



## Rangers FC Disability Equality Survey

### Summary Report

June 2023

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1. Executive summary
2. Key findings
3. About the respondents
4. Survey Responses
  - 4.1 Equality
  - 4.2 Barriers to attending
  - 4.3 Services and facilities (matchday)
  - 4.4 Services and facilities (stadium services)
  - 4.4 Club ratings
  - 4.5 Club communication
5. Supporter comments and suggestions
6. Conclusions
7. Recommendations

This document can be made available in various formats such as in larger print, audio-format and in other languages, as appropriate.



## 1. Executive summary

This is a summary report of the first Disability Equality Survey carried out by Rangers FC and the first of its kind carried out by a Scottish Football Club.

The survey took place from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and forms a key element of the club's Fan Engagement Strategy.

This piece of work also forms a part of Rangers Accessibility Strategy by supporting the club's commitment to develop, improve, and effectively implement, accessible services for all disabled supporters.

The survey was carried out across all season-ticket holders and MyGers members (around 72,000 supporters) and was aimed at gathering the views of:

- disabled supporters who are already in contact with the club; and,
- disabled supporters who have not been in contact with the club prior to the survey.

The survey was conducted primarily using Google forms and was also offered in alternative formats, where required, to respondents.

The survey had three aims:

1. To gather baseline information that will assist the club to understand the numbers of disabled people who attend matches and/or require support to use our services and facilities;
2. To gain a better understanding of the needs of our disabled supporters, e.g., any adaptations, arrangements or equipment required to allow attendance at matches and access to our services; and
3. To gather feedback on the services and facilities currently provided by the club.

The survey results have demonstrated that Rangers have incorporated a range of key equality objectives to:

- effectively engage with Rangers' disabled supporters. This is evidenced by the fact that, specifically in relation to access issues, 70% of respondents stated that they were contacting the club for the first time (in relation to access issues).

- have gathered important information that provides a baseline for the club to measure against in the future.
- have underlined the importance of engaging with disabled supporters to find out about their matchday experience and in particular the barriers that they may experience.

The survey has also identified specific ways, however, in which present practices can be enhanced. This applies to a range of inter-dependent organisational activities, for example, club communication and physical access to the stadium.

These results will be used to advise the club on how to continually improve the match-day experience and improve access to our services and facilities for all disabled supporters.



## 2. Key findings

### Response from disabled supporters:

With over 900 disabled supporters taking part, the response to this survey reinforces the importance of effective, ongoing engagement with our disabled supporters. The response also compares well with the survey carried out by Level Playing Field in 2022, where a total of 1300 disabled supporters participated from all 92 league clubs in England and Wales.

The survey indicates that our disabled supporters are keen to engage with the club and support our aim of continually improving our services and facilities.

### Equality.

**Disability:** Rangers' disabled supporters represent the broadest range of impairment groups (from physical impairments, sensory impairments, autoimmune conditions, and learning difficulties, and so on). This reinforces the need for the club to continually engage and consult with our disabled supporter base to effectively understand and address their needs. It also demonstrates that we should always strive for best practice to provide an inclusive service.

Physical impairment is the largest group of disabled people represented in the survey. This highlights the need to continually improve the accessibility of all areas of the ground when considering any development of the stadium.

**Age:** Almost 50% of respondents are aged 55 or over. This is in line with the trend of an aging population and raises issues for the club to consider, specifically around the physical access to the stadium, seat allocation and so on.

**Barriers to attending:** We asked supporters to detail the barriers that they face when attending matches. They highlighted several areas including:

**Physical access to the stadium:** 38% respondents highlighted this as an issue.

**Parking at the stadium:** The issue of accessible car parking was a recurring theme throughout the survey with 48% of respondents stated it as an issue.

An example provided, "Parking for me at the stadium is a big problem, I have to park a long way away and walk for 10-15 mins which is a problem."

**Attitudes of staff/other supporters:** Over 17% of respondents stated that this was an issue.

One supporter stated, “My daughter sometimes attends, and the large metal barriers and volume of people can be quite overwhelming for her. Stewards are usually good with letting her access through an exit but there could be more access points.”

**Anxiety or lack of confidence:** Over a quarter of disabled supporters taking part stated that this is an issue for them when attending matches.

A supporter said, “Anxiety around others, being immunosuppressed (recognise that this is difficult to avoid), people using vapes within the stadium.”



### 3. About the respondents

#### **3. About the respondents:**

The survey was designed to target disabled supporters and/or supporters who require support to access our services and facilities. This is an important distinction as many people who would meet the legal definition of being a disabled person, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, would not necessarily identify as such, but would require support to attend a match or visit Edmiston House or the Blue-Sky Lounge, for example.

1,346 initially people took part in the survey. Following a sifting process that identified respondents who do not consider themselves to be a disabled person and/or did not have any access requirements/support needs, the number was reduced to 971 people who fully meet the criteria as a disabled person.



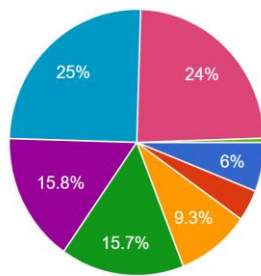
## 4. Survey responses

### 4.1 Equality:

The first three questions focussed on areas of equality, that is, age, sex, and disability. This provides an overview of the demographic of the participants taking part in the survey.

**Table 1: Age.**

How old are you?  
971 responses



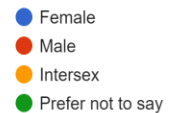
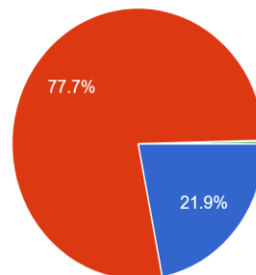
Age range	No.	%
Under 18	58	(6%)
18-24	37	(3.7%)
25-34	9	(9.3%)
35-44	152	(15.7%)
45-54	153	(15.8%)
55-64	243	(25%)
65+	233	(24%)

Although there is a good spread of ages represented in the survey, over 45s is the most represented group, with over 64% of respondents falling into this age group.

**Table 2: Sex.**

Sex  
971 responses

Female:	213 (21.9%)
Male:	754 (77.7%)
Intersex:	0 (0%)
Prefer not to say	4 (0.004%)



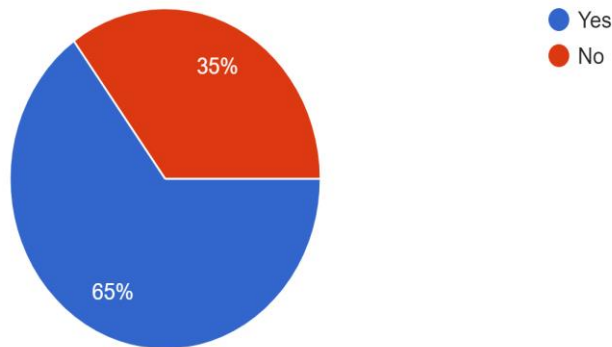
This is broadly in line with the overall support base, 77% of survey participants identified as male.

### Table 3: Disability.

All respondents were asked “Are you a disabled person?”

Are you a disabled person?

971 responses



The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who *“has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”*.

UEFA has adopted the Social Model of Disability definition of disability as *“the physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological and attitudinal barriers that cause disability, not impairments.”* This is the definition that the club has adopted for the purposes of delivering the most accessible services for our supporters although the legal definition takes precedence in matters of law.

Identifying as a disabled person can be a complex issue. For example, many disabled people do not equate the societal barriers they personally experience to that of a disabled person, although they would invariably meet the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010.

This is reflected in our survey results, with 65% of survey participants directly identifying as a disabled person, with 35% of respondents indirectly identifying, by describing a clear access requirement/support need, indicating that they would meet the definition as a disabled person.

Therefore 100% of respondents meet the Equality Act and social model definitions as a disabled person.



## Access Issues (impairment groups):

Respondents were asked which impairment group they believed they fitted. As would be expected, the Rangers supporters present the very broadest range of impairments. Of those identifying a specific impairment, physical impairment was the largest group, although many respondents selected multiple options. This includes all wheelchair-users and people with other physical impairments.

## Access issues (impairment groups):

To assist us in addressing the barriers experienced by our supporters, please tick the box with the category you would use from the following list:

**Table 4: Access issues (impairment groups)**

Impairment group	No.	%
Autoimmune: (for example, multiple sclerosis, HIV, Crohn's/ulcerative colitis)	108	(11.1%)
Learning difficulties: (for example, Down's Syndrome)	45	(4.6%)
Mental health issue: (for example, depression, bi-polar)	150	(15.4%)
Neuro-divergent condition: (for example, autistic spectrum, Dyslexia, dyspraxia)	97	(10%)
Physical impairment: (for example, wheelchair-user, cerebral palsy)	231	(23.8%)
Sensory impairment: (hearing impairment)	71	(7.3%)
Sensory impairment: (visual impairment)	54	(5.6%)
Other: If none of the categories above apply to you, please specify the nature of your impairment	286	(29.5%)

It is worth noting that, although almost 30% of respondents ticked the "other" option, on further investigation, almost all fall within one of the categories provided, for example, a significant number of respondents stated that they have arthritis or physical conditions, which would fall into the category of "physical impairment".

A broad range of impairment related barriers were described by respondents, with the accessibility of seating a common theme throughout the survey, an example provided here:

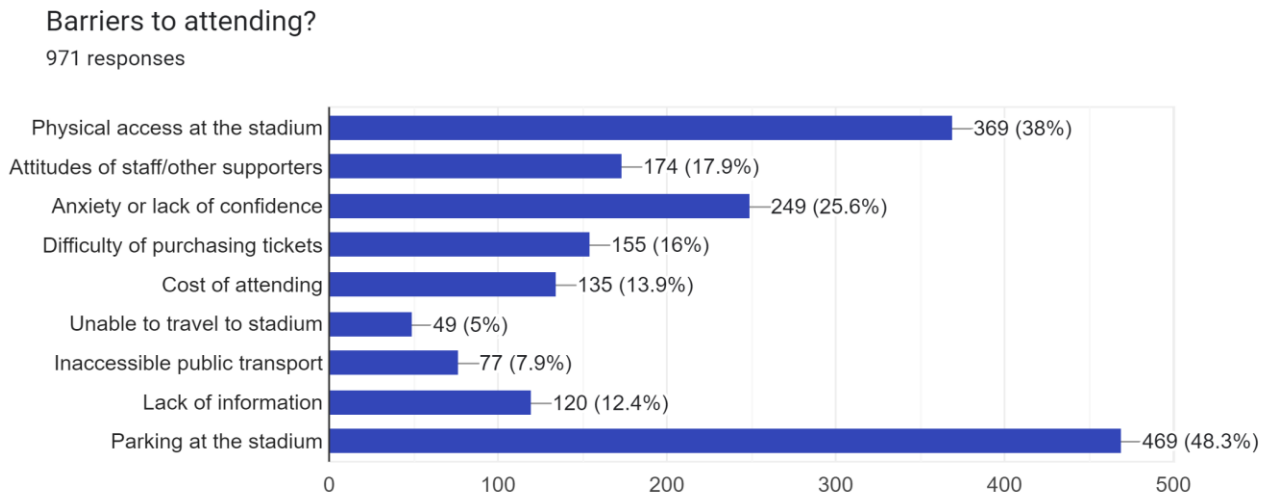
*"Takes several minutes to reach my seat at the back of the stand and sometimes have to sit and rest if there is a seat available."*

*There are also many examples of supporters with complex needs, including:*

*"I suffer from dilated cardiomyopathy, bendopenea, ventricular tachycardia, panic attacks and depression. I am also awaiting a heart transplant."*

## 4.2 Barriers to attending?

Table 5: Barriers to attending?



The importance of good customer engagement/communication skills was underlined in the responses, with one in five respondents citing anxiety or lack of confidence and 14.3% stating that attitudes of staff/other supporters as a barrier to attending matches.

Difficulty in purchasing tickets and lack of information were also highlighted as issues for the club to consider.

Physical accessibility of our services was highlighted most prominently with 32% of respondents stating physical access at the stadium as a barrier to attending matches. Almost half of respondents (48.1%) stating parking at the stadium as an issue, as demonstrated by the response below,

*“Getting from the Albion Car Park to the stadium is an issue. There is a lot of abuse of the disabled spaces in the car park, people double parking, etc. The drop kerbs from the car park to the stadium are poor and you have got to cross the busy road. When leaving the stadium, you get ushered out with the other supporters rather than leaving by a designated exit.”*

### 4.3 Services and facilities (matchday) currently used when travelling to Ibrox stadium?

**Table 6: Services and facilities (matchday)**

➤ Accessible parking	459 (47.3%)
➤ The option to bring a Personal Assistant/companion	230 (23.7%)
➤ Accessible entrances	304 (31.3%)
➤ Accessibility information	135 (13.9%)
➤ Contactable Disability Access Officer	202 (20.8%)
➤ Drop-off and pick-up points	170 (17.5%)
➤ Visiting the stadium on non-match days	115 (11.8%)
➤ Additional communication support	103 (10.6%)

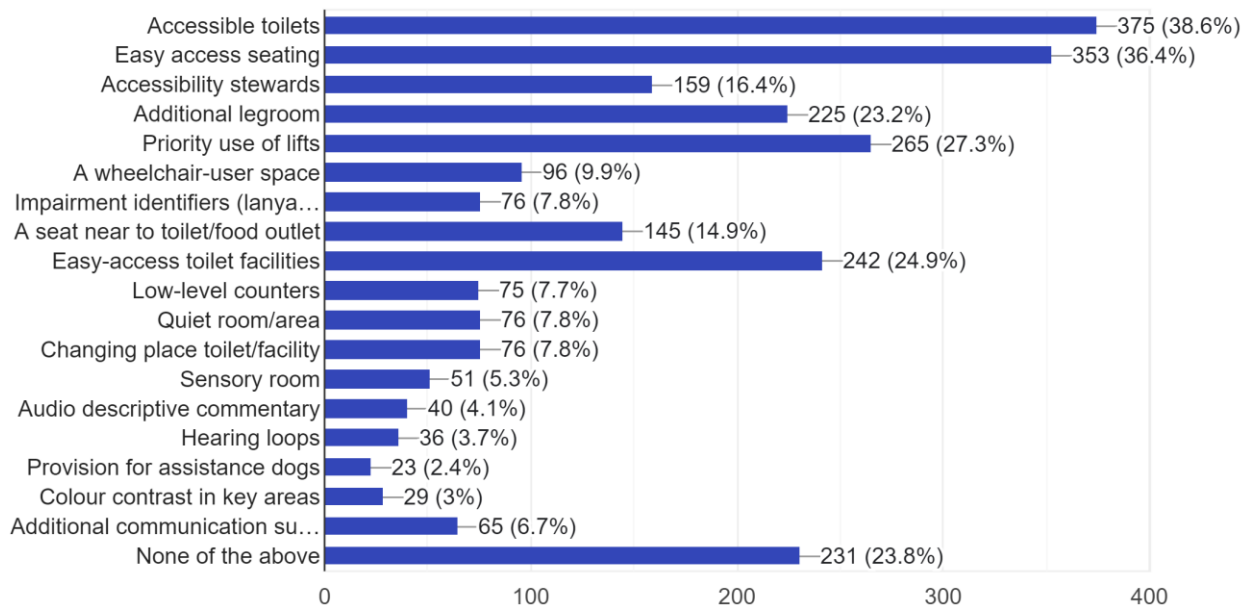
As would be expected, there is a broad range across all service use on matchday. The biggest demand is for accessible parking, with over 47% stating that they currently use or would benefit from having access to this facility.

## 4.4 Services and Facilities (stadium services).

**Table 7: Services and facilities (stadium services)?**

Which of the following services and facilities do you currently use or would benefit from whilst inside the Ibrox stadium?

971 responses



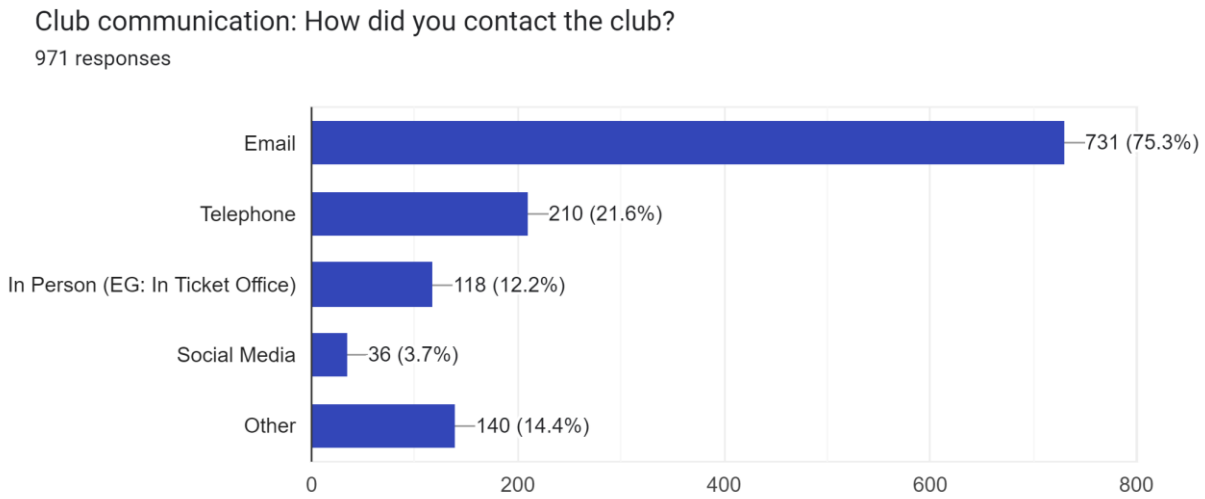
Respondents expressed a range of opinions in relation to services offered by the club.

The largest response was in relation to improvement of physical accessibility within the stadium, including, 28.4% citing easy-access seating with over 40% highlighting accessible toilets and 21% priority access to lifts.

Highlighting the need for additional accessible facilities, 6.5% of respondents confirmed that they would benefit from access to a changing place toilet.

## 4.5 Club communication.

**Table 8: Club communication: How did you contact the club?**



Most respondents (73.4%) contacted the club by email.

An example is provided below:

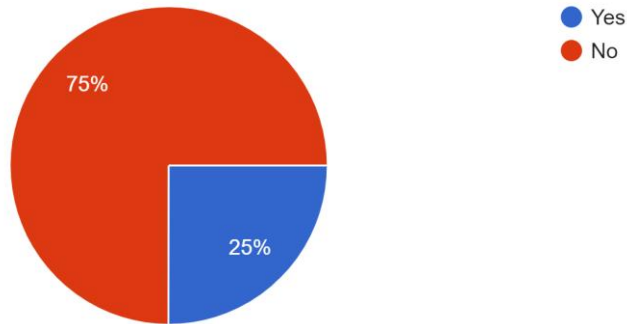
“I have always found the ticket centre, MyGers and SLO staff to be helpful and never had any issues with my general queries. I have found them polite, and they have always answered queries to the best of their ability.”

## 4.6 Disability Matters.

**Table 9: Disability Matters contact**

Have you registered as a disabled person with Rangers FC?

971 responses

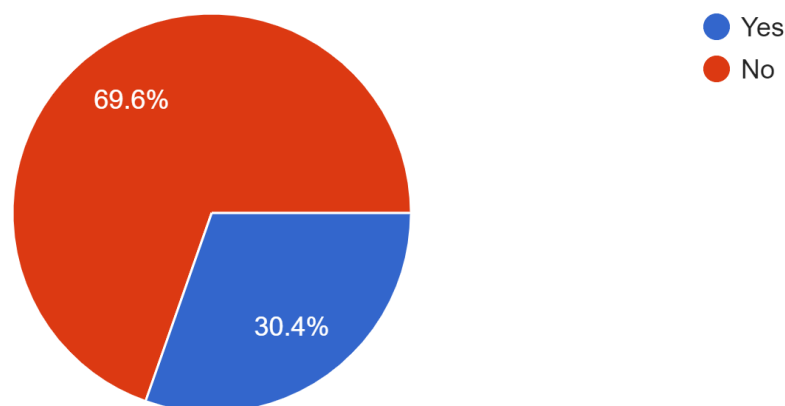


75% of respondents have not previously registered with the club. This is encouraging as it demonstrates that the club is engaging with supporters for the first time.

**Table 10: Disability Matters contact**

Have you contacted the Disability Matters Team?

971 responses



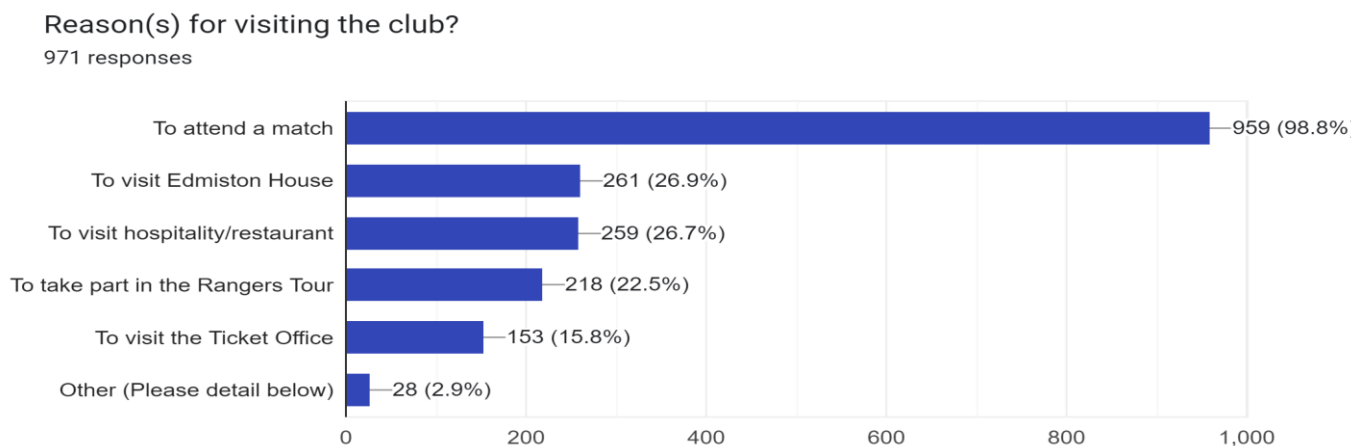
Almost 70% of respondents have not had previous contact with Disability Matters. This provides an opportunity to improve communication and engagement with the support.

## 4.7 Visiting the club.

Almost all respondents (98.8%) primarily visit the club to watch a match.

There is an even spread across visits to the other areas of the club, e.g., Edmiston House, hospitality, etc.

**Table 11: Visiting the club.**

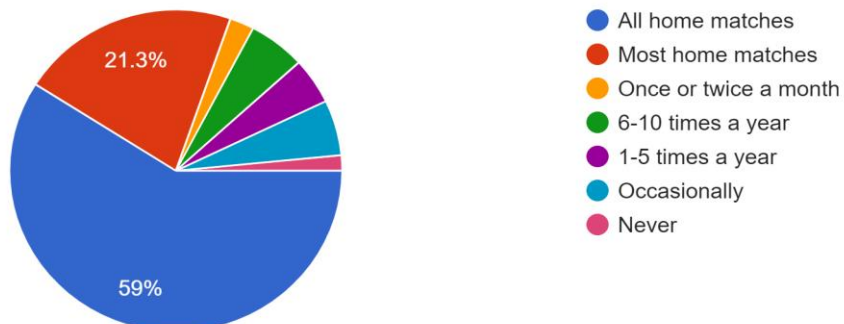


## 4.8 Attending matches.

**Table 12: How often do you attend matches?**

How often do attend Rangers matches?

971 responses

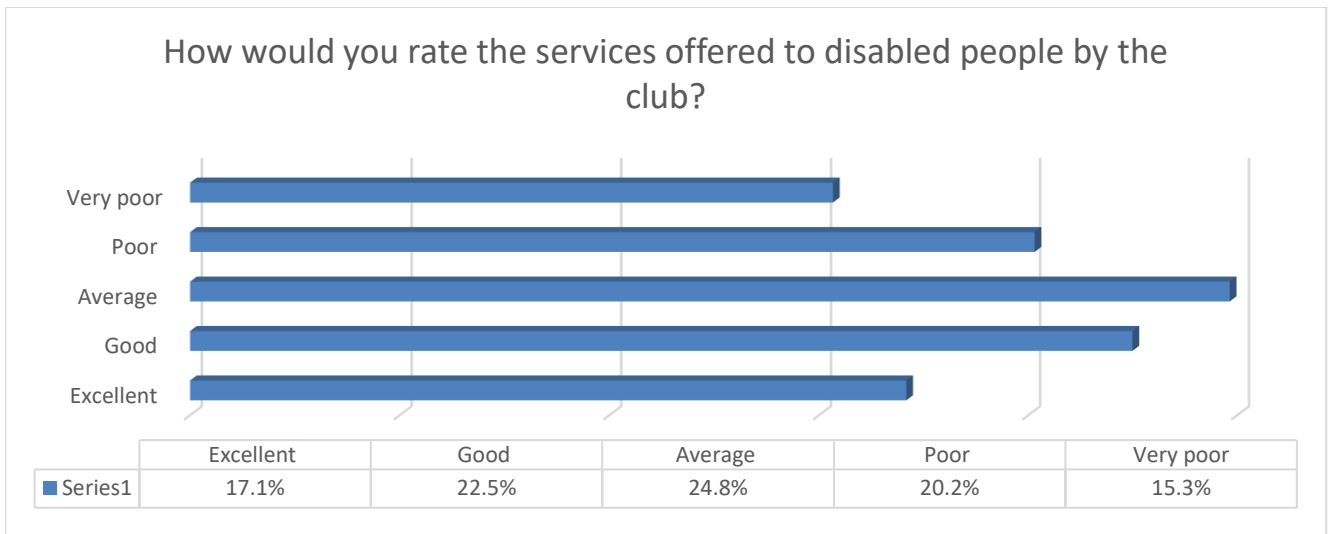


59% of respondents attend all home matches, with just over 80% attending all or most home matches.



## 4.9 Service ratings

**Table 13: How would you rate the service offered to disabled people by the club?**



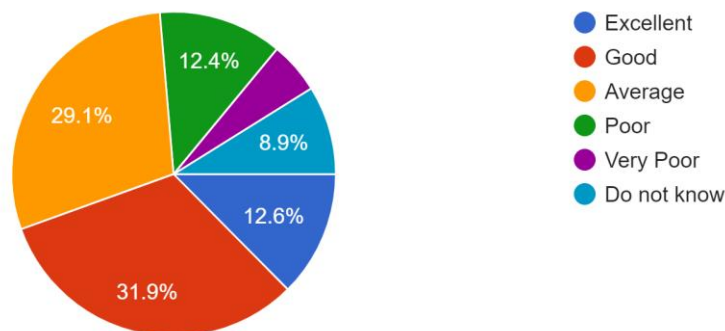
40% of respondents stated that the services offered by the club were good or excellent, with over 35% rating services offered to disabled people as poor or very poor. This is clearly an area for improvement that the club should focus on.

## 4.10 Accessibility

**Table 14: Accessibility: How would you rate Ibrox Stadium on access and inclusion?**

Accessibility: How would you rate Ibrox Stadium on access and inclusion?

971 responses



42.5% of respondents rated Ibrox as good or excellent in relation to access and inclusion, with over 15% rating services offered to disabled people as poor or very poor. This is also an area for improvement that the club should focus on.

### Additional comments

There was a range of positive feedback including,

*“Communication between the club and disabled support has improved greatly since the start of the Disability Matters group.”*

*“Support staff are excellent.”*

There were also areas for improvement highlighted, including physical access to the stadium and steward training,

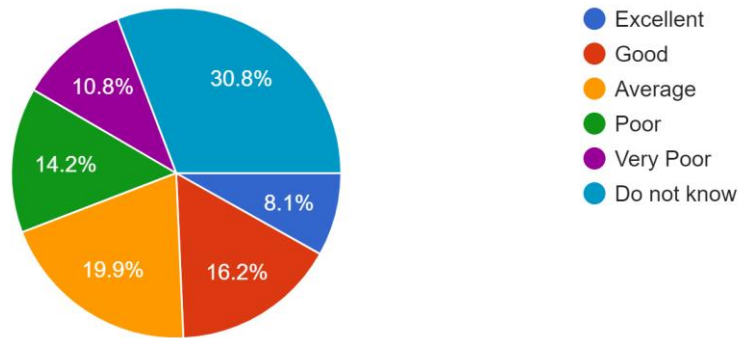
*“The ground around the stadium has a lot of potholes/uneven and I feel, when in a crowd, can be dangerous.”*

*“Staff need better training.”*

## 4.11 Club communication

**Table 15: Club communication: How would you rate Rangers FC on communication to disabled supporters?**

Club communication: How would you rate Rangers FC on communication to disabled supporters?  
971 responses



65.7% of respondents who expressed a preference, stated that communication to disabled supporters ranged from average to excellent.

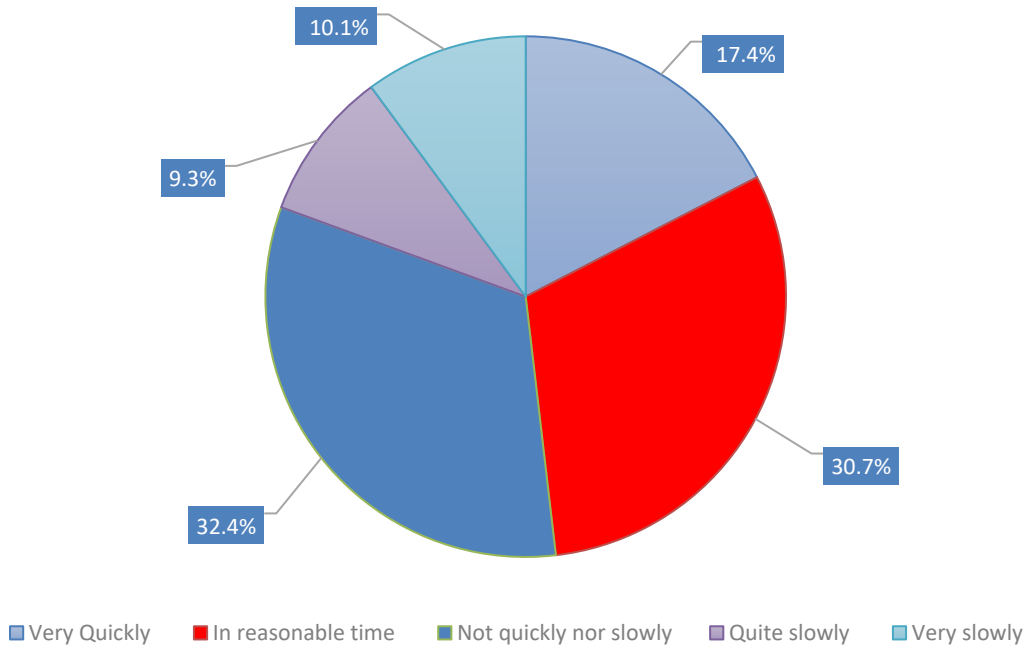
Below is an example of a positive response with some constructive feedback on how we can improve,

“The club are good at implementing small changes that make a massive improvement to disabled supporters experience but not good at communicating any changes to the wider disabled support.”

#### 4.12 Club communication: If you have contacted the club in the past about something relating to access and inclusion, how quickly did we respond?

Table 16:

If you have contacted the club in the past about something relating to access and inclusion, how quickly did we respond?



Over 80% of respondents stated that we had responded very quickly/in reasonable time/not quickly nor slowly. This is an area that the club has improved on in the last year and will continue to focus on.



## 5. Supporter comments and suggestions

We asked the survey respondents ***“If you could suggest any improvements to make matchdays more accessible and inclusive for disabled supporters and people experiencing barriers in accessing our services, what would it/they be?”***

Several of the responses highlight the need for accessible platforms for wheelchair-users and people with ambulant impairments. The club has identified these as pressing issues within the accessibility strategy and plans have been approved by the board to directly address them.

*“Wheelchair-users should have access to watch the game - not try to look over a wall. They should be looking down onto the park.”*

*“Lifts need to be installed.”*

*“More easily accessible toilets are needed.”*

*“Have an area for ambulant disabled people. Being told to find your own seats when you don’t know the stadium is not great. There’s nothing for ambulant supporters.”*

Below are some of the other suggestions from disabled supporters from a broad range of impairment groups.

*“Provide catering options for individuals with dietary requirements (e.g., gluten free alternatives for those with coeliac disease).”*

*“More support for children with learning difficulties.”*

*“There are no interactive screens to order food from.”*

*“At NEH have a section for more wheelchairs/disabled/autistic customers can be which is a bit more quiet and settled.”*

*“Quiet booths around the stadium if things get too much for supporters they could go and watch the game on tv screens in there maybe assessable by a fob for disabled people.”*

*“Having someone to approach that understands mental health issues especially if I am having or can feel an episode happening.”*



## 6. Conclusion

Disabled supporters experience many barriers across all aspects of their lives, but most can be addressed effectively through effective engagement, dialogue and the development of inclusive policy and practice.

The results of this survey provide a baseline for the club to measure against in the future. This demonstrates the importance of engaging with disabled supporters to find out about their matchday experience and in particular the barriers that they may experience.

The survey forms a key element of the club's Fan Engagement Strategy and supports the club's commitment to develop, improve, and effectively implement, accessible services for all disabled supporters.

There are several areas for improvement, highlighted in the survey that the club should focus on. For example, with almost 50% of respondents aged 55 or over, the survey indicates that the supporter base is aging, in line with the broader population. Other areas include physical access to the stadium, in particular parking, attitudes of staff/other supporters towards disabled supporters and anxiety and lack of confidence highlighted by disabled supporters.



## 7. Recommendations

- The survey should be carried out on an annual basis to ensure that we remain up to date with the changing accessibility needs of our support.
- The survey should continue to form a key component of the club's fan engagement strategy.
- The club should review the stadium seating strategy to ensure that we are in position to accommodate supporters with changing accessibility requirements in the future.
- The club should continue to prioritise improving all aspects of the physical accessibility of the stadium, for example, parking, drop-off and pick-up areas, accessible pathways on the stadium footprint.
- This report will form the basis of an action plan to address the issues raised within it and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

John Speirs  
Disability Access Officer  
29<sup>th</sup> June 2023