

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 16. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates’ Courts Act 1980, s.5B

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Statement of: Paul Jennings

Age if under 18: Over 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: Police Officer

This statement (consisting of 2 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Witness Signature: *Paul Jennings (43000)* Date: 22/02/2023

I am the Dedicated Football Officer for Wembley Stadium and Central London, working in the Central Football Unit of MO6 (Public Order and Resources Command) of the Metropolitan Police Service. I have been working regularly within Football Intelligence deployments since 2004 and have been working full time as a Dedicated Football Officer since 2010. I have been the Dedicated Football Officer for Wembley Stadium since November 2021. Since Wembley Stadium officially reopened in May 2007, I have been deployed at the majority of football fixtures there, in an intelligence or Operational Football Officer role.

For many years I have found the policing of Wembley Stadium to be a frustrating role due to the high levels of intoxication and the resulting elevated levels of antisocial behaviour that is a direct result of the alcohol consumption amongst a significant number of supporters. The correlation between levels of intoxication and patterns of behaviour including antisocial behaviour and pockets of disorder are clear to see.

Mixing of groups of opposing supporters is often the catalyst to spontaneous disorder occurring. This is why we consider it to be prudent for supporters not to mix in licensed premises around Wembley Stadium. It is also the reason for requesting a geographic split of the licensed premises taking different groups. The mixing of supporters both inside licensed premises and around the wider footprint of the event would require an uplift in resources. This not only puts great demands on the already stretched policing resources and operation but inevitably results in the officers being taken away from front line policing in communities around London.

Premises not serving alcohol for an hour before kick-off greatly assists in the safe ingress of thousands of supporters. Without this, we would inevitably see a later walk up of large numbers of supporters, often under the influence of alcohol, putting increased pressure on the stewarding operation and on the turnstiles themselves increasing the rise to both supporters, staff and police officers.

The issue presented by the presence of ticketless supporters was highlighted in Baroness Casey review of the UEFA Euro 2020 Final. Licensed premises showing live football during matches at Wembley matches would only serve to attract ticketless supporters to the area. This would increase the potential for antisocial behaviour in the area but also deprives those with tickets of the opportunity to find somewhere to drink before the match. This then has the knock-on effect of increasing the likelihood of supporters engaging in street drinking in breach of the council’s Public Space Protection Order.

Witness Signature: *Paul Jennings (13000)*

Signature Witnessed by Signature: