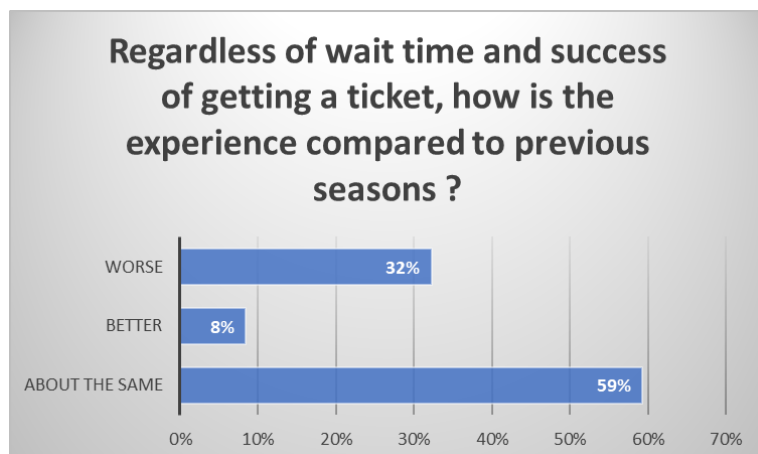
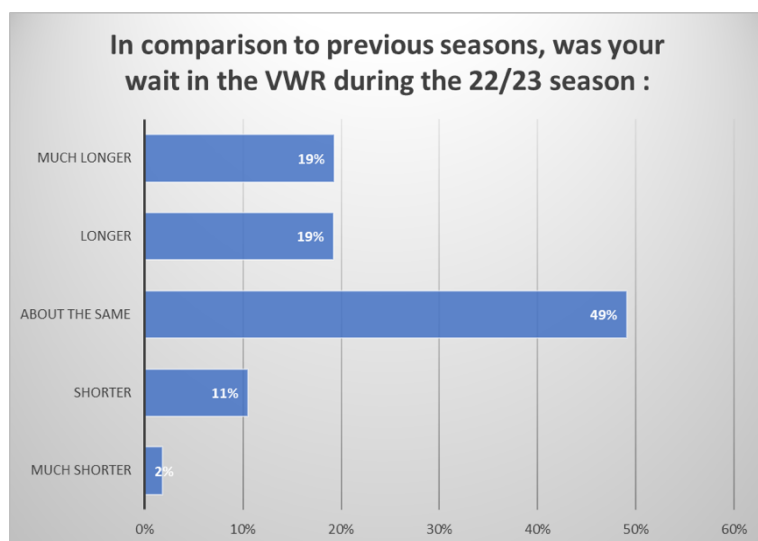
- Issues surrounding tickets and suitable seating choices for home and away matches.
- No system to see seats for disabled supporters, facilities, and access.
- The limitations on (away) tickets impacts ambulant supporters more often, these tickets are taken from the main allocation, the club do not specify how many of these tickets are available, whereas wheelchair ticket numbers are always available. Limitations on where a supporter is allocated a seat.
- Cost of tickets.
- Concessions only apply in the East stand. if you want or can only get a seat in any another stand you pay full price. There is no reduction for tickets.
- Feelings of not being understood, little support, and devalued.

Virtual Waiting Room

VWR Experience

In 2022, Chelsea FC invested in its ticketing website.

- For the purposes of this question, we have removed the respondents who answered that they have never entered the VWR.
- In comparison to previous seasons, 48% indicated that it was taking longer than previous seasons, while 13% said they experienced a shorter wait.
- Regardless of wait time or success in getting a ticket, 8% felt they had a better experience while, 32% said it was a worse experience compared to previous seasons.



Summary of VWR comments

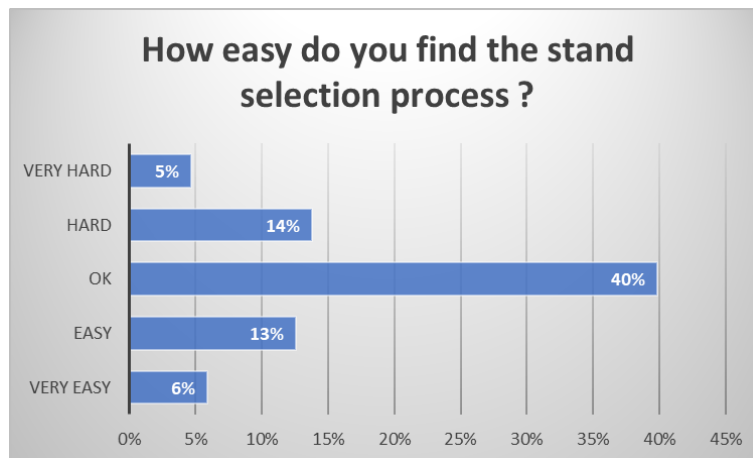
528 respondents left a comment, of which 34% were STHs and 58% were CFC Members

- There is general huge dissatisfaction with the VWR. Much of this is due to time spend in the VWR and then finding that tickets have sold out.
- Many comments indicated that supporters would like to see a queueing system, so they know where their position is in the VWR.

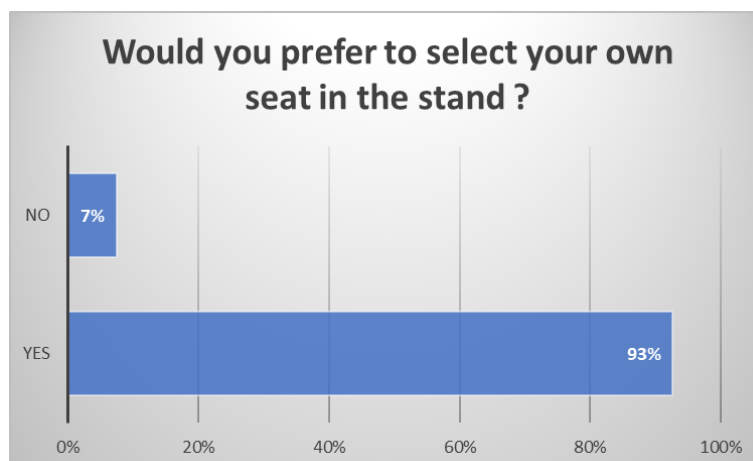
- Many indicate their belief that there are workarounds or 'hacks' which allows the same individuals to always get tickets.
- There is a frustration with so many tickets becoming available through touts/secondary sales sites or social media immediately after the tickets have gone on sale. The point above, as well as the use of 'bots', are cited as reasons.
- There is frustration in trying to get tickets together.
- Many find it frustrating, insensitive, and exploitative that, when ordinary tickets have sold out, they are then offered expensive hospitality/Westview tickets.
- Many suffer from system crashes which means they go back into the waiting room and often miss out on the tickets they have reserved.
- The system is not mobile friendly.
- Several people indicated the start time for tickets should be moved back to 7am. However, it is worth pointing out that previous surveys have indicated that a majority of supporters are satisfied with a 10am start.
- An interesting idea was suggested by one respondent. They suggested "Each member should have a ~one off' log in code. Once used it cannot be used twice. This would prevent multiple screens open to buy tickets."

Ticket Selection

For those that it was applicable, the stand selection process was evenly split between those that found it easy or hard.

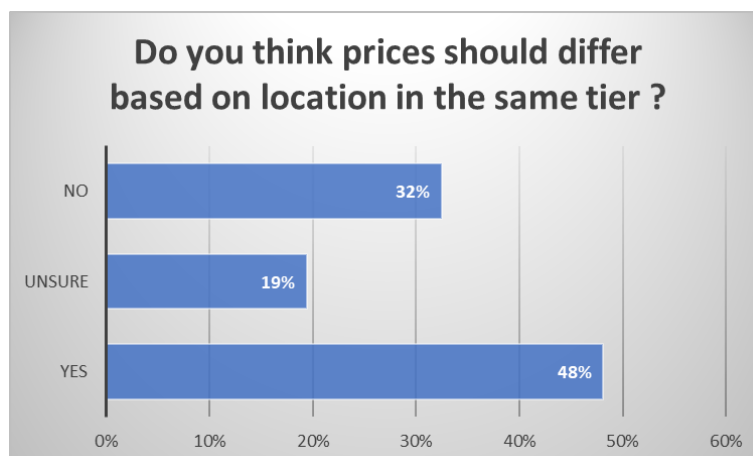


For those that it was applicable, 93% would prefer to select their own seat when purchasing a ticket.



Currently, all seats in a particular tier are priced the same. E.g, seats at the end of the East Stand Upper are priced the same as a seat on the halfway line.

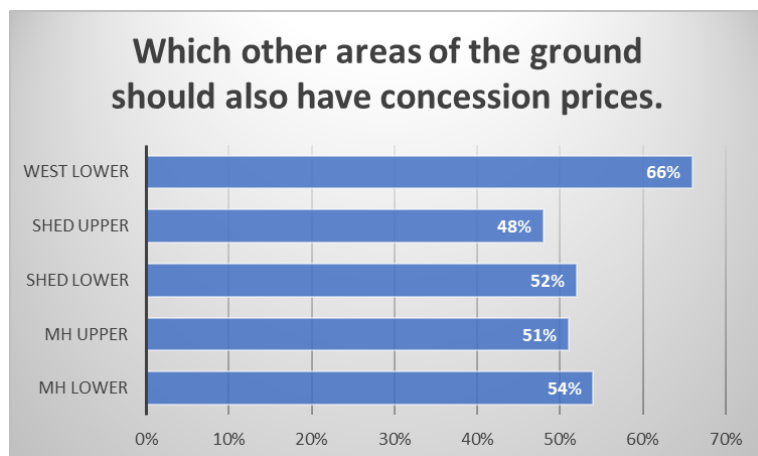
- 48% of those that responded think prices should differ based on location in the same tier?



Concession pricing

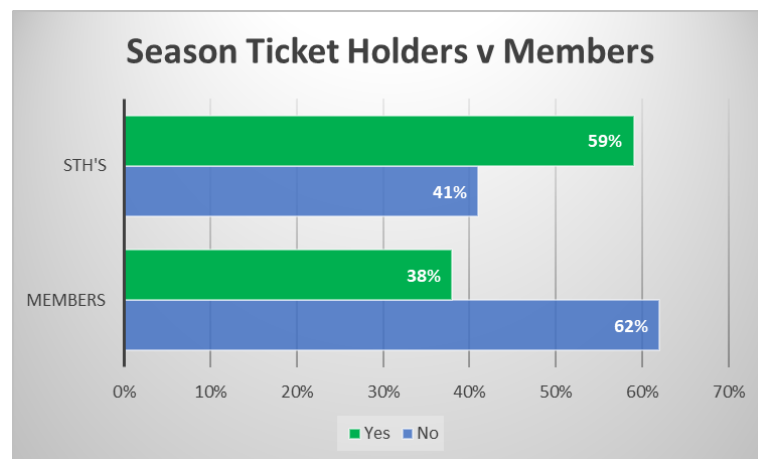
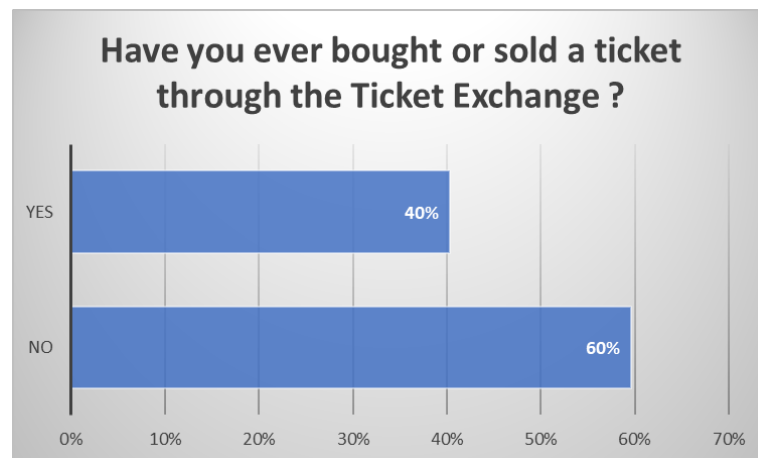
Currently concession prices for general match tickets are limited to the East Stand upper and lower tiers.

- At least half of supporters would like to see concession pricing available in all other parts of the ground.

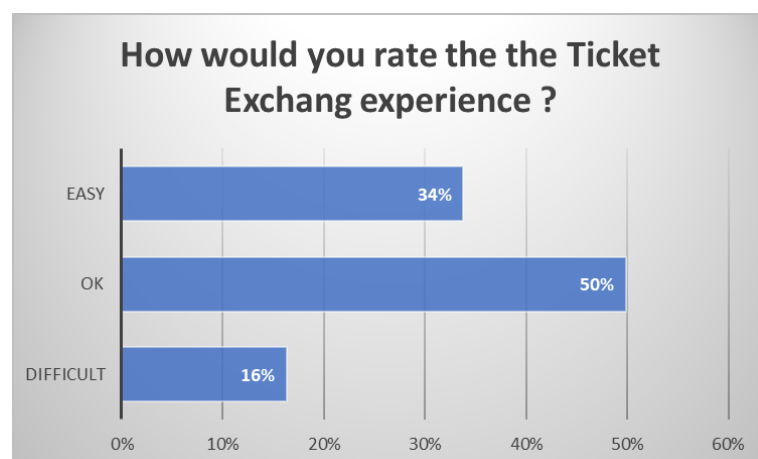


Ticket Exchange

- 40% of respondents have used the ticket exchange.
- 58% of season ticket holders have used to it compared to 38% of members.



- The majority find the experience of using the Ticket Exchange either OK or easy to use.



Summary of Ticket Exchange comments

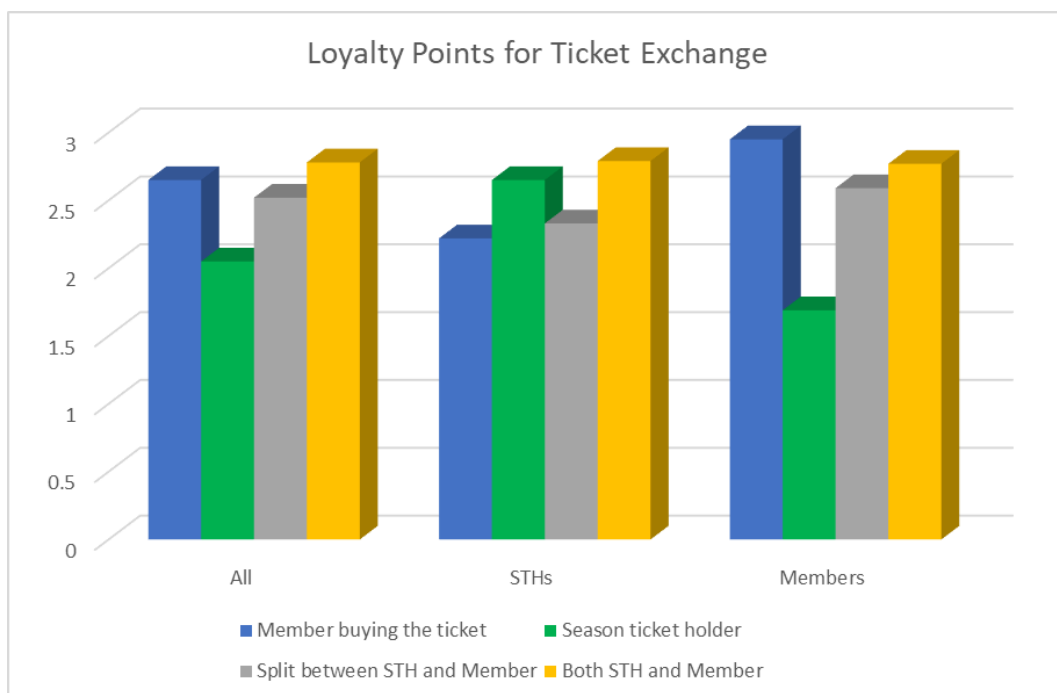
250 respondents left a comment, of which 42% were STHs and 56% were CFC Members.

- The biggest issue raised is the timing of blocks showing as having seats, but they are gone before you enter.
- Many felt that the way the older system displayed a list of seats was better than the seat layout method.
- Some wanted the ability to filter the categories so only show those seats for which they qualify.
- They wanted the ability to buy tickets in a different category to their membership and pay the difference.
- Wanted the ability to list more than one ticket at a time, rather than doing the process for each ticket separately.
- Some suggested that they wanted the ability to nominate a member to buy their ticket.
- Would like to see a system being able to alert you when tickets are available.
- Some mentioned that WestView members should be able to participate in the ticket exchange.
- Some said that the purchaser should get the loyalty points. However, this is better covered in the Ticket Exchange Loyalty Point section below.
- Some suggested that payments to the STH should be quicker.

Ticket Exchange Loyalty Points

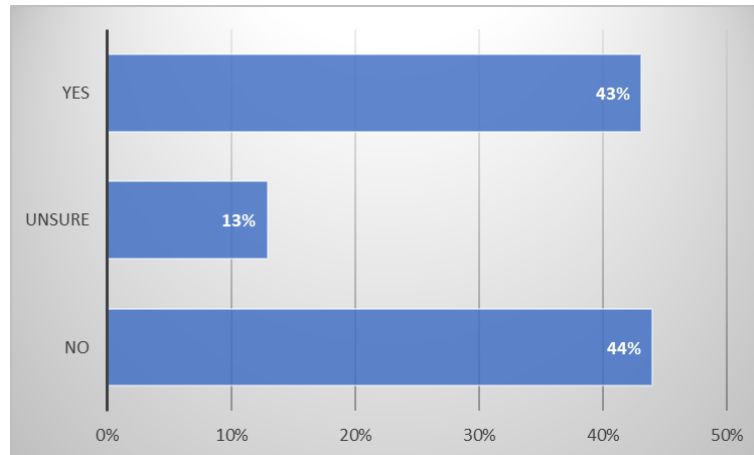
Currently, members buying a ticket via the Ticket Exchange do not receive loyalty points as these have already been allocated to the Season Ticket Holder. This survey asked respondents to rank their preference in order of who should get the loyalty points. (1 being the highest, 4 being the lowest). This created a ranking score with 1st preference getting 4 points, down to last preference receiving 1 point.

- By the nature of the ranking system, average scores are likely to be close.
- The preference for all respondents is for both seller and purchaser to get points. This is probably to be expected as both parties will gain.
- The next popular choice is for the purchaser to get the points.
- However, unsurprisingly, the most popular choice for season ticket holders is for the seller to get the points, as is the case now, and the most popular choice for members is for the purchaser to get the points.



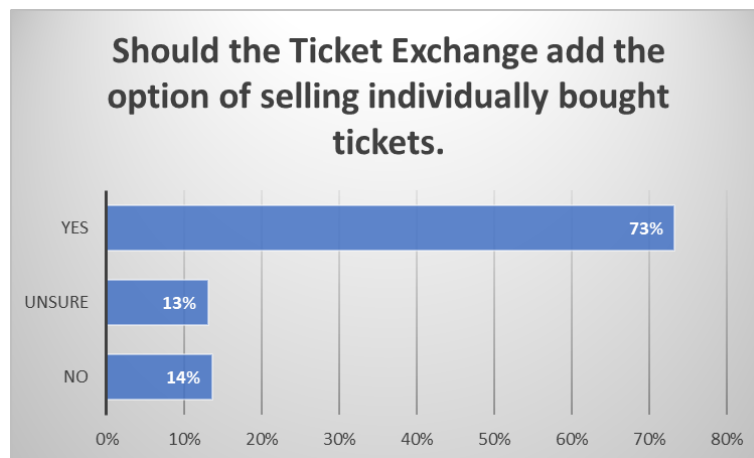
Should there be a limit to how many games a Home Season Ticket Holder should be able to sell their seats on the ticket exchange?

- The answers were split down the middle.
- There was a slight variance between the answers of Members vs STHs, with 47% of members saying there should be a limit compared to 37% of STHs.



We asked if the Ticket Exchange should add the option of selling individually bought tickets (E.g. Cup games, or general tickets bought by members)?

- 73% of respondents would like to see this facility introduced.

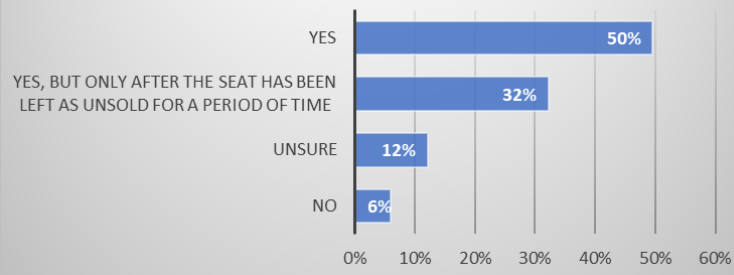


Currently, a concession season ticket holders listed ticket can only be purchased by a member who is in the same concession category. E.g. a senior season ticket seat can only be purchased by a Senior member.

We asked if seats being sold via Ticket Exchange should have the ability to be changed to match the member buying the ticket.

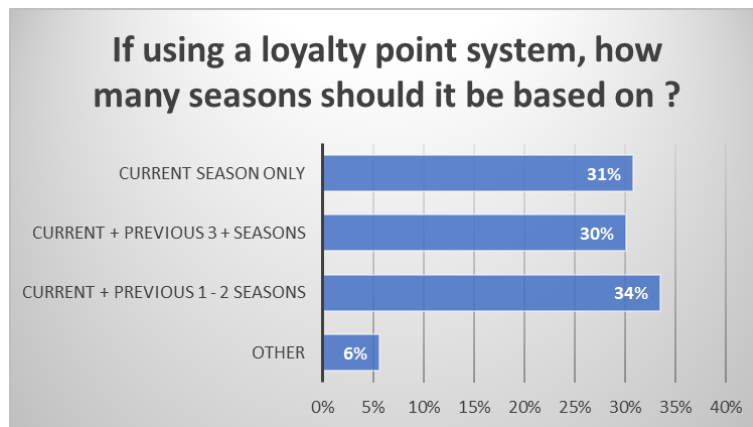
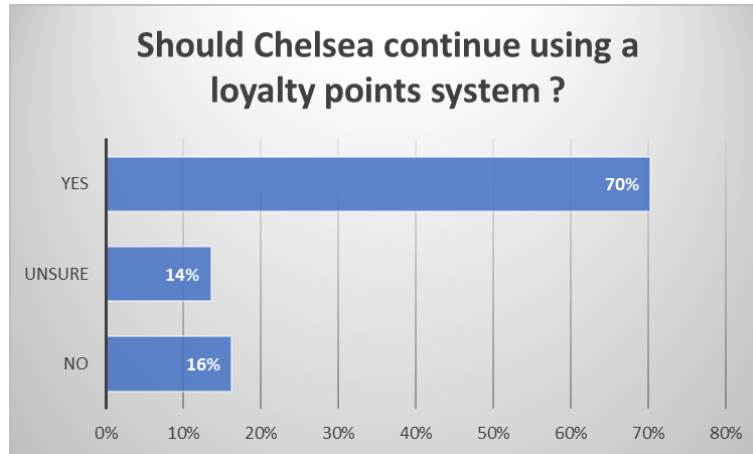
- 50% of respondents would like to see the ability to change the category
- A further 32% said yes, but only if it had been left unsold for a period of time.
- It was slightly more popular with season ticket holders than members.

Should the ticket exchange have the ability to be changed the category of the ticket ?



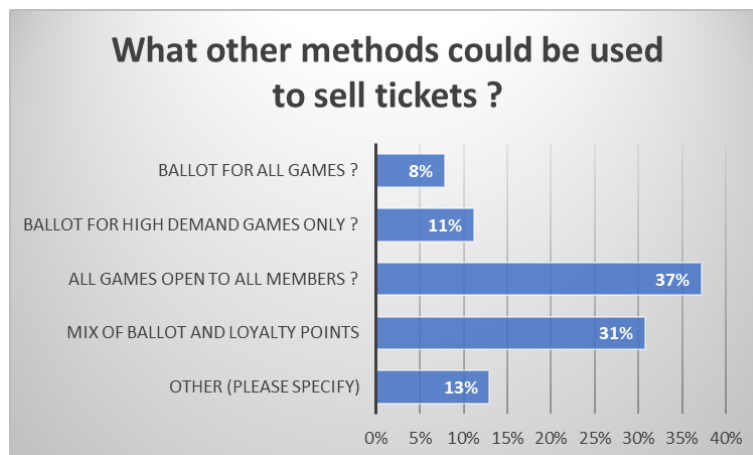
Loyalty Points

- 70% of respondents says the club should continue to use a loyalty points system.
- Respondents were split evenly of how many years the points should be based on.
- Of those that suggested alternative lengths of time, a few said it should be from when the STH or membership started.



If not using loyalty points, we offered a number of possible alternatives

- Balloting was not a popular choice. The significant majority of the 'other' respondents indicated their opposition to ballots in their comments.



Summary of Other Ticket Selling Methods comments

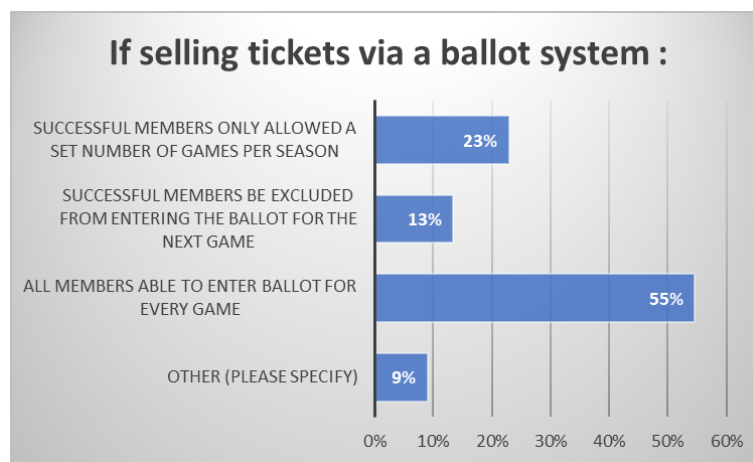
271 respondents left a comment, of which 52% were STHs and 43% were CFC Members

- Most used this opportunity to say they were adamant that they would not wish to have balloting.
- They also wished to keep using Loyalty Points and were happy with the way tickets were currently allocated.

Balloting

We asked that if selling tickets via a ballot system, how should that operate?

- Again, large numbers of respondents raised their objections to a ballot system in the comments.
- If a ballot **was** used, the most popular option was that all members should be able to enter a ballot for every game.



Summary of Ballot comments

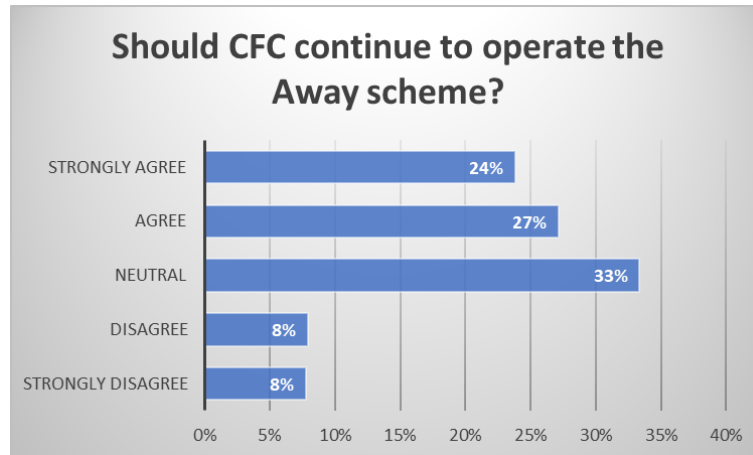
189 respondents left a comment, of which 45% were STHs and 49% were CFC Members

- The majority of comments indicated that they objected to a ballot system, and that they would not be happy with any of the options listed in the question.

Away Season Tickets

The Away Scheme currently occupies up to 850 away tickets.

- 5% of respondents were away season ticket holders.
- Despite the low number of ASTHs, over 50% of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that CFC should continue to operate the away scheme.



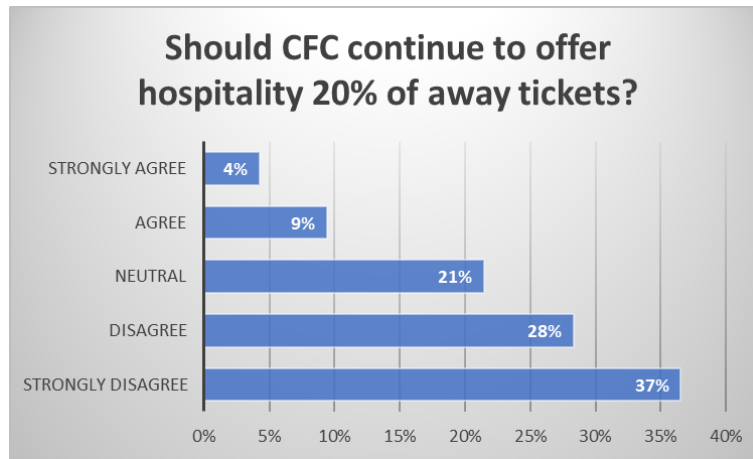
Summary of Away Season Ticket Comments

222 respondents left a comment, of which 58% were STHs and 37% were CFC Members. 4% were Away Season Ticket Holders.

- Most of people's issue is the low number of tickets available.
- Many write that the AST is seen as a closed shop. However, there is an appreciation that those fans on the scheme are the most loyal and passionate supporters. There is also an appreciation that the current situation helps maintain the atmosphere at away grounds.
- There is wide frustration that these tickets are then sold on via social media or passed onto friends. The scheme should be monitored and only the AST holder should be able to use their allocation. Otherwise, they should be removed from the scheme.
- Many said that the Away Season Ticket process should be more transparent, so people understand how it is operated.

Hospitality receives 20% of all away tickets. Should CFC continue to offer hospitality 20% of away tickets?

- Only 13% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Club Chelsea should be allocated 20% of away tickets.



Summary of Hospitality away ticket allocation comments

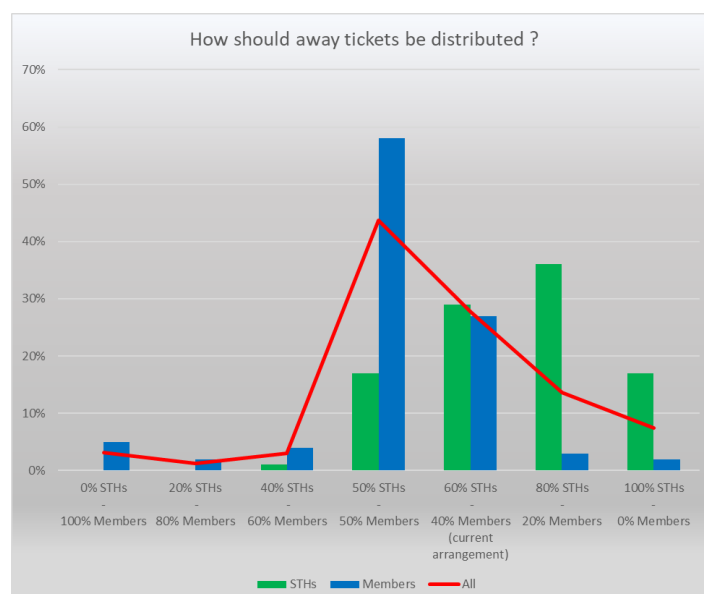
273 respondents left a comment, of which 60% were STHs and 35% were CFC Members, 4% were Away Season Ticket holders

- Many are frustrated that hospitality get any access to away tickets as they feel that corporate or hospitality should just relate to the home games.
- As such, there is a big feeling that the allocation should be less than 20%.
- However, many argued that some of these supporters are just as loyal and long-term fans, who just happen to have season tickets in those areas.
- There is the feeling that their access to away tickets should be the same as other season ticket holders and members, and that they should not have access to their own allocation but instead, should be combined with ordinary STHs and members.
- There is a frustration that these tickets are getting sold on.

How should remaining away tickets be distributed?

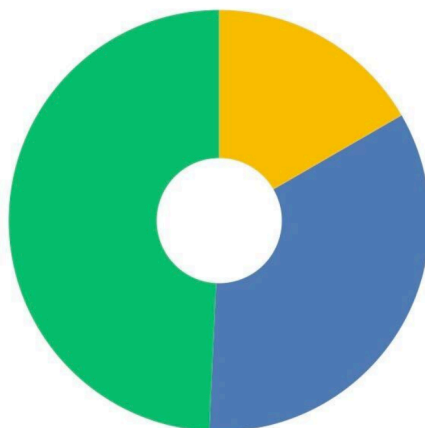
The sale of remaining away tickets are split 60% for Home Season Ticket Holders (STHs) and 40% members.

- The majority of respondents selected a 50-50 split between season ticket holders and members.
- However, unsurprisingly, season ticket holders wanted a larger share, with an 80-20 being the most popular.
- 74% of respondents were in favour of being able to list away tickets on Ticket Exchange if somebody is unable to make the game.
- 20% of respondents have used Facebook/other social media groups for obtaining away tickets.



For the sale of remaining away tickets, would you be in favour of tickets being sold via a ballot system?

Season Ticket Holders responses

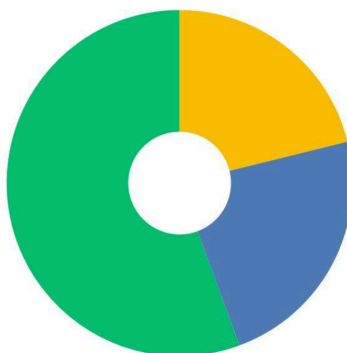


Skipped: 22 Answered: 672

Yes	49%	331
No	34%	229
Unsure	17%	112

Members Responses

42. For the sale of remaining away tickets, would you be in favour of tickets being sold via a ballot system ?



Skipped: 186 Answered: 1102

Yes	56%	613
No	23%	256
Unsure	21%	233

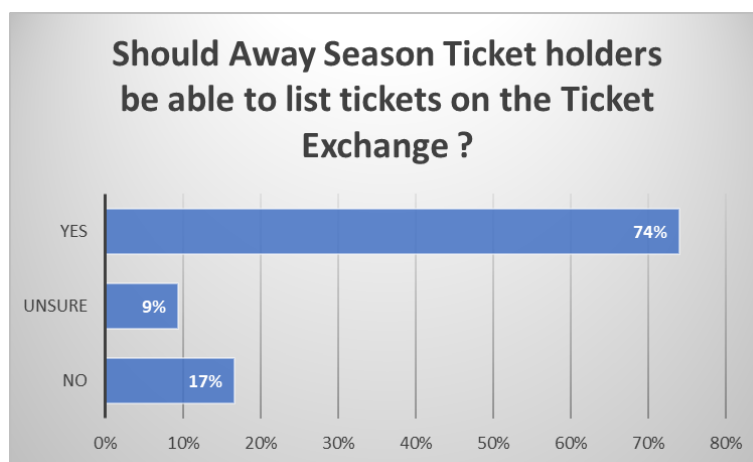
Summary of Away Ticket ballot comments

153 respondents left a comment, of which 54% were STHs and 44% were CFC Members, 9% were Away Season Ticket Holders.

- Large number would not want a ballot system as it goes against loyalty.
- A ballot would also stop groups/friends attending together.
- However, a number argue that it is difficult enough getting an away ticket and a ballot would at least give them a chance.

Should Away Season Ticket holders be able to list tickets on the Ticket Exchange?

- 74% of respondents would like the ability of Away season ticket holders being able to list their ticket on the Ticket Exchange.
- However, only 56% of Away Season Ticket holders said they would like that ability.



Secondary Ticketing

- 47% of respondents have seen an increase of tickets being made available on secondary/selling sites.
- 20% of respondents have purchased tickets from Facebook/social media sites.
- 14% of respondents have purchased tickets from a secondary site.
- Of those that have purchased tickets from a secondary site, 22% have been scammed.
- 65% of respondents are aware of the club's published advice regarding secondary sites.

Summary of What do you feel Chelsea could do to help stop secondary sales comments

827 respondents left a comment, of which 36% were STHs and 54% were CFC Members

- This section produced the most comments of all the questions.
- Many think that Chelsea should do more to monitor the secondary sales sites to identify where those tickets are coming from. One action would be to randomly buy those tickets.
- Those members/STHs who have sold their tickets to the secondary sites should have stiff sanctions or bans given.
- Publicising these actions will then have a deterrent factor.
- Many think that Chelsea should do more about the touts openly selling tickets on the streets outside Stamford Bridge.
- Tickets should be linked to IDs.
- Tickets should be loaded onto a membership card or season ticket, possibly using mobile devices. This will stop the ability of selling on a paper copy or pdf.
- Better checks should be made on the ticketing site to stop 'bots' and multiple memberships scraping off tickets.
- Some see the Loyalty Points system adding to the problem because members will just buy some tickets to get the LPs without intending to go. LPs to only apply when that member actually attends the game. Linking the ticket to the membership card or ID would help in this.

Mobile Ticketing

- 86% of respondents would like the ability for tickets to be downloadable onto their mobile device.
- 79% of respondents would like to see tickets for extra games such as cup games be assigned directly to their Season Ticket or Membership card.

Closing Remarks

We had a large number of additional comments and feedback. All comments have been read. Many highlight the same issues, and some are specific to a particular person. Many also reiterate what has already been said in earlier questions.

Therefore, we have not produced a summary here, but have passed all comments to the club verbatim.

The Chelsea Supporters' Trust would like to thank all the members who have taken time to respond to this survey.