



PROSTATE  
CANCER UK



Group

## HELPING MEN LIVE WELL

**“Getting back in the game, back with your friends, shouting in the stands for the team you love – it’s a huge part of the recovery process.”**



**Phil Kissi, 67**, is an elite athletics coach and former civil servant who lives with his wife and daughter in Battersea, London. His entire family are Arsenal supporters.

**Club:**  
Arsenal F.C.



### London based football fan calls for incontinence bins for men in football stadiums.

“Incontinence used to be a big issue for me, especially going to football games, as it makes you feel as if you can’t do the same things that you used to. I had incontinence for almost 18 years, until I had an operation to help me and now my life has just totally changed.

“But it’s been a journey. After treatment, as soon as you do anything active - walking, running, going from sitting to standing or jumping around - the leaking just comes. You have to watch how long you’re wearing an incontinence pad for, be careful to change your pad in time or get home in time to change. My time limit out socially used to be about two hours, so going to a football game was impossible.

“The first 12 months were difficult. I locked myself up, kept away from people as much as I could. Leaving the house was stressful, and a lot of that was because of having to change my incontinence pads out in public and trying to find a sanitary bin for them in a discreet way. Having my rucksack, my pads, plastic bags to put used pads in; they became part and parcel of my preparation every day.

“Not having anywhere to put the used pads felt exhausting. What’s sad is I started to feel a sense of acceptance about it.

“I remember going to Cardiff for an away match, and to another at the Emirates and one at Tottenham. Each time I took my rucksack, and people often question why you have a bag as a man, but you can’t be without it. I remember in each stadium; the toilets did have a bin, but it was in the open and for paper towels.

“It would be great if there was a sanitary bin located in the cubicle where you could get rid of your pads hygienically and more discreetly. It can make you feel quite despondent. You just want sanitary bins to be commonplace, you know? For what you’re going through to feel more normalised. So that you go to the toilets and it’s as simple as ‘This is for tissue, this is for your pads, end of story.’

“It’s so needed because not every man will be prepared like I was. Leaving the house for me was like a military operation - I knew I had to carry a couple of zip-up bags with me, some spare pads and wipes. Then I had to remember to leave early before half time and before the end of the game to get to the loo and change my pads before it got too busy.

“When I was incontinent, I always had my bag with me on my back 24/7. It becomes part of you, along with disposal bags. You just cannot go without. Wherever you go, you can’t guarantee a sanitary bin is going to be there, so you have to show yourself that respect instead and be prepared, have your rucksack, have your pads and the plastic bags to put it in and take them home.

**“Football needs to step up. Some football clubs are doing their bit to raise awareness about prostate cancer, but they need to support fans further and push other boundaries.”**

It should be a given that if a football club is raising awareness about prostate cancer, then, they should also be making sure that their stadium has got things in place in the toilets, such as sanitary bins and pads, to look after men experiencing incontinence. Otherwise, it’s only half a job done.

“Saving the lives of men with prostate cancer is fantastic. But what we’ve also got to do is save the ‘everyday’ life too and encourage gentle steps to bring men back to their old selves, to a recovery point where they feel great about themselves and feel confident to go out again. Getting back in the game, back with their friends, shouting in the stands for the team you love – it’s a huge part of the recovery process.”

**Supporting men, supporting the game. Find out more:**

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