



ARSENAL SUPPORTERS' TRUST

Safe Standing Survey of Arsenal Supporters  
February/March 2017

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# 1. Executive Summary

## Aim

During February and March 2017 the Arsenal Supporters' Trust (AST) organised a survey of Arsenal fans on the issue of Safe Standing at football. This follows an announcement by the Premier League that they were looking into the issue and planned to conduct further research including asking for views from Supporters. The survey was conducted on the survey monkey platform and distributed on-line and through membership lists of Arsenal fans.

The survey received 7,239 responses making it the largest ever specific survey on this subject. We were assisted in its circulation by REDaction, AISA and BSM.

The following report sets out the results and written comments provided by Arsenal fans. The full results and written responses are being provided to both Arsenal Football Club and the Premier League for their consideration and the AST will remain engaged in the review that is taking place.

## Principal findings

### *Overall*

- More than 96% of fans are in favour of safe standing at the football grounds.
- Over three quarters (76%) of Arsenal fans surveyed said that they would want to utilise safe standing if it was available.
- 85% of fans who said they would not use safe standing themselves were still in favour of there being safe standing areas in the ground.
- Just over 2.5% of fans objected to any form of safe safe standing.

### *By demographic*

Any change to the match day experience must be viewed in terms of how it may affect the inclusivity and diversity for which Arsenal Football club is known. We therefore asked respondents to supply some demographic information, so we could look at the results in this context.

- Every demographic group supported the introduction of safe standing. Even among the over 60s, the group with the highest proportion of objectors, 85% supported the use of safe standing (although only 31% said they would actually use it themselves).
- 91% of women were in favour of safe standing.
- Members from a BME background were more likely to be in favour of safe standing than their white counterparts.
- Over 95% of LGBT members were in favour of safe standing.
- Just over 1% of under 35s objected to safe standing.

### *Arsenal's role in safe standing*

- 92% of respondents wanted Arsenal to champion the use of safe standing. 3% disagreed.
- 94% suggested that Arsenal should offer trials of safe standing. 3% disagreed.
- 85% of fans requested a formal consultation with all season ticket holders and Supporters' Association members about the introduction of safe standing. 6% disagreed.

### *Reasons given*

- 69% of supporters who attend fewer than 10 games per season said that they would be more likely to attend games if they had the option of safe standing.
- The principal reason given for supporting safe standing was an improvement in the stadium atmosphere. 47% of offered comments mentioned atmosphere as a key motivator.

## 2. Overall view of safe standing

The survey of Arsenal fans, carried out by the Supporters' Trust, asked the following question:

*Which most closely describes your opinion about standing at football matches?*

They were given four options by which to respond to the question:

- I would like to be able to watch the match from a safe standing area. (Marked here as WANT TO USE)
- Although I don't want to stand, I would like there to be a designated area for those who want to stand. (Marked here as SUPPORT)
- Standing should not be brought back in any form. (Marked here as DO NOT WANT)
- No opinion.

We can see an overwhelming majority (over 96%), in support of safe standing at the Emirates. 76% would actively use the facility if it were available.

● DO NOT WANT    ● SUPPORT    ● WANT TO USE    ● NO OPINION

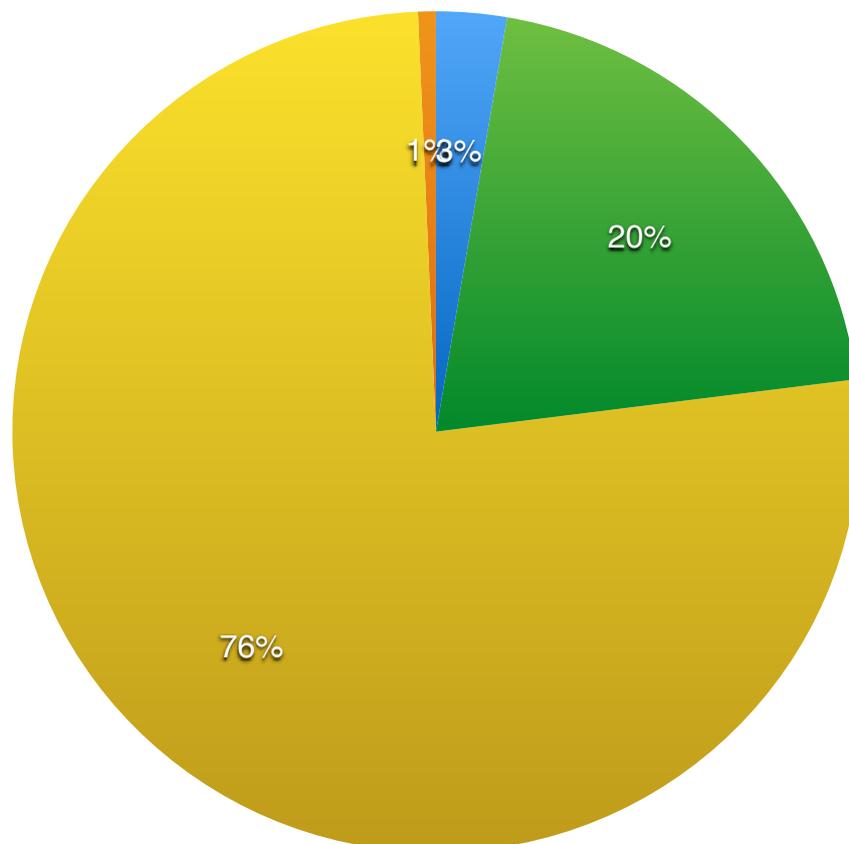


Table 1: Proportion of fans who express each opinion about safe standing

### 3. View of safe standing by demographic

Respondents were asked to provide a variety of demographic and other information, to allow for a better understanding of how these factors affect opinion on safe standing.

#### 3a. Age

- Every age group was in favour of safe standing by a large margin, ranging from 85-99%.
- 98.8% of under 35s were in favour of safe standing.
- Only 31% of over 60s said that they would use safe standing. However, a total of 85% were in favour of the facility.

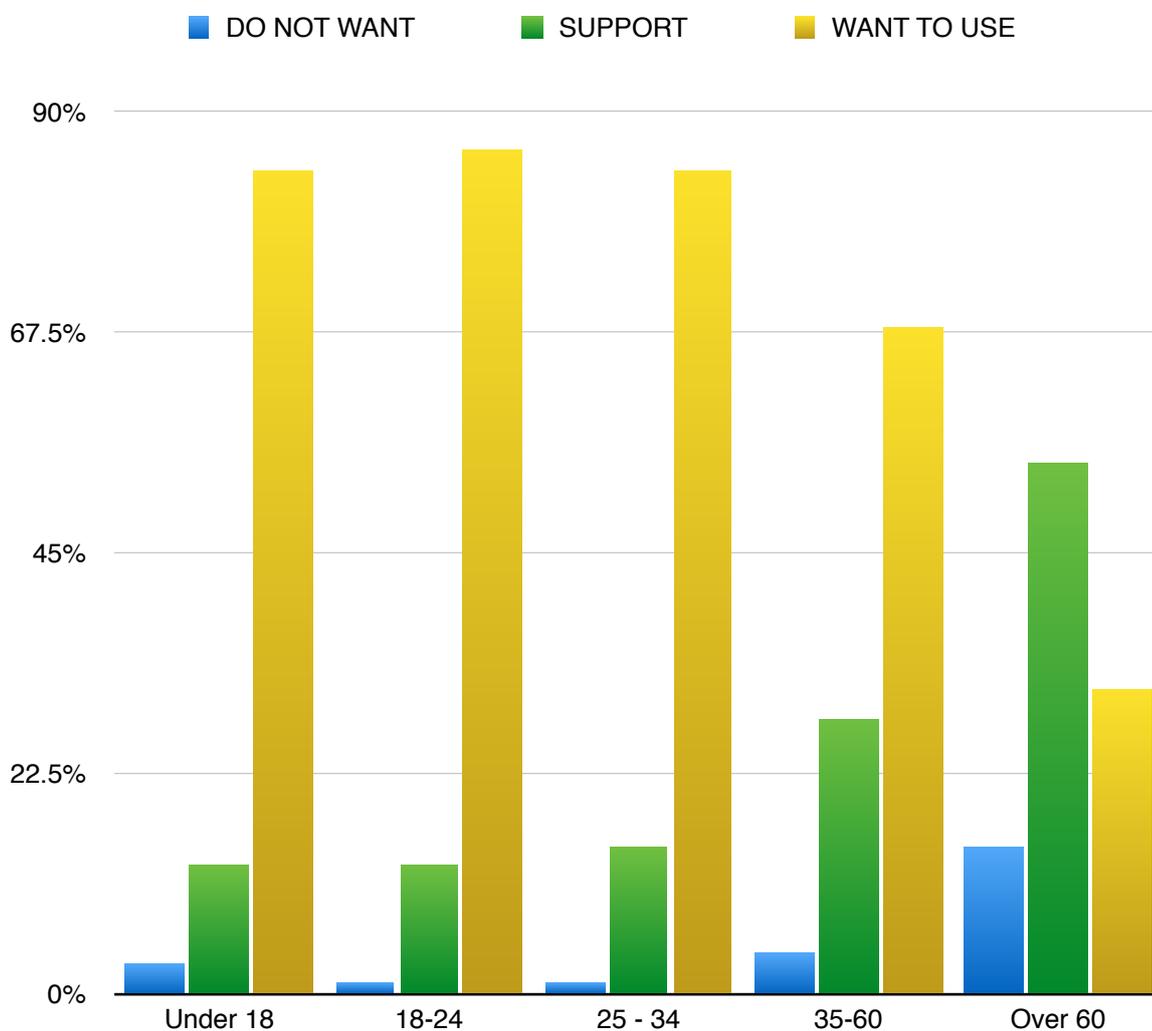


Table 2: Opinion of safe standing by age

One of the primary concerns of any changes to the match day experience is how it will affect the diversity and inclusivity of the football club. We therefore asked respondents, who felt comfortable giving the information, for their gender, ethnicity and sexuality, so we could examine the feelings of minority groups with regard to safe standing.

### 3b. Gender

- 98% of men surveyed were in favour of safe standing.
- 91% of women were in favour of safe standing. 49% said that they would use it.

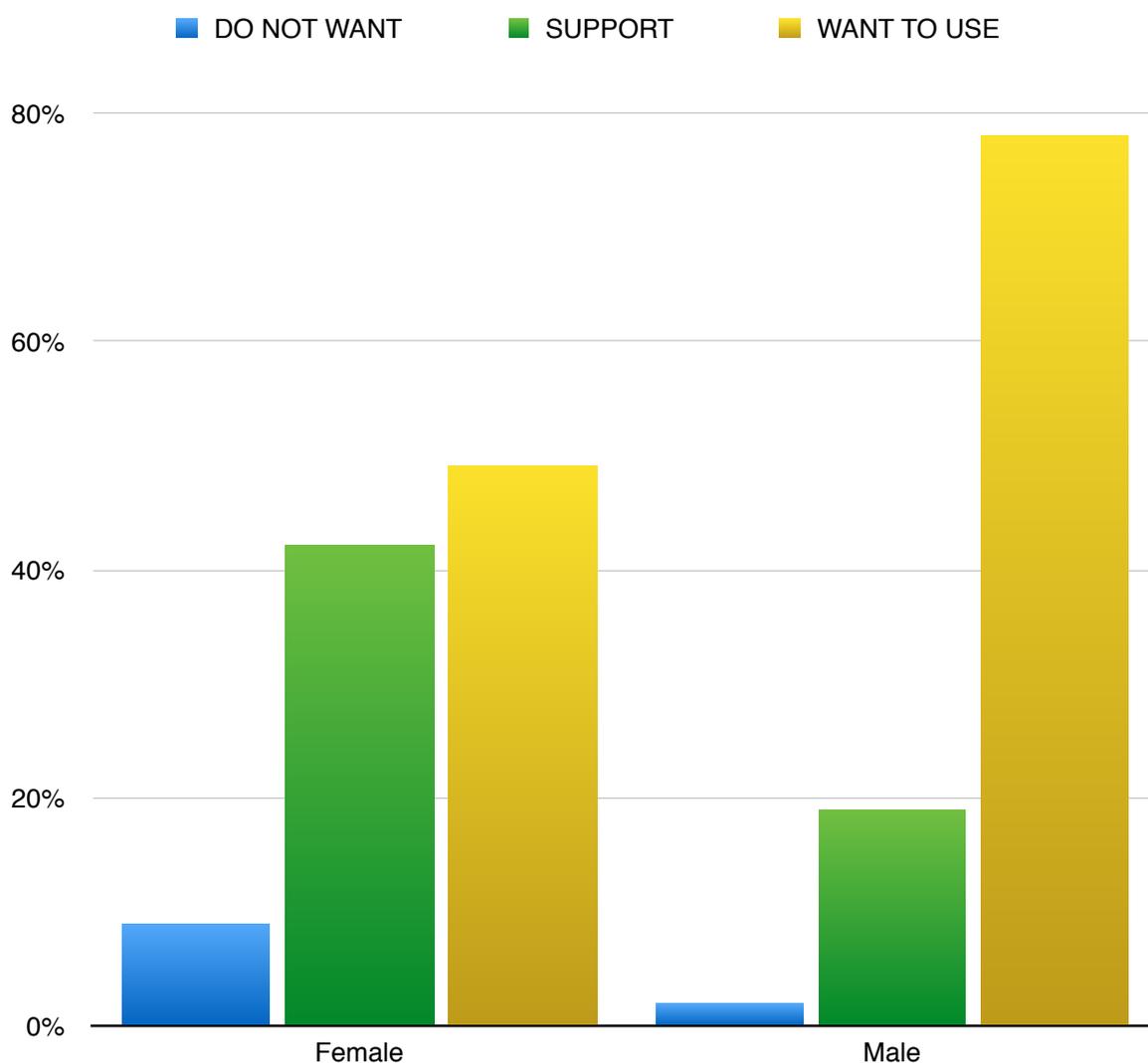


Table 3: Opinion of safe standing by gender

Women and over 60s were the only demographics where a minority would actively use the safe standing, and it is interesting to note that, for both groups, a large majority were in favour of safe standing at the Emirates, regardless of whether they would use it themselves.

### 3c. Ethnicity

1,052 respondents (around 15% of the total) identified as being from a BME background, or from a mixed white/BME background.

- Respondents from a BME background were more likely to support safe standing than those from a white supporters.
- Fans from Indian and Caribbean heritage were the most likely groups to want to utilise safe standing. over 81% of both groups wanted to do so.
- No individual ethnic group had a support level of less than 94%.

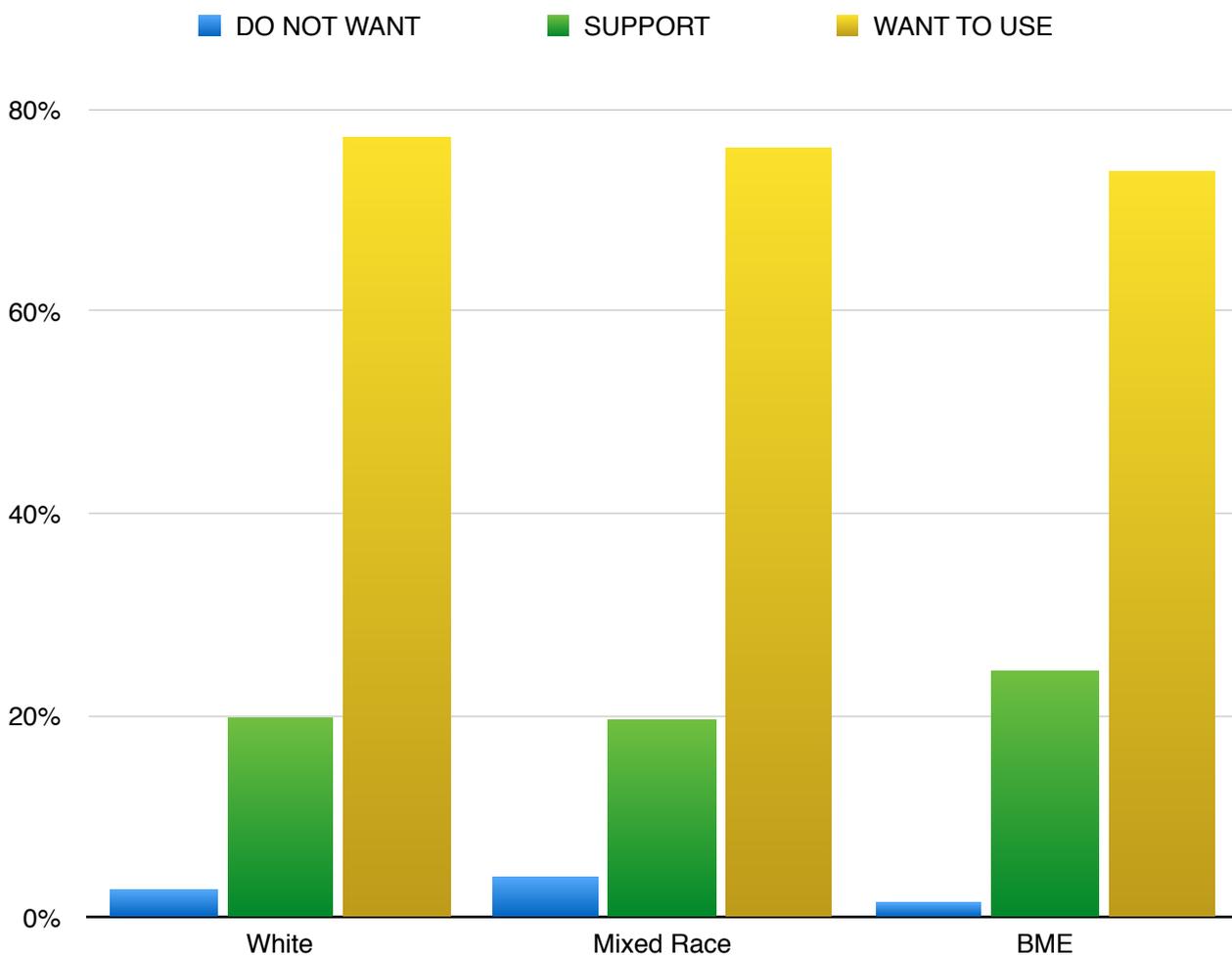


Table 4: Opinion of safe standing by ethnicity

### 3d. Sexuality

Around 3% of respondents self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or another non-heterosexual orientation.

- Over 95% of LGBTQ fans were in support of safe standing.
- Nearly 70% of LGBTQ fans said that they would use it.

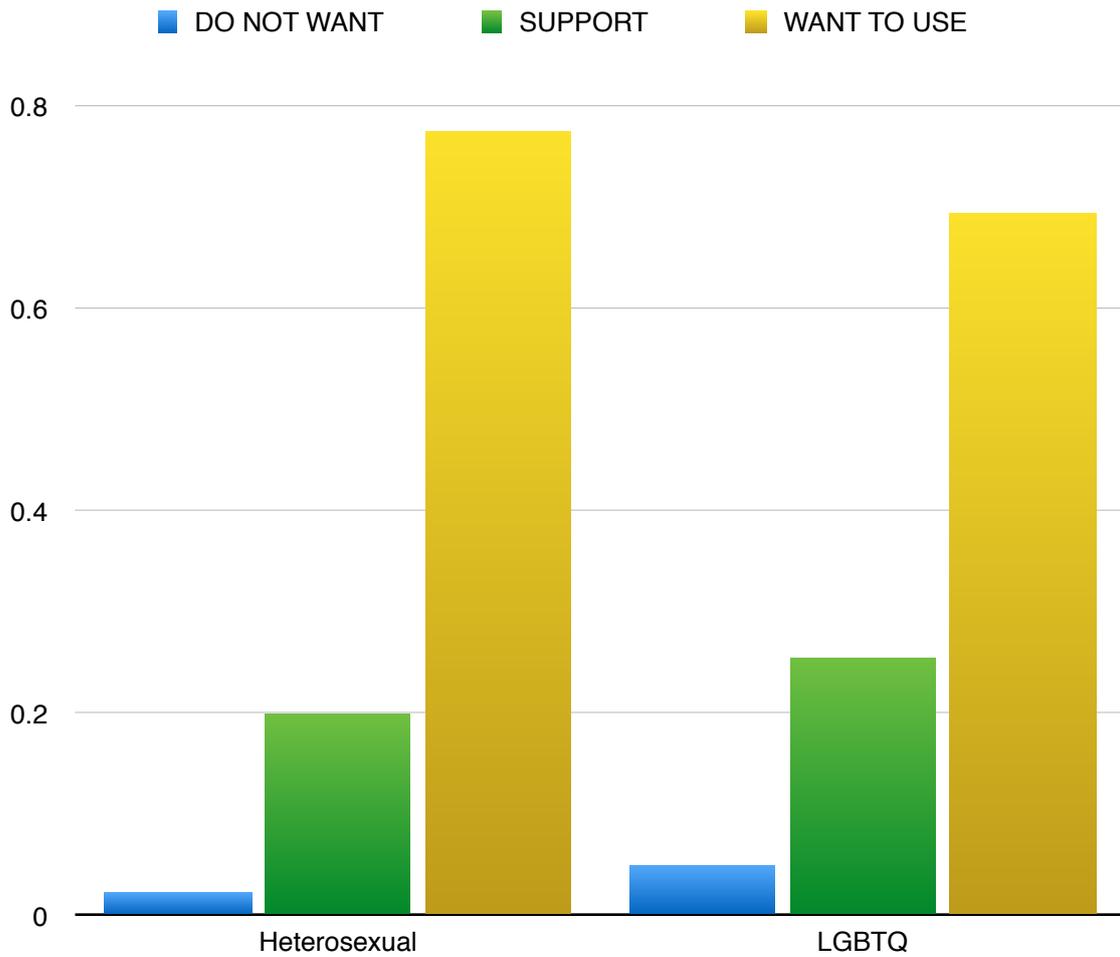


Table 5: Opinion of safe standing by sexuality

## 4. How safe standing influences motivation to attend

As well as demographic information, respondents were asked to provide information on their attendance at Arsenal.

It was interesting to note that, while every group was in favour of safe standing, the group most in favour was those who only occasionally attend games.

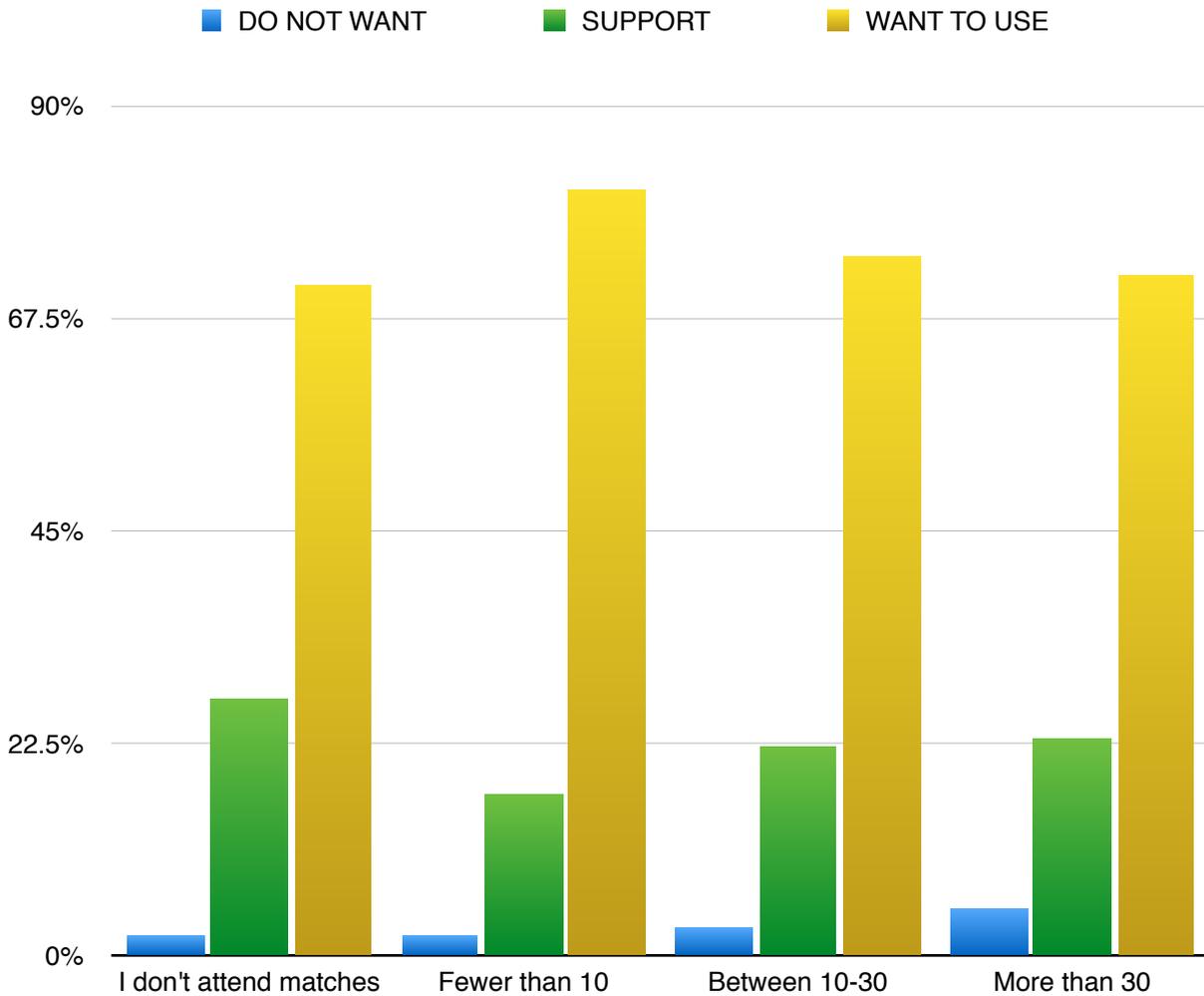
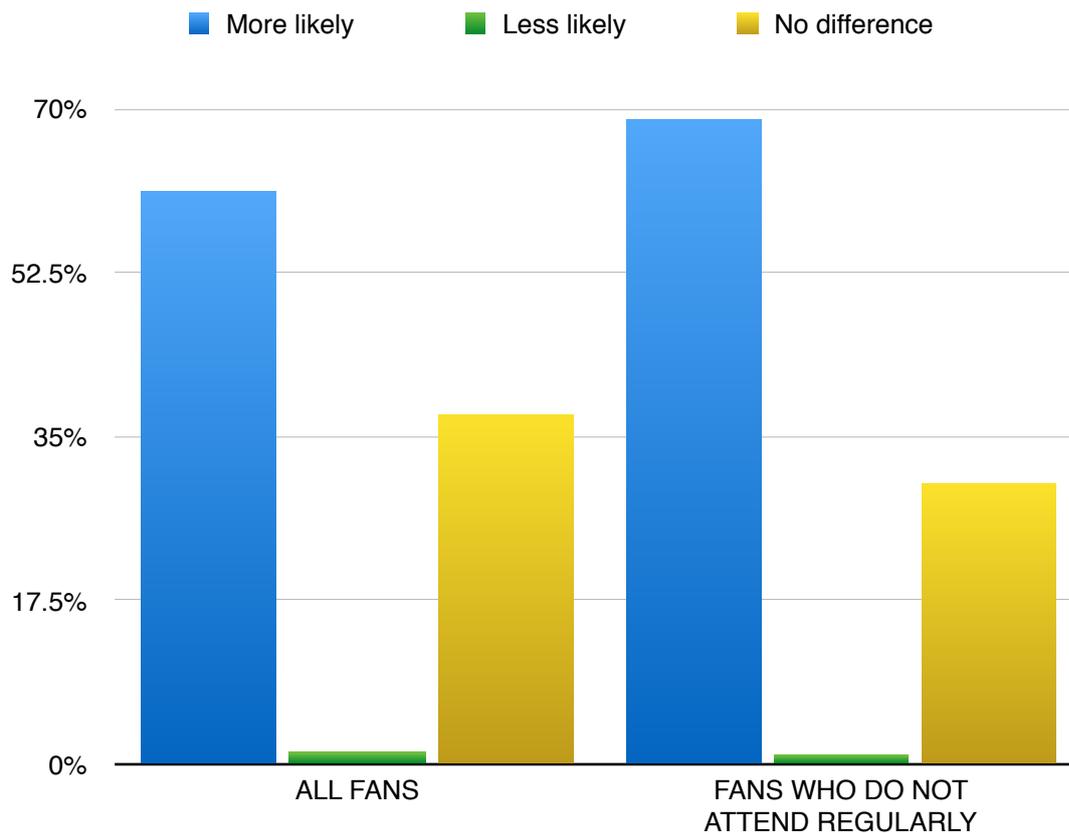


Table 6: Opinion of safe standing by game attendance.

Respondents were also asked the following question:

*How likely would you be to attend games if there were a safe standing area?*

69% of supporters who attend fewer than 10 games per season said that they would be more likely to attend games if they had the option of safe standing. This compares to 61% of the total group.



*Table 7: Influence of safe standing on game attendance.*

## 5. Arsenal's role in safe standing

Respondents were also asked what Arsenal's role in safe standing should be.

- 92% of respondents wanted Arsenal to champion the use of safe standing. 3% disagreed.
- 94% suggested that Arsenal should offer trials of safe standing. 3% disagreed.
- 85% of fans requested a formal consultation with all season ticket holders and Supporters' Association members about the introduction of safe standing. 6% disagreed.

● Agree ● Disagree ● No Opinion

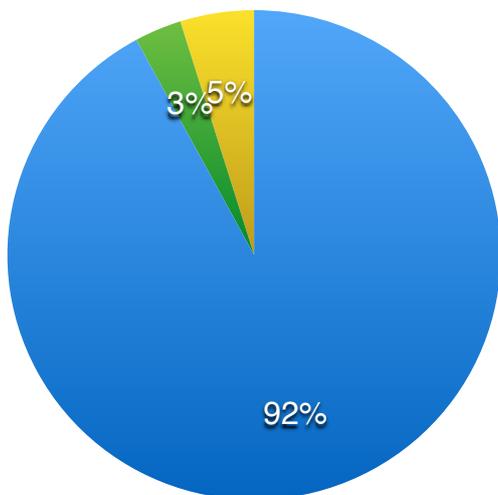


Table 7: Responses to the statement: "Arsenal should champion the introduction of safe standing in the Premier league."

● Agree ● Disagree ● No Opinion

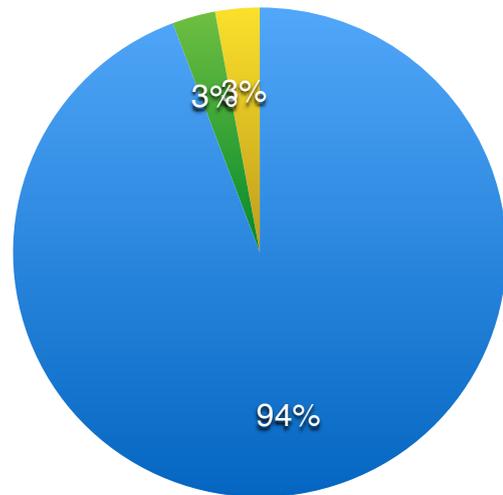


Table 8: Responses to the statement: "Arsenal should offer to stage trials of safe standing."

● Agree ● Disagree ● No Opinion

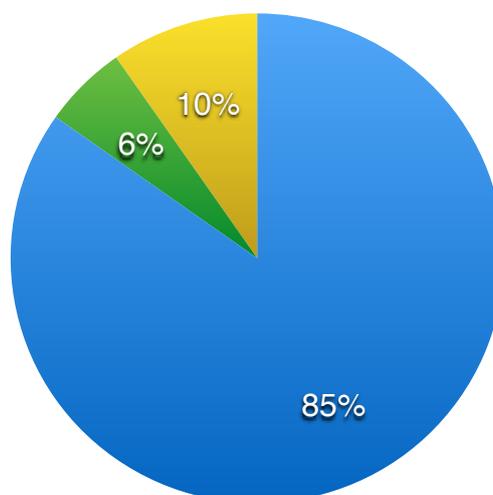


Table 9: Responses to the statement: "Arsenal should formally consult all season ticket holders and members about the introduction of safe standing."

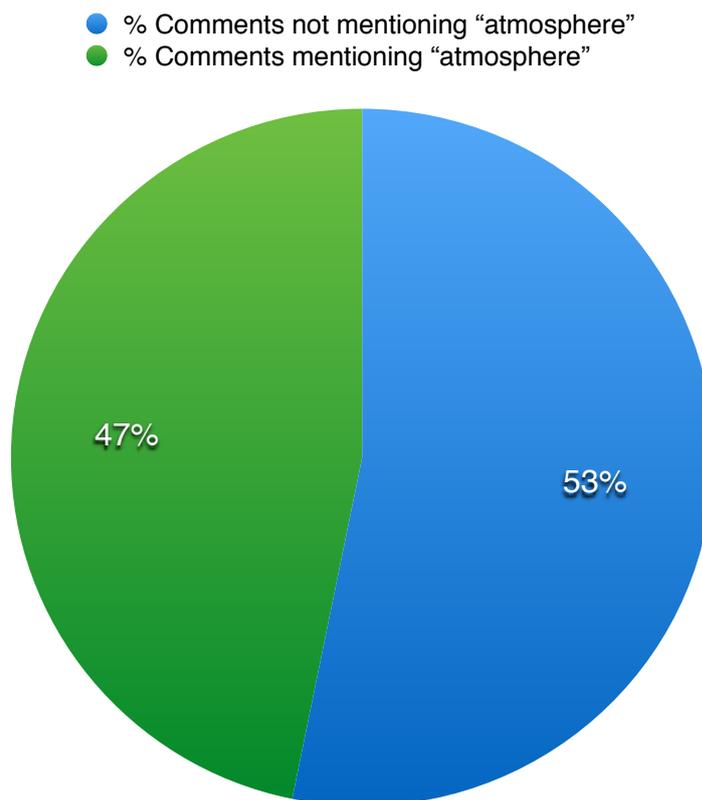
## 6. Reasons for supporting safe standing

In the course of the survey, respondents were given the option to leave a comment on any aspect of safe standing, and provide reasons for their opinion. 579 respondents left a comment.

By far the most common reason given for supporting safe standing was the contribution to the stadium atmosphere. 47% of respondents who left a comment mentioned atmosphere.

Other reasons given for supporting safe standing included improved motivation for the team (mentioned by 54 respondents), and potential value for money (33 respondents). 18 respondents mentioned successful implementation of safe standing in Germany and Scotland.

*Table 6: Influence of safe standing on game attendance.*





ARSENAL SUPPORTERS' TRUST

P.O. Box 3188,  
Gerrard's Cross,  
SL9 0WY

[info@arsenaltrust.org](mailto:info@arsenaltrust.org)

[www.arsenaltrust.org](http://www.arsenaltrust.org)