



Disabled Fans' Survey (Home Grounds) Report - February 2025

The aim of this survey is to determine how disabled fans in Scotland feel about the various aspects of the provision of facilities/services at their 'own' home club. The key findings are as follows:

- **Parking for disabled fans:** There is room for improvement. The majority, just under 60%, rated this as average to very poor, with over one fifth (22%) saying it is very poor at their home club.
- **Toilet facilities for disabled fans:** Over half (51%) said these are good or very good at their home club. Only c. one fifth (22%) rated them as poor or very poor.
- **The View from the stands for disabled fans:** 61% of those surveyed rated the view at their home club as good (30%) or excellent (31%), with only 7% saying it was very poor.
- **Tickets for disabled fans:** it can be difficult for disabled fans to get information on tickets in general, however, two-thirds (66%) rated this was very good (25%) or excellent (41%). This follows through to the actual acquisition of a ticket, with nearly two-thirds say that actually getting tickets is either good (26%) or excellent (37%).
- **Shelter from the elements for disabled fans:** With disabled people being more vulnerable to the elements that can be experienced in Scotland, the provision of adequate shelter is one of the most important factors which encourages them to follow their teams. Despite this, well over half (61%) say this is average or worse (26% rated shelter in their home ground as very poor, with a further 35% saying it was either poor (10%) or average (25%). However, nearly a quarter (23%) said it was excellent, with a further 16% saying it was good.
- **Awareness of their club's Disabled Supporters Association (DSA) and/or Disability Access Officer (DAO):** the majority (over three quarters) 76% know their club has a DSA, with an even bigger share 79% being aware of their club's DAO.
- **Does your DSA/DAO do a good job for both home and away fans?** DSA/DAO Leads for DSAs and Disabled Access Officers have responsibility for attending to the needs of both home and away fans. Two-thirds (67%) said their DSA/DAO does this well. Only 7% said their DAO/DSA do not do this well.
- **When gives specific options for what DSA/DAOs do well:** 75% said they clearly care for disabled fans, 74% said they were easily contactable (with contact details on the club website), and 57% said they go the extra mile for disabled fans.
- **A huge range of very positive comments on the performance of fans' home clubs' support for disabled fans was received, along with suggestions for improvements.**
- **The SFSA has been supported by Level Playing Field, the major English and Welsh disability organisation, who, in 2024, have included Scotland in their annual fans' survey for the first time.**



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Introduction

This Survey was sent out to Disabled fans and Associations throughout the country, with the aim being to determine how disabled fans in Scotland feel about their experience at their 'home' club, that is the club they support. The survey canvassed the SFSA's entire database (only a percentage of whom are disabled) supported by a social media campaign and direct contact with DAOs across Scotland's senior clubs.

80% of our respondents were Male, with 18% being Female and 2% identifying as Other. Fans were asked a number of questions across the survey: for the first seven questions they were asked to rate various factors between 1 and 5, where 1= Very poor, 2= Poor, 3= Average, 4= Good and 5 = Excellent.

Level Playing Field

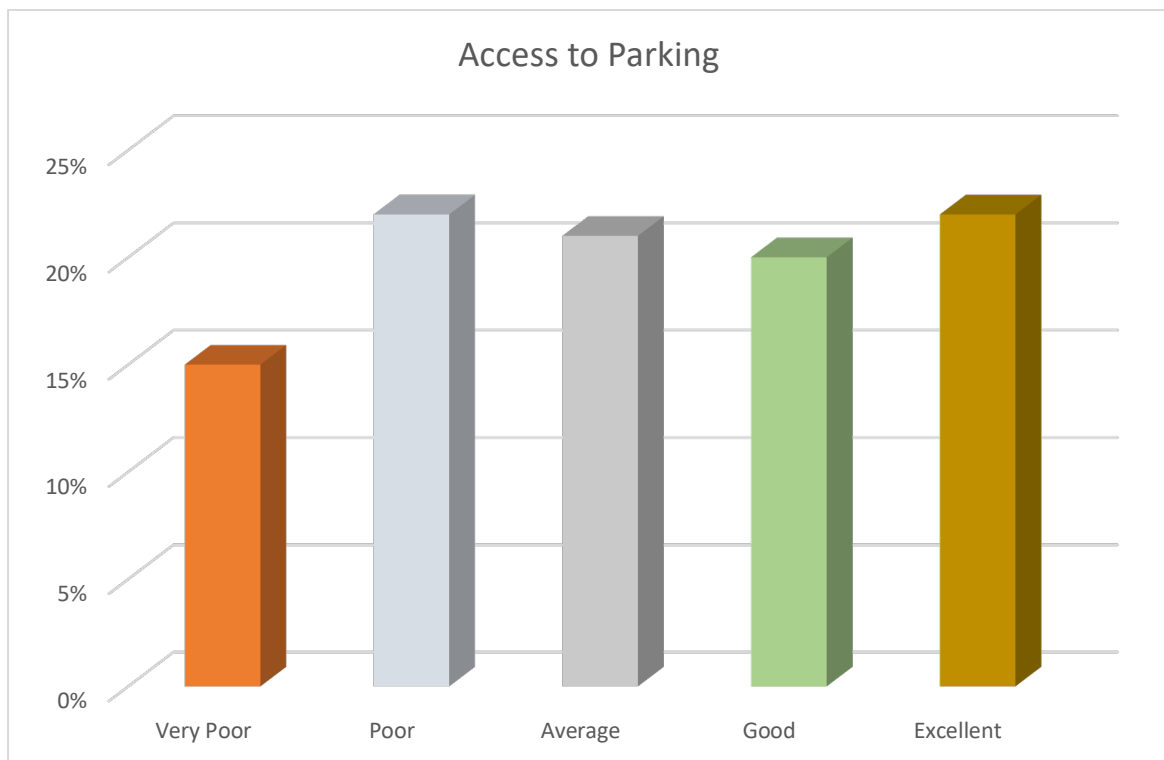
Level Playing Field is a major UK disability organisation, primarily working in England and Wales. Their annual survey, which covers all sports, not just football, is always very well worth reading. The SFSA is developing a good working relationship with LPF and, for the first time, they included Scotland in their annual survey last year. To see the full LPF survey for the UK, please [go to this link](#).



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Question 1 - Parking

This question asked fans how they felt about access to parking at their home stadium. Disappointingly, over one third (37%), rated parking access as very poor (22%) or poor (15%), with a further 22% saying it was only average. However, a fifth (20%) said it was excellent and a further fifth (21%) said it was good. There is clearly room for improvement here.



This came up in the Level Playing Field (LPF) report, where it was noted that 62% of Scottish respondents said that they would benefit from accessible parking when attending matches. The importance of parking and external access to the stadium also came out in another question in that survey, with 60% of respondents saying they arrive either as soon as the stadium opens or 1-2 hours before the match begins.

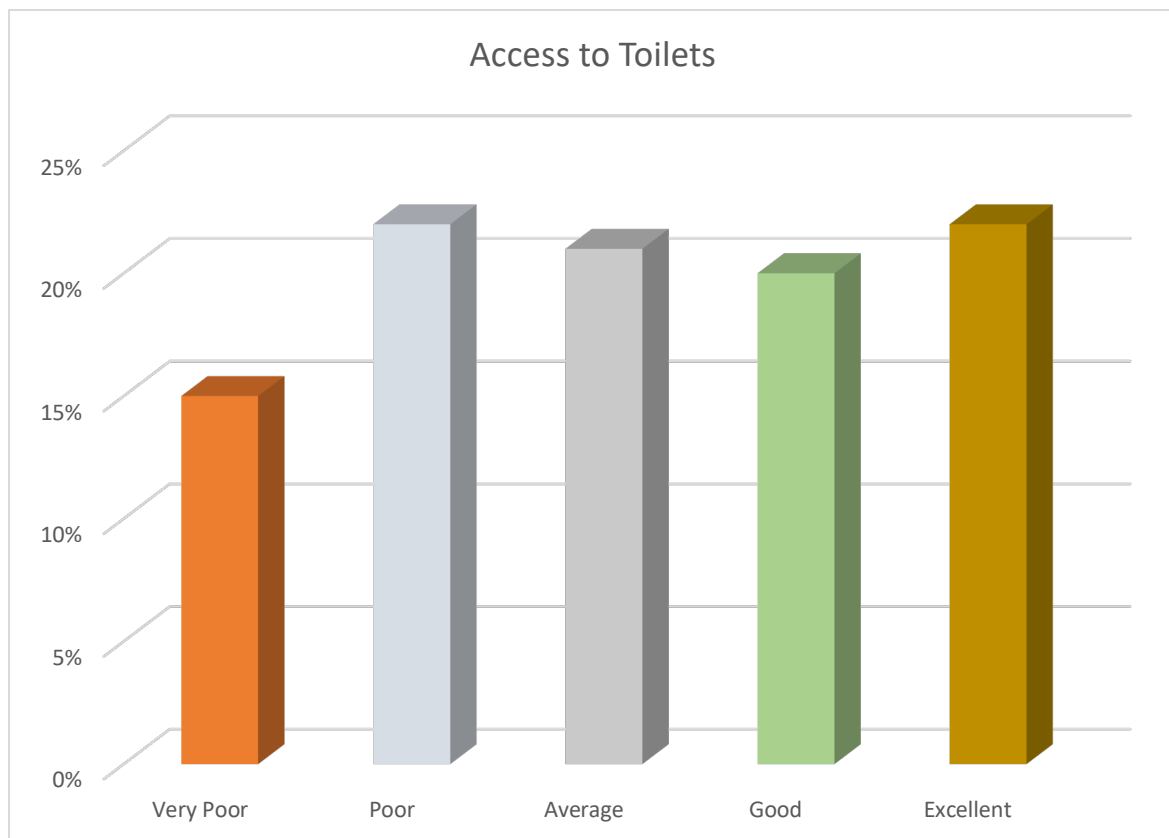


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Question 2 - Toilets

Next, we asked about access to toilets. Just under half (49%) said this was average or below, with over one fifth (22%) rating it as poor or very poor.

However, this means that a majority (51%) believe access to toilets was good or very good, reflecting, we believe, a lot of hard work done by club's DAO/SLOs to improve toilet facilities for those with visible and invisible disabilities.



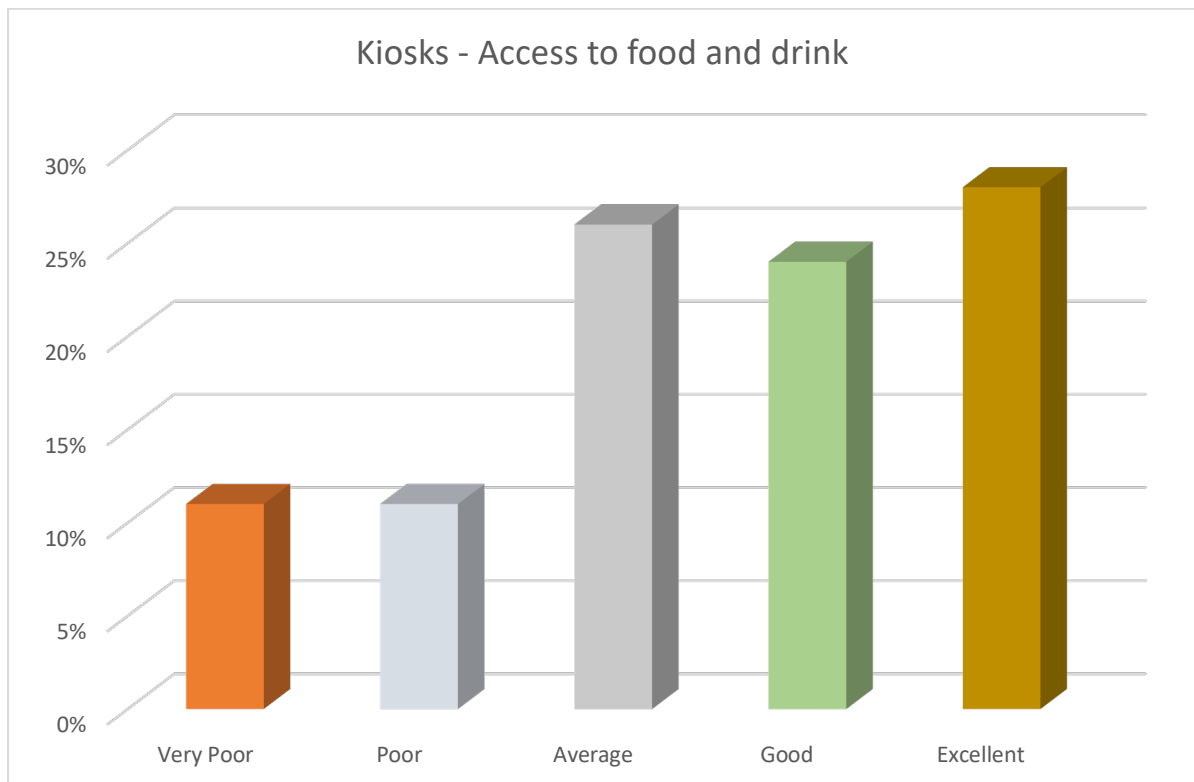
The Level Playing Field survey also highlighted the importance of accessible toilets for disabled fans, with 54% saying they would benefit from being able to use one at matches.



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Question 3 – Kiosks: access to food and drink

Access to kiosks is generally good, with just under a quarter (24%) of fans surveyed saying it was excellent compared to only 22% who ranked it as poor or very poor. The largest percentage (26%) ranked access to kiosks as average.

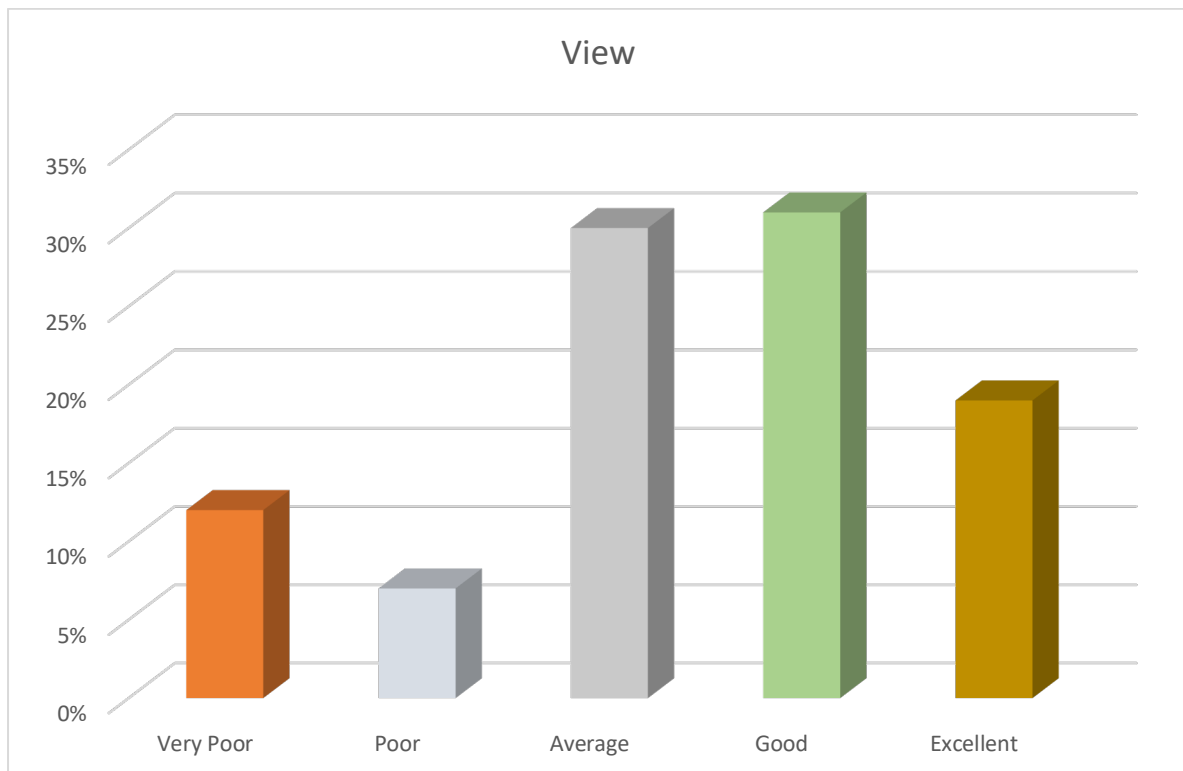




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Question 4 - View

This is one of the most important aspects of the experience for any football fan. However, most disabled people don't always have the luxury of picking a seat or a premium view. Despite this, 61% of those surveyed rated the view as good or excellent, with just 7% saying it was very poor.



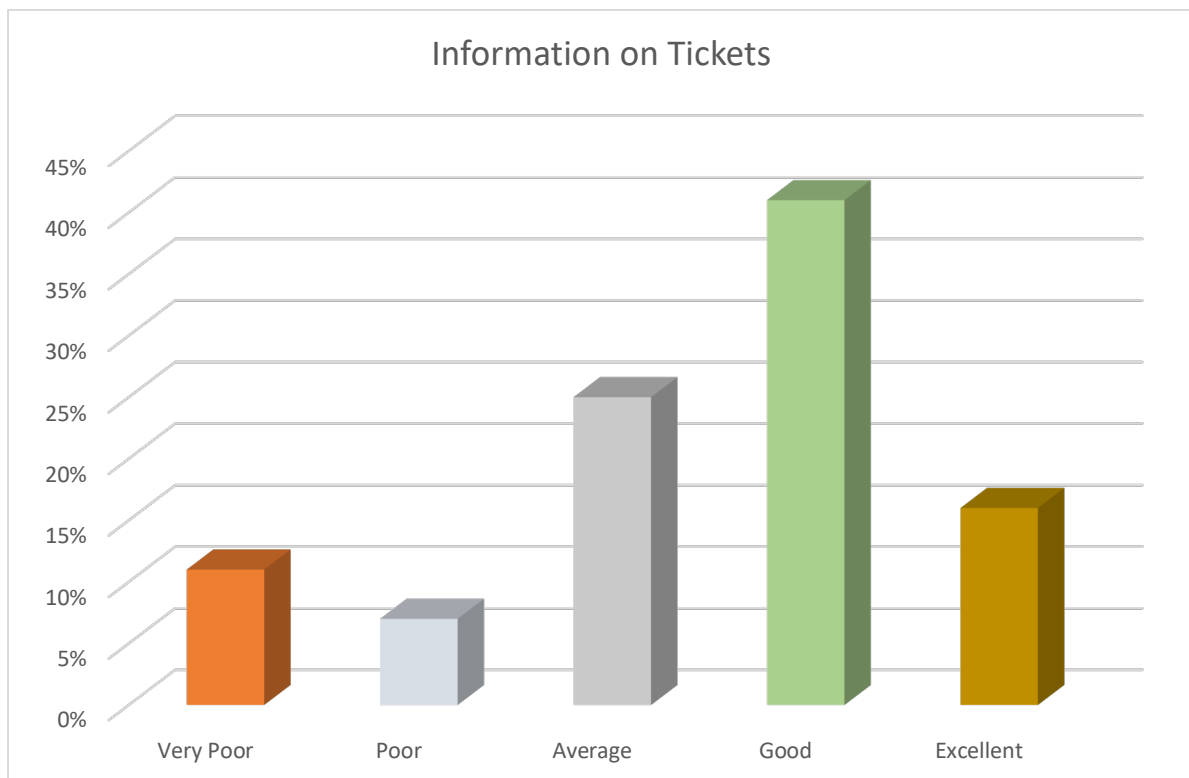
In the LPF survey, almost half (49%) of respondents said that easy-access and amenity seats (end of row/max three steps) are important, with 46% saying more legroom is also beneficial. Priority use of lifts (this mainly applies to the larger grounds) was also cited by 46% of their respondents.



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Question 5 – Getting information on Tickets

Bearing in mind that this survey asked specifically about fans' experiences with their own club, we were gratified to find that *getting information* about tickets was also found to be easy for the majority of disabled fans surveyed, with two-thirds (66%) rating it as very good (25%) or excellent (41%). Only 19% said it was poor (12%) or very poor (7%).

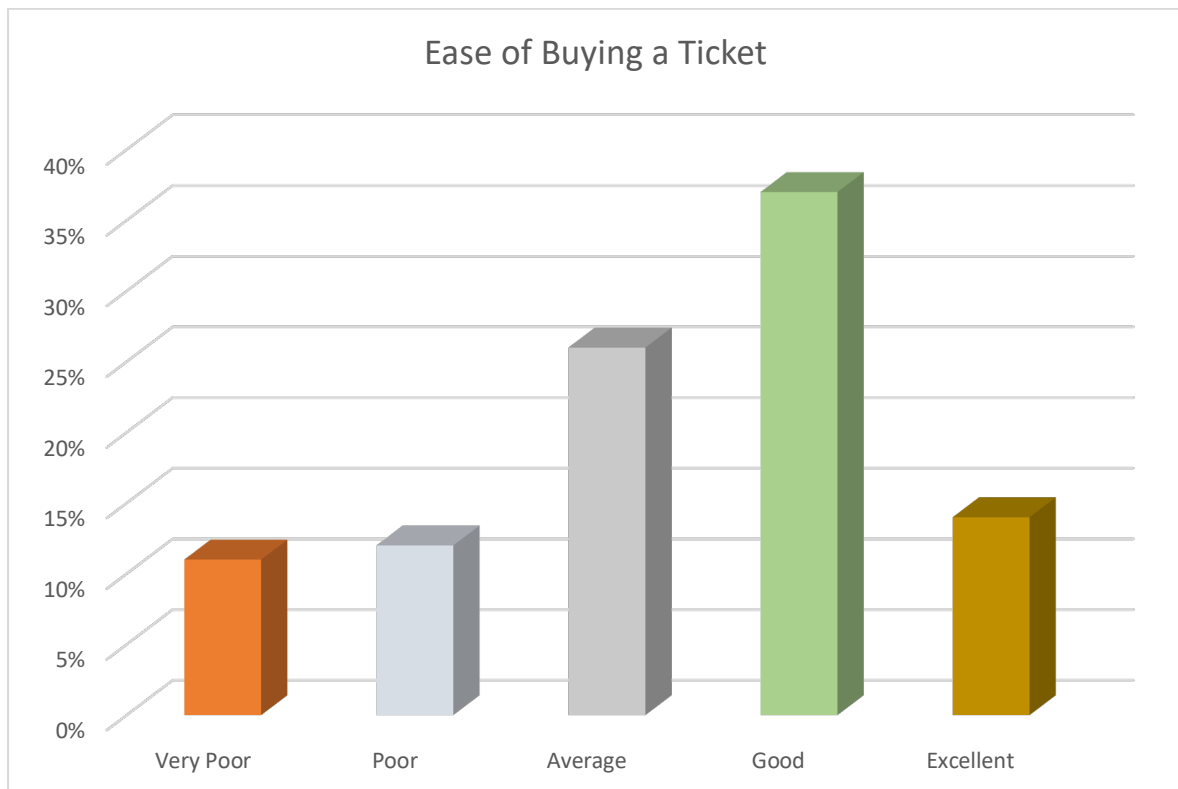




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Question 6 – Ease of Buying Tickets

Mirroring what we found in the previous question about getting information on tickets, we're pleased to see that the majority of disabled fans told us that actually getting tickets was relatively easy, with 77% saying it was average (14%) to good (26%) to excellent (37%) and only 23% saying it was poor or very poor.

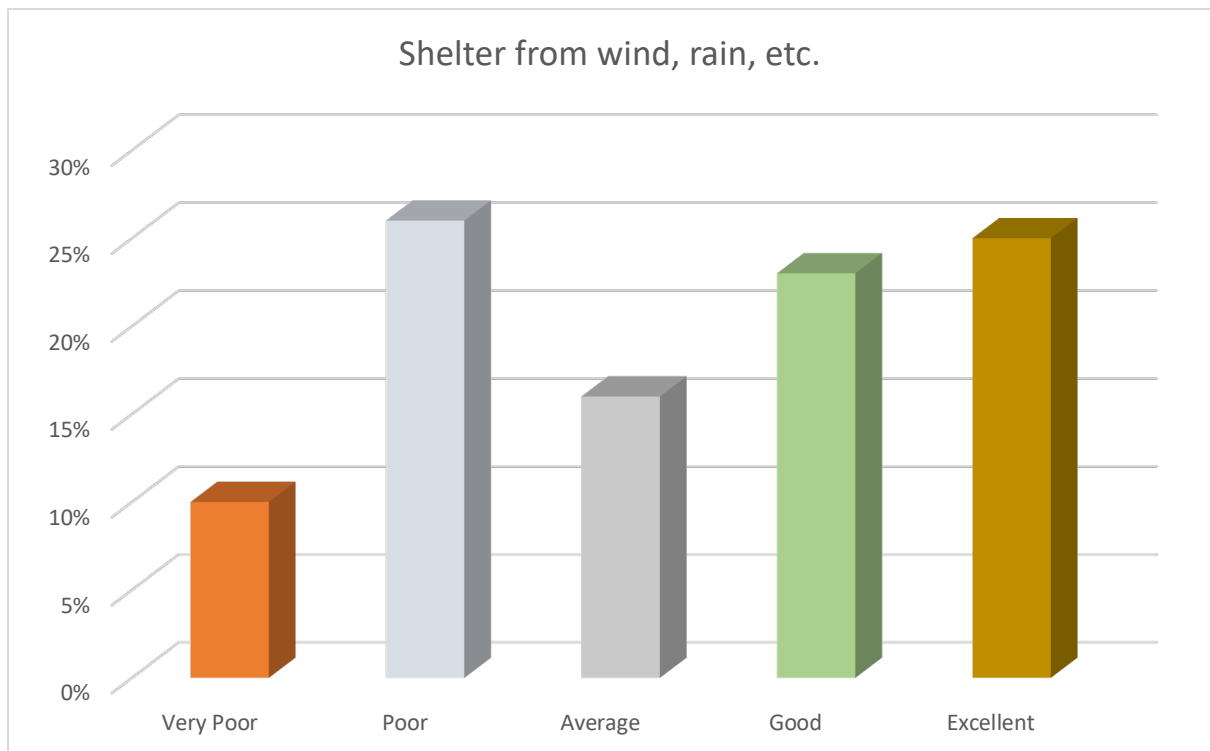




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Question 7 – Shelter from the elements

With disabled people being more vulnerable to the vagaries of the elements in Scotland, (especially during the winter months), adequate shelter is one of the most important factors which encourages them to follow their teams. Despite this, over a quarter (26%) rated shelter in their home ground as very poor, with a further 35% saying it was either poor (10%) or average (25%). However, nearly a quarter (23%) said it was excellent, with a further 16% saying it was good.



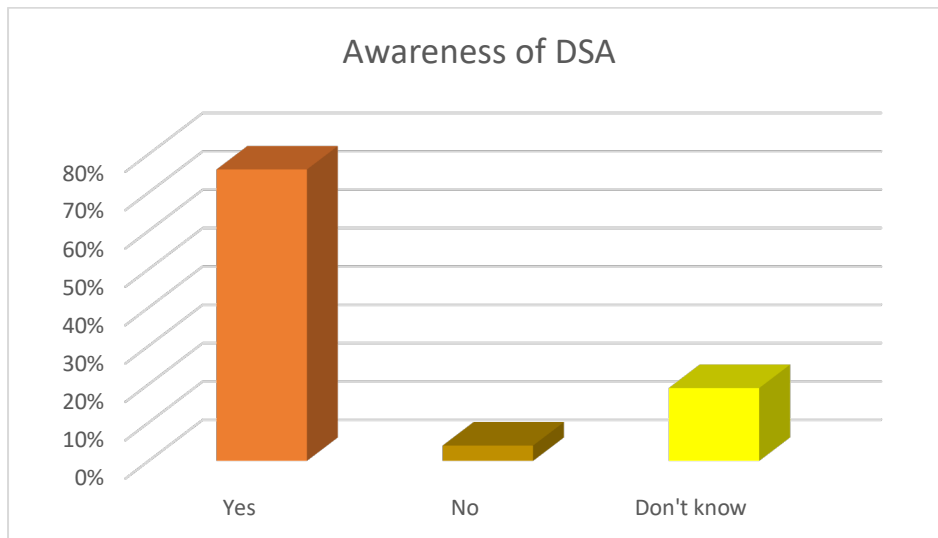


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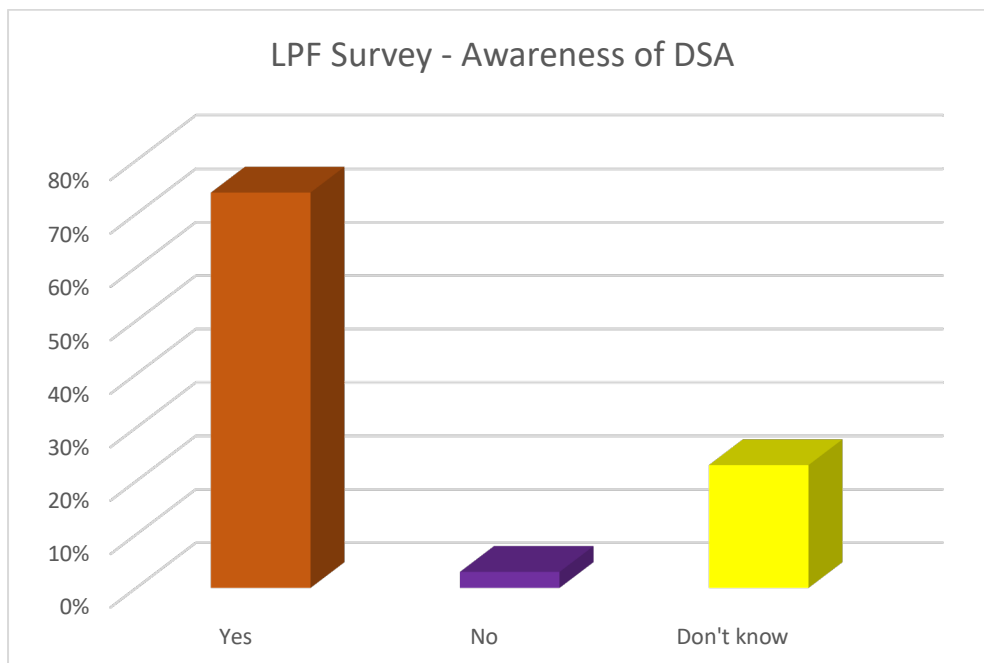
Question 8 – Does your club have a DSA (Disabled Supporters' Association)?

DSA

76% answered yes, with 19% stating they don't know and 5% saying their club doesn't have a DSA.



The figures from the LPF survey, with virtually the same question, support this finding.

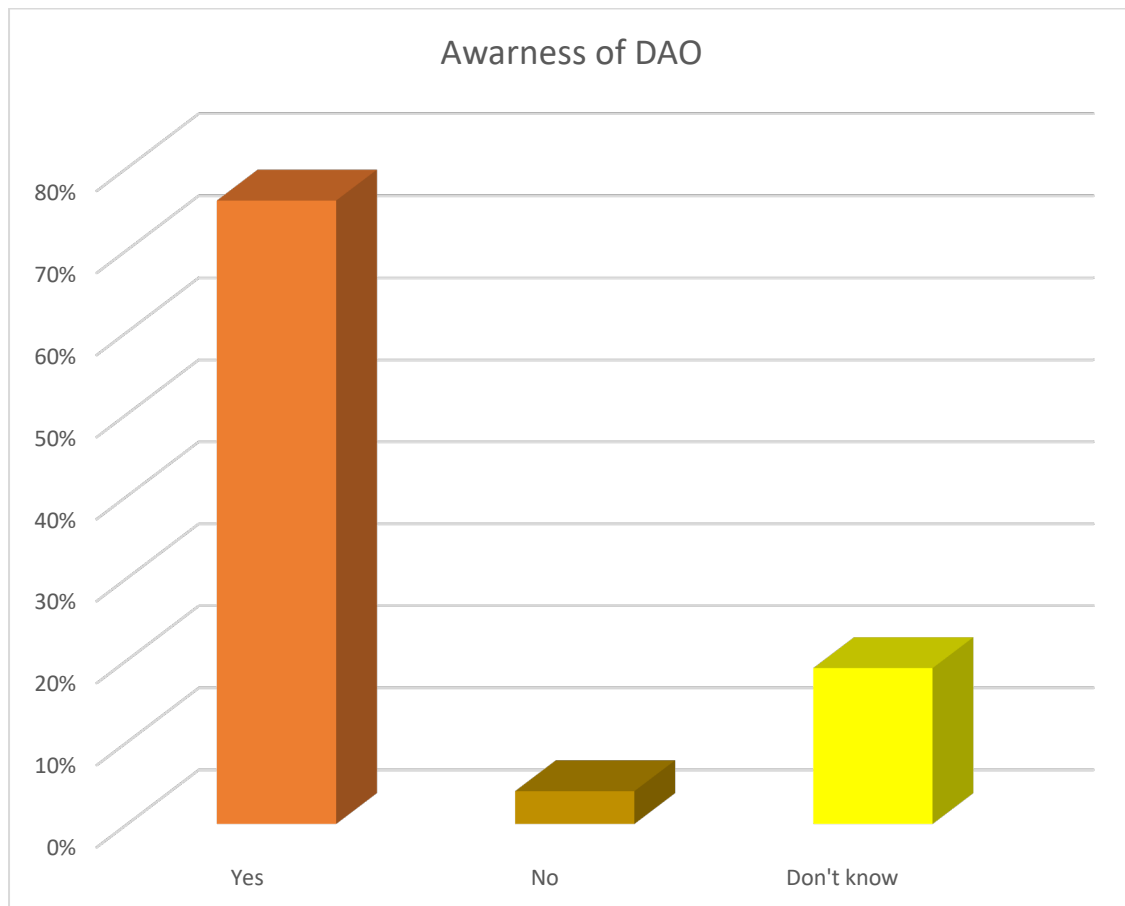




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Disability Access Officer

79% of respondents were aware that their club has a lead person whether a DSA or an SLO (Supporters' Liaison Officer) who also acts as a DAO. 19% didn't know and 2% said their club didn't have one. This, by and large, mirrors what we found in the answers to the previous question about clubs' DSAs.

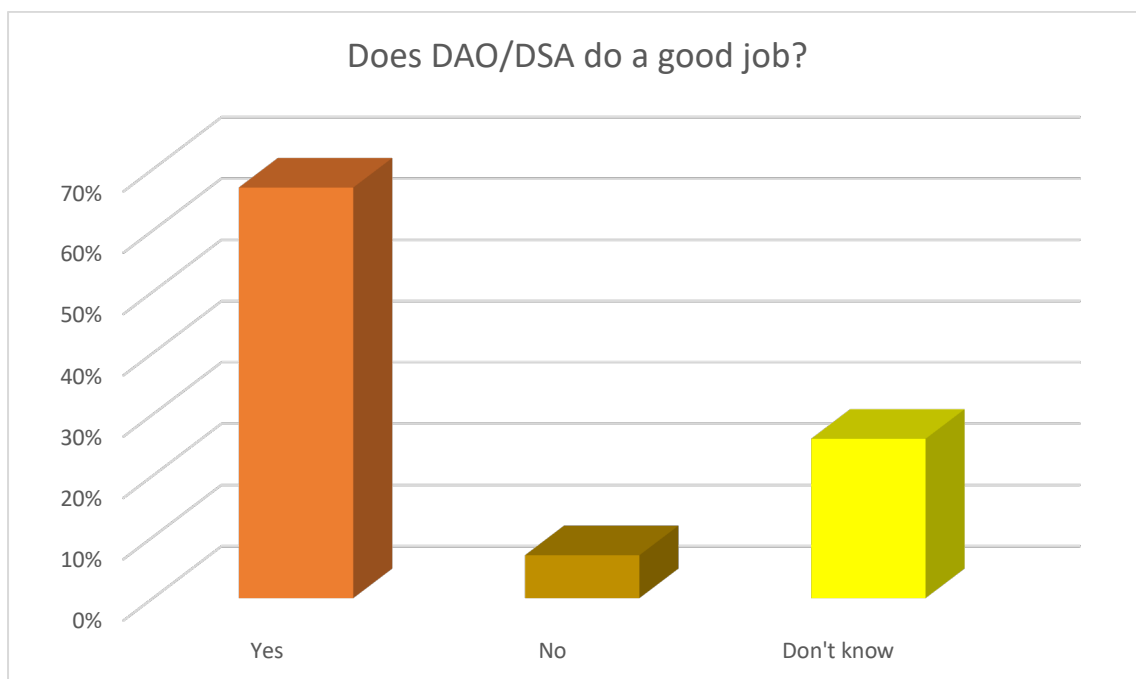




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Question 9 – Does your DSA/DAO do a good job for both home and away fans?

DSA/DAO Leads for DSAs and Disabled Access Officers have responsibility for attending to the needs of both home and away fans. The good news is that two-thirds (67%) said their DSA/DAO does this well. Only 7% said their DAO/DSA do not do this well with 26% saying they didn't know.



The LPF survey did not ask this question as such, but did ask for comments on what DAOs do well and what improvements can be made. These are referenced in the pages below.



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Question 10 – specific what your DSA/DAO does well – based on the following list of options.

Clearly cares for disabled fans	75%
Easily contacted (with contact details on club website)	74%
Goes the extra mile for disabled fans	57%
Is visible and helpful at home and away games	55%
Communicates well by social media, club mailers and club website	45%
Provide facilities for fans with non-visible disabilities	41%
Comes up with new ideas for disabled facilities/access	38%
Regularly meets with disabled fans' groups	38%



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Comments about what clubs' DSAs and their DAOs do well

- Kilmarnock's DSA has a Christmas lunch every year for its members. This is a good chance to socialise with other members and meet players and management. This is a fantastic PR opportunity for the club and DSA.
- The arrangements for parking are really well organised and efficient
- The DSA and DAO put out emails and update the Facebook page with information on match day
- They do a great Job and go the extra mile for people with a disability
- Smiley approachable person! Unfortunately, no longer with us, was a fantastic advocate for the disabled supports. Club is actively looking for volunteer.
- Raises funds. Spends quite a few Sundays collecting in supermarkets etc
- Friendly, approachable person; feels like she's on your side; always available to help.
Great at being approachable
Communication
- Keith is great for Disabled Fans, easy to speak to and helpful with tickets.
- Excellent for go-between club and fans
- Goes above and beyond. Credit to the club. Deserves a medal. Was a game changer getting in touch with him.
- Keith provides an excellent contact point for any questions or issues and is always very helpful.
- Excellent care taken with ticket allocation at away games.
- Competent at all aspects.
- Always helpful and trying to find solutions.
- Very good at arranging tickets.
- Moira is amazing and really tries to help wherever she can. does facility survey and keep people in touch.
- Our DAO is an important part of the club. He appears to be.
- Really does do an excellent job. Must be the best.
- Sorts out ticketing issues.
- Our disability access officer is fantastic. He is a volunteer but has a professional attitude.
- Good interaction with supporters.
- Chats to disabled person plus the family of disabled.
- Colin has created a family atmosphere amongst the disabled support.
- They do a first-class job.



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From the Level Playing Field survey, we have the following responses to virtually the same question.

- Information and inclusion excellent stadium facilities.
- All easily accessible.
- Dedicated steward to assist and hand blankets out on cold days.
- DAO and our club's Disabled Supporters Club are very proactive in getting things right for supporters with disabilities.
- The stadium is restricted by the area it is in so they do try and accommodate disabled fans where possible.
- Good information from the disabled officer.
- Priority for accessible seating tickets for away matches.
- It gives me commentary and it is superb - the man called Giddy who does it for us visual impaired people is first class.
- Stewards are very helpful in ensuring that easy access to the ground is possible whilst avoiding turnstiles.
- Match buddies a great idea and very welcoming. SFA at Hampden not so welcoming and disabled area open to the elements. We have been soaked through on multiple occasions.
- Well looked after.
- They have installed an elevator to the GF Upper stand.
- Loads of access points, stewards are pretty decent.
- The DSLO, Alexis is great. Shaleen at the ticket office is great.
- Excellent seating. Multiple disabled toilets. A DAO who is always approachable and happy to help. Disabled parking. Easy access to stadium.
- I don't deal with the disabled liaison officer so I don't know. I certainly don't get anything from the club and they have taken away the lift pass I had to avoid the stairs too.
- The viewing platforms are high up so a great view.
- Every year, the Disabled Supporters Association hosts a Christmas lunch for its members. This is a cost-effective social event where members get together, have a traditional festive meal, meet the first-team players and coaching staff and partake in a raffle. Normally, the club's media team are at this event, giving the Association some much-needed PR, but as stated in response to question 21, Christmas lunch aside, the club don't take much to do with the Association. If both parties start working more collaboratively, the experience for disabled supporters at the ground could improve immensely.
- The platform, handrails and audio description.



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Is there was anything their clubs, DSAs/DAOs could do better ...?

- I don't think we look after all disabled fans well enough. Not all disabled fans get the qualifying benefit to enable them to be on the platform for example.
- We have a disabled toilet - one away supporter said one of the best DT he has been in.
- Sensory space.
- Better food.
- Looking at things like stoma toilets and sensory rooms would be a positive step. The club should also look at implementing an 'at your seat' catering service, similar to what is offered at St Johnstone.
- Put toilets in the stand that are accessible to disabled fans.
- Toilet access is pretty poor but that's true across all spectators and not just the disabled. The facilities are awful as well. The club is aware but doesn't prioritise funds to sort it
- A sensory room and stoma toilet is currently a project that the club is looking into and hopefully will have in place very soon.
- Provide disabled tickets for people on ESA and PIP lower level. Right now I can't get a ticket because I'm not on PIP higher level.
- Sadly, it all depends on finance, especially if you go to part-time in lower leagues or junior football.
- A proper disabled area.
- Set up regular meetings with disabled fans, organise a safe space for the disabled/other disability fans, in a quiet space before/during/after home games.
- Become more visible to disabled fans.
- Keep tickets affordable, have better WiFi, have better sound system so could hear announcements, have online access to order from kiosk.
- DSA could communicate better with club and supporters.
- Make more space in toilets for disabled fans.
- More toilets / runner to kiosks/ parking.
- Better location in stadium for disabled fans.
- Better area for disabled. Club has denied to put this in place for years which is alienating disabled fans and are left to suffer the elements.
- Cash payments.
- Better access to disabled parking, it is almost impossible to access the clubs disabled spaces close to the ground.
- Stewards at the disabled toilets & disabled eating area.
- Sensory Space and more disabled spaces as really hard to be able attend matches due to limited seating areas for disabled.
- Social media updates.
- Safer exit route after the match.



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- View at our ground needs looked at. More signs around the stadium to make fans aware that people with disabilities are nearby. Unable to buy wheelchair tickets online. Anti slip flooring in the toilets.
- Possible more disabled toilets but space is the issue.
- The club are very good with most things. Disabled viewing from a wheelchair is shock due to a barrier at eye level while viewing the pitch
- Upgrade viewing areas to an acceptable level and have more "clean" disabled facilities.
- More grab handles for disabled toilets, signs around the stadium indicating disabled section.
- A lift that actually works reliably. Disabled toilets and more toilets available for females. A sensory space or security team being aware.
- Accessible and bigger print on programmes.
- Possible more seats available on the concourse near to the food outlets.
- Sensory Space.
- Probably toilets.
- Changing places toilet facility, better dedicated viewing platform...accessibility in general.
- Provide seats at lower levels for fans who struggle with stairs
- Better toilet facilities all round – non-disabled use disabled as they at least can flush the ladies' toilets and wash their hands! Not disadvantaging disabled fans as so few disabled female fans but not ideal.
- Provide more elevated disabled spaces to improve view.
- A quiet area, such as a private room would be good for autistic supporters.
- New shelter which is already being worked on.
- The toilets are accessible but not always clean and soap not always available at sink.

From the Level Playing Field survey, we have the following responses to the same question.

- Better pathways outside the ground.
- More blue badge parking available and better viewing area.
- Changing places toilet and lift access to lounges in main stand.
- Speak to the disabled fans. Be treated with respect, inclusion.
- Include more hand rails on the aisles leading to seats. The lack of them is very dangerous.
- As said before... it's a seated stadium and fans should be asked to sit down during a match. Not everyone wants to stand... if you have a seat then sit in it!!
- More disabled spaces, access to lifts disabled lanyards for fans.
- Easier access to disabled parking, currently have to pre book a ticketed space.
- Nothing they are great with me and other disabled supporters.
- Our DSC does sterling work, but needs more support from fans.



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- Make stewards more aware of disabilities.
- Make access (not physical) to disabled platform easier. Covered area nearer the pitchside.
- Currently disabled folk get soaked when it rains if they're not on the platform.
- More wheelchair seats, allowing ticket resale between wheelchairs supporters, stronger checks on disability and allowed precious wheelchair space. A bigger elevator for eagle view area or 2 elevators.
- I believe my club is one of the best in the UK for disabled fans.
- I think just making all fans aware that someone who isn't sitting in an accessible area or doesn't have visible disabilities still needs adjustments.
- Travel and better help around the stadium.
- Our club should focus on the following: • Better communication between the club itself and the Disabled Supporters Association. This is particularly important when it comes to match or season tickets as the club, at the moment, do not publish disabled supporters' ticket prices online. Instead, directing supporters to contact the Disability Liaison Officer. This will be an off-putter for some fans. The club needs to raise the Disabled Supporters Association's profile, be that through enhancing its online presence (which at the moment is borderline non-existent at the moment), or sharing information about the facilities available at our ground, such as the wheelchair platform, opened in 2022 or the headset-based commentary service offered for visually impaired fans, which appears to be very well received.
- Improve access for disabled fans who don't have season tickets. There seems to be little option for people who just want to turn up to games on a whim. Young people from local schools are encouraged to attend with free tickets etc. However, no such offers are made to young disabled fans.
- Cover wheelchair spaces.
- Include us in the season ticket brochure for a start.
- Better facilities



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Following the results of our survey, Stephen Reside, the SFSA's Lead on Disability, commented, *"There is no doubt that Scottish football clubs have made immense strides in the way they cater for disabled fans. While improvements can always be made, I applaud the hard work of all DAOs across the country who do so much for people like me and other disabled fans. Based on our survey, I would urge clubs to make improvements in particular to the shelter they provide for disabled fans. The fact that 61% of fans surveyed rated it between very poor and average, with over one quarter saying it is very poor, means this should be a priority. When you consider that many disabled people are in a vulnerable position health-wise, especially during the winter months, this makes it even more important that we see action. Elevated viewing areas in stands would provide this, however, I am aware upgrading stands would have an impact financially. Parking too, could be improved for disabled fans.*

"The feedback we received about areas of improvement were interesting, with a lot of people mentioning that they would like to see more Stoma toilets and Sensory rooms. This is a sentiment I would echo and I think in general more needs to be done for those with invisible disabilities. Finally, I would encourage clubs to make more information clearly available on DSAs and DAOs as although a large majority know these organisations and people, almost a fifth of our respondents weren't even sure if their club had these."

Stephen Reside, SFSA Lead for Disability.