

Dear

I am writing on behalf of the Middlesbrough Supporters Forum (MSF), a body representing the unified voices of thousands of fans of Middlesbrough Football Club. The organisation was founded in February 2017 and meets with senior personnel of Middlesbrough Football Club each month to debate issues and share information that will be of benefit to both Middlesbrough fans and football supporters in general. You can read more about MSF and read the minutes of our meetings at the website: - www.boro.support

This summer, in conjunction with the Football Supporters Federation, MSF conducted an online survey into the issue of safe-standing at football grounds.

More than 4500 fans took the trouble to fill in the survey and more than 94% expressed support for some form of safe permitted standing to be reintroduced to football grounds, and to the Riverside Stadium.

Recent similar polls, including perhaps the most sensitive of all conducted amongst Liverpool supporters, came out overwhelmingly in favour of some form of safe standing.

It is important to reinforce that this is not a call for the return of the old-fashioned terraces of the past. Quite rightly, this form of standing was outlawed at higher level football stadiums following the tragedy at Hillsborough.

However, new design and technology has led to the trialling of safe standing areas at several grounds, including Celtic Park and by high-profile German clubs. This is proving to be successful, and very popular with the fans. In addition to adding to the atmosphere at games, it ensures that fans who choose not to stand can sit without the fear of fans standing in front of them in all-seated areas, which is illegal but difficult to steward.

As a fans organisation MSF would welcome the opportunity to meet you, as an MP representing many thousands of Middlesbrough supporters, to brief you on the trials taking place and to hopefully to enlist your support for the campaign for safe standing.

This is likely to be a long process, which will require a change in legislation, but with a ground swell of public support it is an issue that I am sure you will be interested in engaging with.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course and if you would like to attend a MSF meeting please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely