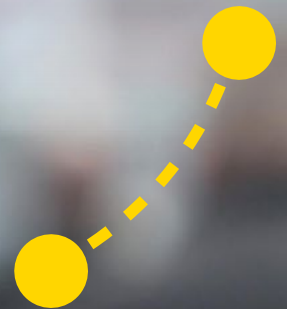
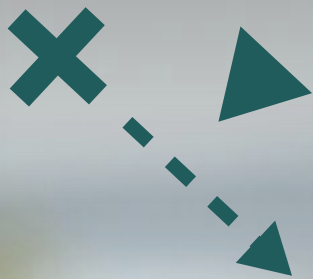


BACK IN THE GAME



Getting men living
with incontinence
Back in the Game

**MEN vs. URINARY
INCONTINENCE**

26th November 2024



HELPING MEN LIVE WELL

Contents

The starting eleven



Foreword



“This Back in the Game research shows how attending live sports matches poses significant problems for men with urinary incontinence, with the majority of male fans saying their incontinence puts them off going to games. Of these men, half are attending far fewer matches and one in seven no longer attend at all, negatively impacting both their mental health and social wellbeing.

“It shouldn’t be this way. A man living with incontinence should be able to go to the football only worrying about whether his team will win, and the ref will make good decisions – not about whether he’ll be able to get rid of his used pads.

“Prostate Cancer UK campaigns on behalf of men who live with incontinence and our partnership with **phs** Group – and the launch of the **BOG STANDARD** Charter – has been invaluable in improving men’s lives. Together, we’re working to raise awareness and break down the taboo around male incontinence, and what finer way to help do this than through football – a powerful force for collective action. By getting men access to the basic facilities they need, we hope more men will feel confident to go out and get back in the game of watching live football matches, unhampered by their incontinence.

Nick Ridgman,
Head of Support Services,
Prostate Cancer UK

“**Urinary incontinence is often seen as a ‘women’s issue’. But as many as two thirds (65%) of men who get prostate cancer will become incontinent – some for a few weeks, many for some months or years, and others will live with the condition forever.**

“For these men, the safe and hygienic disposal of incontinence products is really important. Men who need to dispose of their sanitary waste often have no direct access to a sanitary bin in male toilets and a lot of men are too anxious to leave home because they’re worried they won’t be able to find a sanitary bin.

1 Kicking Things Off

Football is more than a hobby, it’s a way of life for many, a staple in their social calendar; the heart of their community and a part of their identity and who they are.

Currently, for fans who experience incontinence, attending matches, is a goal too far. Watching their team lift the cup from the stands is an impossible dream, even if they win.

The **BOG STANDARD** Charter is an initiative by Prostate Cancer UK and **phs** Group to create safe spaces for men experiencing urinary incontinence – including lots who have been through life-saving prostate cancer treatment.

The **BOG STANDARD** Charter builds on our **Dispose with Dignity** campaign to break the taboos around talking about incontinence. and give every man the support, facilities and access to products they need to go about their day with confidence, free from shame or anxiety.

Our research tackles the impact of urinary incontinence on fans of the beautiful game. It also evidences how football clubs need to sign up to the **BOG STANDARD** charter by installing incontinence bins in male washrooms as the bare minimum to give supporters this part of their lives back.

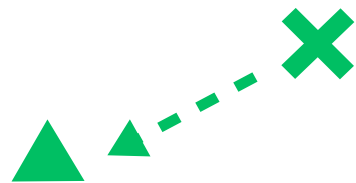
Prostate Cancer UK, the largest men’s health charity in the UK, and leading hygiene services provider **phs** Group have

teamed up to support football clubs who want to help their fans by providing access to incontinence waste bins and products at every game.

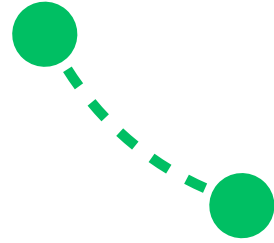
We also want to get men talking – not just about what’s happening on the pitch – but what’s happening in their lives too.

Football is a powerful force for change. Together we can break down the barriers faced by men diagnosed with prostate cancer, and men who experience urinary continence. Together we can raise awareness and bury the stigma. To ensure that every match can be enjoyed by every man: every grandfather, every father, every brother, every son, colleague, friend and teammate.

Together we can get men, Back in the Game.



2 The State of Play



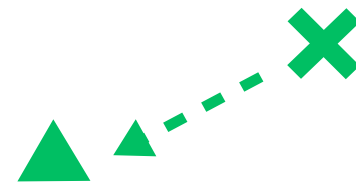
For football fans, their club plays a massive role in their lives.

For men diagnosed with prostate cancer, undergoing treatment, and then trying to go about their usual activities after, being able to go to a match and watch their team alongside mates and fellow supporters is the sort of stuff that makes life worth living.

But each match day, there are seats that lie empty. Instead of being on their feet cheering their team in victory or defeat,

many men are playing it safe, sitting at home alone, feeling anxious and depressed.

The stats are a wake-up call. **One in eight** men will get prostate cancer. If you're over 50, if you're Black, or if your dad or brother had it, you're at even higher risk. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men with **52,000 diagnosed each year**. Of these men, around **65%** will go on to experience urinary incontinence as a side-effect, after prostate cancer treatment. Men can become incontinent for a few weeks, some for a few months or years, and some for the rest of their lives.



A STADIUM IN STATISTICS

1 in 8 men

will get diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime.¹



Wembley Stadium has a capacity of **90,000**



If every seat was taken up by a man, prostate cancer could affect up to

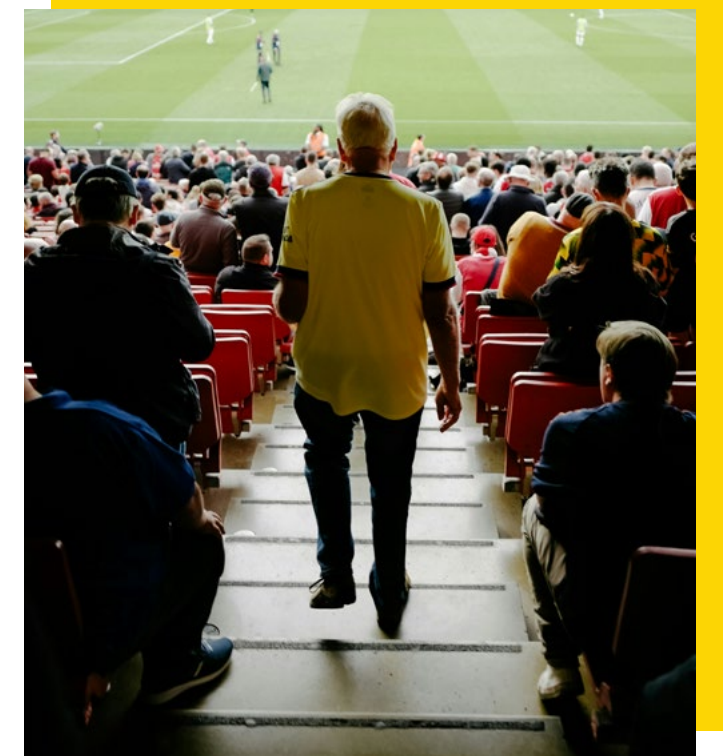
11,250 fans at Wembley.

3 Understanding Urinary Incontinence

It's often a secret subject that few are aware of. Urinary Incontinence (UI): the urgent, frequent and uncontrolled passing of urine.

A common side effect of prostate cancer treatment, incontinence can be life changing for the men who experience it.

Each day away from home is dominated by thoughts about leaks. No longer can they venture out without a pre-match analysis. How many washroom stops will I need on the way? Will there be a long queue for the toilet? How many pads should I take? Where do I put the used ones? Where can I get more if they run out?



For many football fans, a match ticket is pointless if there is no incontinence pad to go with it, no bin to discreetly and hygienically dispose of it, no safe space for dignity.

Anxious, sometimes embarrassed and worried about the lack of facilities and products while at a game, men are simply giving up going.

The result? A big loss for fans and a big loss for clubs – from grass roots to the Premier League to national fixtures.

4 Missed Matches

Almost a third of male football fans (**32%**) experiencing urinary incontinence in the poll say they have supported their club for over 30 years. The average fan notches up 26 years of loyal support and some netting as many as seven decades watching their team play.

But, since becoming incontinent, one in seven (**14%**) has blown the full-time whistle on attending matches and half (**50%**) say they now attend fewer games. In the 55 years plus age group – those who have undoubtedly supported their club the longest – more than a quarter (**27%**) avoid the risk and choose to stay at home.

The vast majority (**74%**) say having urinary incontinence simply puts them off. Three in five (**62%**) are anxious about leaking, while a lack of bins to dispose of products used to manage their condition is a worry for one in five (**20%**). **27%** of men with urinary incontinence aged 55+ no longer attend live games or sporting events.

MATCH ATTENDANCE RESULTS

How, if at all, has the number of live games / sporting events you attend changed since becoming incontinent?

FOOTBALL

I no longer attend live games / sporting events: **14%**
 I attend fewer live games / sporting events: **50%**
 I attend the same number of live games / sporting events: **26%**
 I attend more live games / sporting events: **8%**
 N/A – I have always been incontinent: **1%**

ALL SPORTS

I no longer attend live games / sporting events: **13%**
 I attend fewer live games / sporting events: **49%**
 I attend the same number of live games / sporting events: **29%**
 I attend more live games / sporting events: **7%**
 N/A – I have always been incontinent: **2%**

Experiencing Urinary Incontinence (UI) puts me off attending live sporting events

FOOTBALL

Agree (net): **74%**
 Disagree (net): **13%**

ALL SPORTS

Agree (net): **72%**
 Strongly agree: **31%**
 Somewhat agree: **41%**
 Neither agree nor disagree: **14%**
 Somewhat disagree: **6%**
 Strongly disagree: **6%**
 Disagree (net): **12%**
 N/A: **2%**

For what reasons, if any, do you not attend live sporting events / games or attend less live sporting events / games?

Anxious about leaking: **62%**
 Due to my urinary incontinence: **57%**
 Cost of tickets: **36%**
 Feeling paranoid and self-conscious in general: **34%**
 I worry that other fans will think I smell: **27%**
 There are no bins/facilities to dispose of my products: **20%**
 Mobility reasons: **18%**
 Feeling unwell due to side effects of my prostate cancer/treatment: **3%**
 Other: **2%**
 There are no particular reasons: **2%**

5 No Winners



Men with incontinence told us as a result of not feeling able to attend any games or live sporting events, or having to cut down on how often they go, many men have lost their confidence (62%), feel a part of their identity is missing (42%), are sad, depressed or angry (33%) at their predicament, and increasingly lonely (28%).

More than three in five (64%) miss the buzz and excitement of a match day and spending time with friends (42%).

If you've stopped going to live games / sporting events due to your incontinence, what, if anything do you miss most about going to live games / sporting events?

- The buzz and excitement of match / event day: 64%
- Spending time with friends: 42%
- The feeling of belonging to something: 21%
- Sense of identity: 12%
- There is nothing I miss most: 12%
- Away days: 9%

How, if at all, has stopping attending games / live sporting events or attending less games / live sporting events due to your incontinence affected you?

- Loss of confidence: 62%
- Fewer social activities: 47%
- Affected mood: 43%
- I feel like I've lost part of my identity/who I am: 42%
- Smaller social circle: 34%
- Sad/depressed/angry: 33%
- Increased loneliness: 28%
- Lost sense of community: 22%
- Concern that other fans no longer see me as a 'true fan': 16%
- No effect – this has not affected me at all: 2%



6 Where's the Support?

Over a third (35%) of male fans who experience incontinence say their football club is not aware of the needs of men with the condition and, while two in five (42%) feel cared for by their club, almost a quarter (23%) do not.

Almost two in five (39%) do not think that there is good awareness generally about male incontinence, and the vast majority (80%) wish more people knew about the problem and its association with prostate cancer treatment.

I feel that my club / most visited live sports venue is aware of the needs of men who experience incontinence

FOOTBALL
Agree (net): 38%
Disagree (net): 35%

ALL SPORTS
Agree (net): 38%
Strongly agree: 16%
Somewhat agree: 22%
Neither agree nor disagree: 26%
Somewhat disagree: 18%
Strongly disagree: 15%
Disagree (net): 33%
N/A: 3%

I feel cared for by my club / most visited live sports venue

FOOTBALL
Agree (net): 42%
Disagree (net): 23%

ALL SPORTS
Agree (net): 41%
Strongly agree: 13%
Somewhat agree: 28%
Neither agree nor disagree: 29%
Somewhat disagree: 15%
Strongly disagree: 10%
Disagree (net): 25%
N/A: 5%

There is good awareness that men experience incontinence

✓ Agree (net): 44%
✗ Disagree (net): 39%

I wish there was more awareness of male urinary incontinence, as a result of prostate cancer treatment

✓ Agree (net): 80%
✗ Disagree (net): 5%

Where's the Support?

FANS AFFECTED ARE MORE LIKELY TO ATTEND IF THERE ARE:



Male incontinence bins:

62%



Vending machines for products:

53%



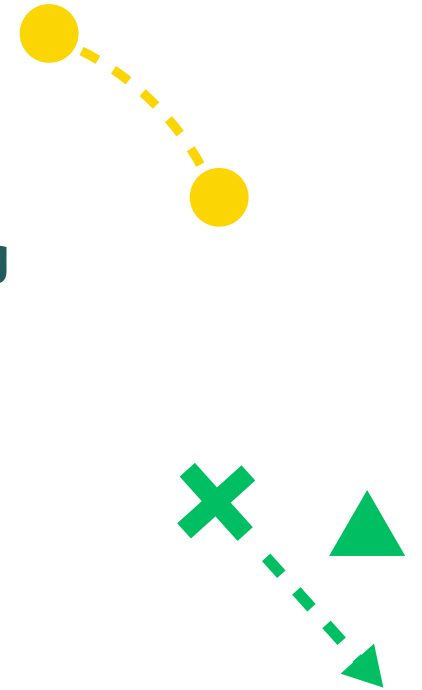
A 'no waiting' toilet card:

72%



AWAY DAYS

Highlighting just how much of a challenge it is for a man experiencing urinary incontinence to join in on away days, almost half (49%) of those affected have to stop two or three times to change pads due to leaks on a four-hour journey by road. For one in 10, it can be as many as five times.



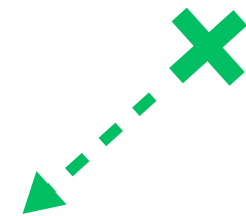
TOILET PITSTOPS

30%
Once

49%
2-3 times

15%
4-5 times

Being able to skip queues to use the toilet urgently and having bins in male washrooms to dispose of used pads hygienically and discreetly, along with vending machines for products to cope with symptoms, would encourage more fans with incontinence to attend.



7 Talking a Good Game

Some men tend to avoid awkward conversations, using humour and deflection as a form of defence. But it seems that within football, men aren't even doing this, with most choosing not to share their experiences at all.

Only half of men (50%) have told anyone they go with to a game that they are experiencing incontinence, while over a quarter (27%) would never entertain the idea of sharing their experience.

It's a shame so few do share, because of those who did open up, almost nine in 10 (87%) say those they had told were supportive of them and their needs.

For men who are reluctant to discuss their problem with a pal, almost two thirds (61%) are too embarrassed and a third (33%) are worried their friends would tease them.

Have you shared that you have male incontinence with other sports fans/friends who attend(ed) games with you?

Yes (net): 50%
 Yes, multiple people: 21%
 Yes, one person: 29%
 No, but I would consider this: 23%
 No, I would never do this: 27%
No (net): 50%

If yes, how supportive, if at all, were they of you and your needs?

Supportive (net): 87%
 Very supportive: 50%
 Somewhat supportive: 38%
 Not very supportive: 9%
 Not supportive at all: 3%
 Not supportive (net): 12%
 Prefer not to say: 1%

If no, why, if for any reasons, have you not shared this?

Embarrassment: 61%
 It's a private matter and they don't need to know: 52%
 Worried that they will take the mickey out of me: 33%
 They won't understand: 23%
 There are no particular reasons: 8%
 Prefer not to say: 1%

8 Washrooms: What the Crowd Think

This poll also probed the general opinions and awareness about urinary incontinence among 1,006 male sports enthusiasts who regularly attend live sporting events, including 898 football fans.

The research reveals that two in five (40%) fans do not know that men who have had treatment for prostate cancer can experience ongoing urinary incontinence and more than one in seven (13%) are unsure about the side-effects.

What many seem sure of though is that they would like to see improvements in washroom facilities while in a stadium or clubhouse, particularly in terms of better hygiene (52%) and more facilities (49%) as well as increased privacy (33%), improved access for disabled fans (29%) and the availability of essential supplies (27%).

Out of 12 sports, football came third from bottom of the table for washroom satisfaction.

While almost half (48%) of football supporters are content with the male toilets at their club, a significant quarter (24%) would send them off. Maybe surprisingly, satisfaction levels are lower for Premier League, Championship and national club facilities than in the lower leagues.



SATISFACTION LEVELS AT FOOTBALL CLUBS

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the current washroom facilities when watching sport live?

Satisfied (net): 48%

Very satisfied: 11%

Quite satisfied: 37%

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied: 26%

Quite dissatisfied: 20%

Very dissatisfied: 4%

Dissatisfied (net): 24%

N/A – I do not use washroom facilities when watching sport live: 2%

LEAGUE BREAKDOWN

National: 50%

Premier League: 50%

Championship: 50%

League 1: 54%

League 2: 60%

Grass roots: 46%



Washroom satisfaction breakdown by sport

Baseball: 63%

Basketball: 60%

Badminton: 58%

Golf: 54%

Boxing: 54%

Athletics: 53%

Hockey: 51%

Tennis: 51%

Swimming: 49%

Football: 48%

Rugby: 47%

Cricket: 46%

What improvements, if any, would you like to see in washroom facilities when watching live sport?

ALL SPORTS

Enhanced cleanliness and maintenance: 52%

Increased number of washrooms: 49%

Shorter wait times: 49%

Improved privacy features: 33%

More modern and comfortable amenities: 31%

Better accessibility for disabled fans: 29%

Availability of essential supplies: 27%

There are no improvements I would like to see: 3%

Unsure: 3%

9 A Business Loss for Clubs

Not only are men missing out on the game they love, clubs, too, are missing out on a huge amount of business. The average football fan spends almost **£80 each game**, including their ticket, travel, merchandise, food and drink. Just one match missed is a loss for both club and supporter.

Taking an average stadium capacity in the Premier League (EPL) of **37,559** and based on **one in 25 men** over the age of 40 experiencing urinary incontinence, according to previously established research, that means that some 1,500 fans at each stadium could be affected by UI.

If one in seven (**14%**) of those no longer attends live matches as a result, that's **210** unbought tickets and loss of associated expenditure each game. With the average football fan laying out **£80** a time to watch their team play, that means **£16,800** in lost revenue each time to the club for each home game, along with transport and catering.

Across all of the EPL's **20** clubs, that represents a potential total deficit of **£168,000** for 10 Premier League games played each week and a whopping **£3.2 million** every season (based on **19** home fixtures).

On average, how much, if anything, do you spend per game / event going to watch live sport? (please consider tickets, merchandise, travel, drinks/food on match day)

Football average: **£79**

National: **£92**

Premier League: **£83**

Championship: **£82**

League 1: **£76**

League 2: **£90**

Grass roots: **£70**



10 Time to Turn the Game Around

When asked how they would feel knowing fellow fans at their club are no longer able to attend games and events because of urinary incontinence and worry over a lack of facilities, almost two in five (**38%**) fans expressed disappointment and concern (**35%**).

Two in five (**42%**) supporters questioned know someone dealing with prostate cancer or the after-effects of urinary incontinence (**37%**), with the same proportion aware of a fellow fan no longer coming to games as a result of their treatment.

Two thirds (**67%**) say they, too, would be put off going to games if they were worried about leaks.

Seven in 10 football fans (**73%**) call on their club to raise awareness about the issue with a similar number (**74%**) wanting the red card shown to inadequate washroom facilities, and for men who are experiencing incontinence issues after prostate cancer to get what they need.

If their club were to do more to entice these supporters back to home games, **71%** say they would feel **immense pride**.



I would like my club / stadium to run an awareness raising campaign on the issue of prostate cancer and male incontinence

Agree (net): 73%
 Strongly agree: 33%
 Somewhat agree: 40%
 Neither agree nor disagree: 20%
 Somewhat disagree: 4%
 Strongly disagree: 1%
Disagree (net): 6%

I would like my club / stadium to install male incontinence facilities for men who have experienced prostate cancer / suffer with incontinence

Agree (net): 74%
 Strongly agree: 29%
 Somewhat agree: 45%
 Neither agree nor disagree: 21%
 Somewhat disagree: 1%
 Strongly disagree: 4%
Disagree (net): 5%

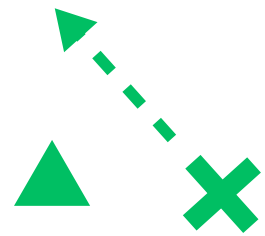
If my club / stadium did more to support men with male incontinence and prostate cancer, it would make me think very highly of my club / stadium

Agree (net): 71%
 Strongly agree: 34%
 Somewhat agree: 38%
 Neither agree nor disagree: 22%
 Somewhat disagree: 4%
 Strongly disagree: 1%
Disagree (net): 5%

If I developed urinary incontinence, it would put me off attending games if there were not suitable facilities

Agree (net): 67%
 Strongly agree: 29%
 Somewhat agree: 38%
 Neither agree nor disagree: 24%
 Somewhat disagree: 5%
 Strongly disagree: 2%
Disagree (net): 7%

11 Bring on the BOG STANDARD and get men Back in the Game



As the largest men's health charity in the UK, Prostate Cancer UK understands the challenges men face during and after their prostate cancer treatment.

With 120,000 customers over 300,000 locations across the UK, **phs** Group is the leading hygiene services provider and knows what men need in a washroom to access products and dispose with dignity.

Together, working with football clubs across the country, we can score a victory for men who experience urinary incontinence. To ensure there are no more missed matches, no men sitting at home instead of celebrating life.

For further information about the **BOG STANDARD** Charter and **Dispose with Dignity**, go to: www.phs.co.uk/BACKINTHEGAME

On the Bench

The **BOG STANDARD** Charter provides a three-tiered benchmark system for football clubs to demonstrate their commitment to supporting fans with prostate cancer and urinary incontinence.

The three tiers are:

Gold

Achieving washroom greatness and raising the **BOG STANDARD** to a commitment to supporting initiatives that drive awareness about prostate cancer and UI.



Silver

In addition to incontinence waste bins, installing vending machines to provide incontinence products if men are caught short while on the go.



Bronze

Installing washroom bins that give men with UI what they need most and achieves the **BOG STANDARD**.



“I couldn’t think of going to a football game when the incontinence was at its worst. Now I can get **Back in the Game**”



Mark Farrington, 56, is a repairs planner, from Horwich in Greater Manchester.

He lives with his wife Kim and has two adult children. He’s been a Manchester United fan since he was child, and also goes to watch his local team, Bolton Wanderers, who are walking distance from his home.

Clubs: Manchester United F.C. and Bolton Wanderers F.C.

Manchester football fan calls for stadiums to support men with incontinence after prostate cancer treatment.

“I like being able to walk down the road to watch my local team again. I couldn’t think of going to a football game when the incontinence was at its worst. It was just too stressful. It’s been a tough few years, but things are looking up now.

“Kim and I have just celebrated our first anniversary. We’ve been together for 28 years, but after the cancer and a few really tough years, with quite a bit of bad luck, we decided to get married and concentrate on us, bring a little extra happiness into our lives.

“I had an accident cycling a few years ago, and broke my shoulder, I was 54 at the time. I was seeing my doctor regularly during my recovery and he mentioned while I was there that I should get a PSA blood test.

“The test result showed my PSA level was high– so my doctor sent me for a biopsy which revealed I had prostate cancer, so I had surgery to remove my prostate.

“I was really pleased with how well I felt after my surgery. It’s the next stage that’s difficult. You have a catheter for a week, and then when that’s out, you’re in unknown territory.

“The incontinence side of things, you’re just not used to it. It’s a traumatic, major operation, and then you have to deal with incontinence after, and you’re just not prepared for it.

“In the beginning I didn’t want to go far at all because the incontinence was bad, and I would have to change pads quite often and that would be too stressful. Then even when you do

get a little more confident to go that bit further, you worry constantly – will I leak, will I be able to find anywhere to change my pad? Going to a football game was out of the question.

“I wouldn’t even go to the pub with friends for a long time, let alone a game where you might be queuing for the loo at a football stadium. When you’re incontinent anything can set things off, so standing, sitting or even walking for a long time might mean you need to change your pad more often. You just can’t hold it in like you used to before the prostate cancer treatment.

“Eventually I did start getting out and about a bit more. I like craft beer, and in these types of places there’s only ever one loo and I would go in and see bins for period products and I would think – why not my pads? I used to have to take out doggy bags and pack them up and put them in my bag or take them to a different bin. I used to feel so self-conscious.

“Having bins for me to have disposed of my incontinence pads would have made such a difference to me. Especially if you knew where you were going would have a bin. You’d know you have somewhere to put it – I would 100% have gone to some games if things had been different.

“Things are much better for me now. It’s been nearly two years, and I wear a pad now and again as a back-up, especially if I am having a few drinks. I won’t ever be 100% dry, and I accept that, and get that I’ll have to wear a pad every now and again forever.

“At the end of the day, I’m here, and I’m grateful and you just get on with it. And now – if there are bins at Manchester United, I can get Back In the Game, and that’s absolutely brilliant news.”

“Having bins for me to have disposed of my incontinence pads would have made such a difference to me”





“Nothing stops me going to see Cardiff City, but things could be made easier for men like me.”

Mark Lewis, 57, is a Cardiff City fan from Merthyr Tydfil. He was diagnosed with prostate cancer in November 2016, has experienced incontinence and now has a urinary stoma.

Club:
Cardiff City F.C.

Cardiff City fan calls for incontinence bins for men.

“I’d lost quite a bit of bladder control. I was having to wear Tena pants, which after you’ve leaked can make you feel like you’re walking around with a soggy nappy, desperate for somewhere change it.

“It’s hard to believe how much it affects you until you’ve been through it yourself. Everything revolves around the toilet. Even if you’ve had a wee, you could still leak a few minutes later. I think I know every toilet and layby in Merthyr and South Wales by now, because of the number of times I’ve had to stop to jump out for a wee or change my incontinence pad. But what do I do with it once I have changed it?

“Depression can really set in because you can’t do the things that you want to do. I’m a Cardiff City season ticket holder, and there’s a gang of us who go down to the games together. Now my pals have to change their plans to accommodate me. They don’t mind, but it does make you feel bad. Some of my mates have free bus passes, but we all go on the train now to make sure that there’s a toilet and a bin for me.

“In 2023 I discovered the cancer had moved from the prostate to the bladder, and I had a nine-hour operation, and they fitted a urinary stoma* for me. It works brilliantly for me but comes with its own challenges for disposing of it too. You need a sanitary bin if you need to change your stoma. There are no bins for men’s pads or stomas or anything like that at the football, the pub or any public toilets really.

“I don’t think anyone realises how common this is and how much of a problem it is for men, so this is a great campaign to raise awareness. It’s hard for men to talk about this stuff but once people start opening up about it, everyone starts chipping in about their issues or someone they know.

“At the football, I said I was off to the loo because I had a stoma, and then all of a sudden in our row, someone said, ‘He’s got a stoma too’. Then someone else popped their hand up and said they wore incontinence pads, then someone else too, and all of a sudden you realise how common it is.

“Nothing stops me going to see Cardiff City, I’ll be there by hook or by crook, but things could be made much easier for men like me. It’s totally changed my life. We used to go for a full day out and really enjoy ourselves, but now I just get there to watch the game and get back again.

“The facilities at Cardiff are great, but the cubicles are always busy, there’s always a queue and it’s a stress getting to the loo and you do feel a bit self-conscious queuing. When you do get in and change your incontinence pad or stoma bag, there’s no sanitary bin in the loos. Your only option is to carry it out with you and put it in the waste bins where the cups and the food are. It isn’t ideal but what can you do?

“I’ve thought about using the disabled loos, but I don’t want people accusing me of not being disabled – and I’m not. I just need a sanitary bin, it’s not much to ask for and it would make things easier and much less stressful.”

Mark has raised over £3000 for Prostate Cancer UK, via its Prostate United Walking Challenge. To donate, head to prostatecanceruk.org/fundraising/mark-lewis-prostate-united-walking-challenge



“I just need a sanitary bin, it’s not much to ask for and it would make things easier and much less stressful.”

* Urostomy

A urostomy is carried out during a radical cystectomy. A small section of the small bowel is removed and connected to your ureters (the two tubes that normally carry urine out of the kidneys).

The surgeon then creates a small hole in the surface of your abdomen and the open end of the removed bowel is placed in this hole, creating an opening known as a stoma.

A special waterproof bag is placed over the stoma to collect urine. A stoma nurse will teach you how to care for your stoma, and how and when to change the bag.

“I had to get in touch with the stadium team at Tottenham to ask them to change where my season ticket was, so I was closer to the toilets.”



Tony Ellis , 62, a old business owner originally from Windsor - is a lifelong Tottenham fan and travels down to London for every Spurs home game. He now runs a printing business based in Newcastle, where he moved 20 years ago, and lives with his wife and his grandson. He was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2018, and had surgery to remove his prostate, which has been successful in treating his cancer. Tony has experienced incontinence since having the life-saving surgery.

Club:
Tottenham Hotspur F.C.

Newcastle based Spurs fan who travels to London for every home game leads drive to get men with incontinence Back in the Game.

“I decided to go to the doctor because my friend and business partner Steve was diagnosed with prostate cancer, and he told me – ‘you should go and get yourself checked’. I didn’t have any symptoms or anything like that, and I sort of went to keep him happy. I was surprised when I went through the process and eventually the doctor told me I had prostate cancer.

“I don’t think anyone can ever prepare you to hear those words. It was hard. But I’m so grateful to my friend for pushing me to get myself checked out, because I am here now, and you just have to get on with things.

“The incontinence side of things, I wasn’t prepared for, but I don’t think anyone ever is. It can really get you down, and you don’t want to burden your family, so you don’t really talk about that side of things that much. I just had to keep reminding myself to get on with things.

“I’m quite a stubborn sort of person – and nothing was going to stop me going to the football. I think all in all I only missed about six weeks of games. I decided that prostate cancer and incontinence wasn’t going to stop me going, but it isn’t easy.

“I travel down to London from Newcastle on the train for the home games, which can be around four and a half hours door to door. When I book my train, I make sure I get the service where I can choose my seat, and I book myself next to the train’s toilet so I can change my pad in there if I need to. The bin in there is

quite small and awkward, and shouldn’t really be for incontinence pads but what else can I do?

“When I get to London, I then have to get the tube to the ground, and obviously there are no loos on the tube. I know which tube stations have pubs near them, so I know where I need to jump off if I need to use those loos to change my pad. More often than not there are no bins in those toilets which is frustrating – what do people expect you to do with them? Flush them down the toilet, carry them out into the street? The constant planning and worry really does mount up.

“I had to get in touch with the stadium team at Tottenham to ask them to change where my season ticket is, so I am closer to the toilets. I had to prove that I had prostate cancer and explain why I need to be close to the toilets, and they were great about it, moved me no problem. I am constantly having to go to the toilet and occasionally have to change my pad during a game, so I wanted to be at the end of a row and close to the loos so that I don’t disturb anyone. I also don’t want to miss too much of the game!

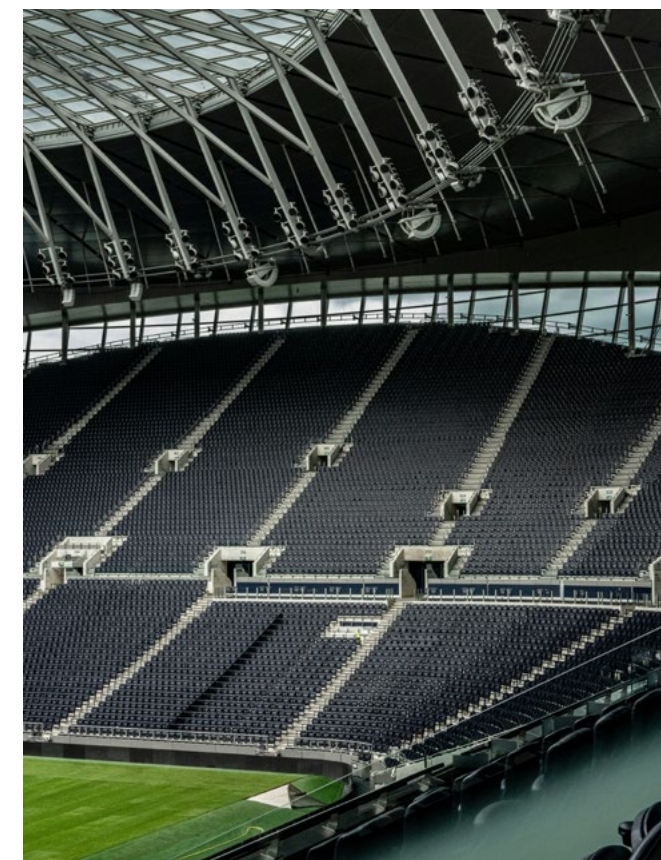
“I do wish there were sanitary bins in the stadium, it would be nice to know that’s one less

thing for me to be stressing about. You don’t want to be carrying used incontinence pads around with you in your pocket and keep them on you, but sometimes that’s the only option, it’s just not right.

“I go to the games with the same group of guys and rather than be embarrassed about it, I decided to be really open about it and just make a joke of it. I thought, there’s no point in hiding it or feeling awkward about it, and everyone has been great about it. When I see them I wave my pads around and make a joke that I’m ready for a few drinks today!

“I know this isn’t easy for everyone though. Other men might not be as ready as me to make a joke about things and get down to the games no matter what.

“You see club managers and programme presenters wearing the Prostate Cancer UK badge, and that’s great – but I think it’s important to support men with what they really need after prostate cancer too – sanitary bins, pads, more openness about incontinence and prostate cancer. It’s not much to ask and if we had that, more of us could get back in the game.”



“I wanted to be at the end of a row and close to the loos so that I don’t disturb anyone. I also don’t want to miss too much of the game!”



“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 I 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.”

“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.”



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