

The Baroness Casey Review

An independent Review of events surrounding the
UEFA Euro 2020 Final '*Euro Sunday*' at Wembley

December 2021
The Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB

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Foreword

The events of Sunday 11 July 2021 (Euro Sunday) at Wembley Stadium were a 'near miss'. I am clear that we were close to fatalities and/or life-changing injuries for some, potentially many, in attendance. That this should happen anywhere in 21st century Britain is a source of concern. That it should happen at our national stadium, and on the day of our biggest game of football for 55 years is a source of national shame.

I want to be very clear from the outset that responsibility for that risk to human life lies with the individuals without tickets – nearly all men, it has to be said – who attacked the stadium, successfully or otherwise. The drunkenness, drug taking, irresponsibility, criminality, and abuse of innocent people – including staff, families, and disabled ticket holders – was shocking and intolerable. I hope the police and other authorities continue to prosecute as many of the perpetrators as possible and the courts and football authorities apply the toughest possible punishments.

Nevertheless, some of what happened was sadly foreseeable, even if the scale of it was not. And even if it had not been predictable, there are always wider lessons to be learned from such events. That is the opportunity of a near miss. It allows learning without suffering or grief, and is vital so that a disaster does not recur. So it was right that the FA commissioned this review and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to undertake it. I wish to put on record my thanks and appreciation for the open way in which FA staff and other stakeholders have engaged with it.

One of the saddest parts of this process has been hearing the testimony of FA staff. While they did not want the England team to lose that night, such was their concern for what might happen in the event of an England victory, they ended up with a feeling of huge relief at the result. In the end the penalty shootout went Italy's way, the rain came down, and the crowds dispersed largely quietly. But we should not lose sight of how close the alternative was. And they should never have had to feel that way anyway.

For this was a potentially golden day in the history of this nation. This was a team of role models which the whole country could be proud of. They cut across so many divides and represented the St George's Flag as a flag for everyone. They had a manager that stood up for the values we hold dear. They were in a major tournament final at their home ground. It also came at a time when the country was being released from Covid-19 restrictions and beginning to put a year of immense national difficulty behind it. We all wanted to get behind the England team, celebrate them, our country and our national game.

Of course, we still can and should celebrate them and their achievements. There is no question, however, that the day was spoiled by a horde of 6,000 or more ticketless

fans, many of whom were no more than mindless thugs. The outpouring of vile racist abuse that followed in the days after only made this worse. These men may wear England shirts but they can't be allowed to represent us. I choose instead to be represented by the England team, and by organisations like the Football Supporters' Association, who support all decent law-abiding football fans, England supporters or otherwise, and were on the ground to assist visiting Italian fans that day.

The remit of this review was to look at the events of the day and the FA's role in managing them, alongside its event delivery partners. Following the evidence and accounts presented to us, I have studied the events of the day itself, the build-up to it and the aftermath in detail. Safety has been the dominant issue and my principal concern. The events at Hillsborough in 1989 have weighed heavily on my mind. As Lord Justice Taylor said in his report on that tragedy, "Amazingly, complacency was still to be found even after Hillsborough." I am encouraged that no one interviewed for this review was complacent about what happened. But we cannot allow for any complacency to set in now.

I am fully aware that a review like this has the benefit of hindsight. It allows us to identify mistakes that were made, and make recommendations, but that is not always the same thing as blame. I believe that to learn lessons and seek improvement effectively, we need to avoid a defensive culture that makes admitting fault and committing to change almost impossible. In this case, I am satisfied that the FA leadership team 'gets it' and are committed to change. Now they need to make it happen.

Finally, the biggest challenge I lay down is around the culture that led some individuals on the day at Wembley, and in the days after on social media, to choose to behave in this way. What makes people believe that it is somehow acceptable to break into a stadium or abuse disabled entrances just because it is a big match or there are spare seats inside? Why on earth should black footballers be expected to continue to play for their country amid racist abuse from their own countrymen?

That is partly about what the FA and football can do to keep these people away from grounds. But we also need a national conversation about greater civility and responsibility that goes far beyond what one sport alone can do. A national effort that truly kicks out racism and hooliganism from football and society at large would be a fitting tribute to that England team, and all those of us who love our national game and our country for the right reasons.

Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB

Executive Summary

The events of 11 July 2021 (Euro Sunday) - when thousands of ticketless supporters sought to force their way into Wembley Stadium and created significant levels of disorder in and around the ground - were sad and disgraceful in equal measure. The behaviour of these individuals put the safety and security of thousands of law-abiding fans (not to mention the staff and police officers at Wembley) at risk.

On 29 July, the Football Association (FA) commissioned Baroness Casey to undertake an Independent Review of the events surrounding the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Euro 2020 final at Wembley, in order to understand what happened and determine lessons so that there can be no repeat in the future. The review period has been short - completing in under four months - and as such, this report is not exhaustive. Nonetheless, it represents a significant body of research, with the Review having:

- interviewed FA and Wembley staff, from stewards to the chief executive
- interviewed stakeholders representing key delivery partners, including the police and other emergency services, council staff and government officials
- analysed substantial documentary evidence relating to the preparation and delivery of the final, including over four thousand hours of CCTV footage
- completed a survey of more than 7,700 ticket holders at the final
- commissioned independent reports from experts and academics relating to crowd safety, football-related disorder and legislation, and social media

This report sets out the findings and conclusions of that research and makes a series of recommendations.

Summary of the report (chapter by chapter)

Chapter 1: Euro Sunday: the chronology

Chapter 1 provides a detailed timeline of events, from the arrival of people in Wembley from 9am that morning, through to the sustained and increasingly violent attempts to enter Wembley as kick-off approached, and the experience of fans and stewards inside the stadium during the match concluding with the penalty shootout.

Around 100,000 people travelled to Wembley on the day of the final (“Euro Sunday”) of which approximately 2,000 gained entry to the stadium without tickets, often targeting disabled pass gates. Around 400 of them, principally those who attempted to ‘tailgate’ through turnstiles, were ejected. With extraordinary force and recklessness, some fans pulled apart emergency fire doors from the outside or

opened them from the inside. Others charged disabled access doors when opened to eject tailgaters or to allow in wheelchair users.

In all, 17 mass breaches of Wembley's gates occurred during a period stretching from 90 minutes before kick-off until the penalty shootout. Eight of these were repelled by stewards and the police who often showed great courage in the face of extraordinary aggression.

The main approach to the stadium, Olympic Way, became, in effect, an unlicensed fan zone, with widespread drug use and over 31 tonnes of rubbish left - ten times more than usual. Almost none of those arrested by the police on the day or since had previous convictions for football-related offences.

Chapter 2: Crowd Safety: Near misses

Chapter 2 draws on a report from crowd safety expert Eric Stuart QPM and examines whether the events of Euro Sunday could have been even worse. His work was informed by interviews with key personnel and CCTV footage, and is published as an addendum to this report.

It identifies many instances before, and during, the match, where the behaviour of ticketless fans created risks of progressive crowd collapse on staircases, door-wedging, trampling in crowds, barrier collapse and entrapment. Some of the riskiest moments by ticketless fans were when large numbers of people were compressed as they surged through fire doors deliberately opened from the inside by fans. The Review finds no evidence to contradict Mr Stuart's central conclusion: that the events of 11 July at Wembley Stadium saw a series of 'near misses' which could have led to significant injuries or even death. The report also notes that the skill, professionalism and split second decision making of the FA/Wembley Safety officer should be commended.

Chapter 3: Planning and organisation in the run-up to Euro Sunday

Chapter 3 examines the effectiveness of planning and organisation in the run-up to the final. It looks in depth at the role of different agencies, how they interacted with each other and the factors which constrained tournament planning.

The most significant of these issues was the fact that the final was held in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed a central finding of this chapter is that there was a fundamental tension that existed between controlling Covid-19 and managing crowd safety around Wembley Stadium. A number of consequences flowed from this:

- the reduced capacity meant that there were empty seats in the stadium that everybody was aware of

- Wembley had to organise additional screening tests close to the stadium
- perhaps most significant of all, there was no capacity for sizeable ‘fan zones’ or dispersal zones near the stadium or elsewhere in London despite repeated requests to government from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and others, which would have provided a much needed pressure valve on the day of the final.

Added to that was the fact that England men’s first final in 55 years coincided with the imminent lifting of social distancing restrictions (so-called ‘freedom day’). This contributed to a sense of national euphoria, and it is easy to see why so many agencies described this as the ‘perfect storm’.

Chapter 4: Intelligence and foresight in the run-up to Euro Sunday

Chapter 4 looks at the intelligence that was available to the FA, Metropolitan Police Service, British Transport Police and Brent Council in the run up to Euro Sunday. It examines the extent to which the disorder that occurred, involving thousands of ticketless fans seeking to force their way into the ground, was foreseeable.

The Review finds that the arrival of large numbers of ticketless fans at Wembley on the day of the final was predictable. What was unexpected was the ferocity and scale of these efforts. The behaviour of those who may not have come to Wembley planning to get into the stadium but joined in, often violently, when it became apparent that this was possible, was particularly striking.

However, warning signs (involving earlier matches in the tournament) were not recognised as parts of a bigger picture of trouble looming. This was largely due to assumptions that trouble was more likely to flare after the game and across London. Brent Council were the exception to some degree, having flagged concerns in the days leading up to the final.

The chapter concludes that although action was stepped up for the final there was an absence of risk assessment for the occasion that Euro Sunday represented. This amounted to a collective failure by partners involved.

Chapter 5: Wembley operations and stewarding

The quality of stewarding has already been the subject of significant media scrutiny. Chapter 5 examines this issue in depth.

The Review confirms that before the final, Wembley was aware of concerns around the experience, age and training of stewards, as were their partners. The security industry had been hit hard by loss of personnel during the pandemic.

These problems meant Wembley went into the biggest football match in 55 years struggling to get the quality of stewards it needed. This vulnerability was tested by the most intoxicated and aggressive crowd the stadium had ever encountered. Many stewards showed courage in the face of unprecedented violence and aggression. Ticketed fans' recognition of their efforts is reproduced in this report. Brent council staff also showed great professionalism and bravery on the day.

Chapter 6: Public order and policing

Chapter 6 examines the police's approach to Euro Sunday and how it contributed to the way events unfolded on the day.

A 3pm to 3am deployment had been planned for that Sunday. This gave the police 12 hours to be on the ground, with officers in place a full 5 hours ahead of kick-off. The MPS also planned for a very significant risk across London that day in central areas, at Wembley and in the 'town centres' of outer boroughs. The total number of officers planned for Wembley that day was substantially higher than for a club game in the same risk category.

As it turned out, the planned deployment of these higher numbers at 3pm was too late in the day to provide a visible uniformed presence as fans started arriving and gathering in large numbers in the morning. By the time officers were on the ground, therefore, the area around Olympic Way had been taken over by significant numbers of people committing disorder, fueled by alcohol and drug-consumption. The violence directed towards the police was appalling and those fans responsible should face severe consequences.

The police fought a rear-guard action around the stadium with considerable skill and courage, stabilising the situation shortly after kick-off and ensuring the match was able to progress.

Chapter 7: Enforcement

Chapter 7 focuses on the effectiveness of enforcement in responding to the anti-social behaviour and violence that was displayed on Euro Sunday.

The Review confirms that the recklessness of supporters' behaviour, clearly fuelled by alcohol and drug use, was not just appalling, but at times recklessly endangered lives. The extraordinary use of force to destroy stadium infrastructure and attack stewards and the police was described by many stakeholders as unprecedented.

However, while the ferocity of their aggression was clearly a shock, neither was it completely unexpected. Indeed some would argue it fitted a pattern of behaviour that has come to be associated with England supporters over decades. The same could

be said about the racist abuse which was directed at England's black footballers and at Italians, both inside the stadium and online.

It is striking that had such behaviours taken place in a different context, for example, in an airport, or on public transport, the penalties facing those involved would have been a lot more serious. However, as the barrister Daniel Greenberg CB makes clear in his advice (published as an addendum to this report), there is a surprising lack of enforcement mechanisms to deter such behaviour within a football context.

Chapter 8: Conclusion, findings and recommendations

Summary of key findings

The key findings of the Review are as follows:

- The behaviour of a large minority of England supporters was not just disgraceful, it recklessly endangered lives
- There were a series of crowd 'near misses' which could have led to significant injuries or even death
- Planning and preparation for Euro Sunday was hampered by a set of unique conditions, including the ongoing need to manage the Covid-19 pandemic, which combined to create a 'perfect storm'
- Many of the events that unfolded were foreseeable, and, while there were many mitigating factors, there was a collective failure to plan for the worst case scenario
- A loss of experienced stewards as a result of the pandemic left Wembley's stewarding operation vulnerable when confronted with the most aggressive and disorderly crowd Wembley had ever seen
- The absence of a fan zone or fan zones denied the police and other agencies a key crowd management tool and was potentially a very significant factor
- There was insufficient enforcement of the ban on consuming alcohol on public transport in London
- The policing of the final did not sufficiently mitigate the risk of ticketless fans with officers deployed too late in the day
- There are a lack of enforcement mechanisms available to respond to and deter the kind of behaviour witnessed at Euro Sunday
- Planning of the final did not match the 'occasion' that was Euro Sunday

Recommendations

This Review makes 5 recommendations for national consideration and 3 specifically for the FA and Wembley and its partners. This Review has been conducted on behalf of the FA to look at their own responsibilities with regard to Euro Sunday.

We have considered the wider partnerships and the national context within which the event took place and taken the liberty of making some recommendations with that in mind. It should also be noted that while this Review is concerned with football there are many lessons that could be applied to the wider stadium and event industry.

1. I recommend that the Government considers a new category for football matches of national significance

The majority of partners treated the Euro final as another match albeit a significant one, rather than an event of national significance. As a result, the security arrangements surrounding the final were underpowered and public safety was not given the prominence it deserved.

In the future, there should be a new category for football matches of national significance, with the SGSA, police, and other key partners setting out what steps should be taken for such matches. This could include:

- A maximalist police (and other agencies with enforcement powers) resourcing and deployment plan
- The establishment of a sterile area within Zone Ex which is restricted to ticket-holders
- More robust governance arrangements including an independent checkpoint as part of the process
- Enhanced enforcement of bans on alcohol consumption on public transport and in other designated public spaces

The prospect of new legislation is welcome and timely as it gives the Government the opportunity to update the legal framework that governs spectator safety which has not been significantly reviewed since the Hillsborough tragedy.

2. I recommend that the Government consider tasking the SGSA to work with the FA and the event industry to undertake a review of stewarding

SGSA should undertake a review and research the current challenges faced by live sporting events in securing sufficient numbers of trained stewards and provide guidance to the sector on how public safety can be assured.

A range of wider factors, including the pandemic (which prompted many experienced stewards to find new vocations) and global supply chain challenges, have created significant workforce challenges for the stewarding sector. It is important that the implications of these shortages are understood for the wider events sector.

The SGSA should work with key partners (including the FA and United Kingdom Crowd Management Association (UKCMA)) to understand the particular factors in play here and their implications for the longer-term sustainability of the stewarding role at major sports events. That, in turn, should inform wider considerations within the Government and the sector itself.

3. The SGSA, the events industry, the police and local government agree on a way forward on who is accountable for Zone Ex

There should be clear accountability for public safety in Zone Ex. The question of who was responsible for public safety on Olympic Way was a contributing factor to the inability to deal with the disorder seen in the build-up to kick-off. The police and stadium operators have for many years contested the issue of who is responsible for safety and security in Zone Ex (the area of public space outside the stadium used by supporters) and the financing of it remains a contested issue. This should be resolved.

The SGSA should review the provisions of the 1975 Safety of Sports Grounds Act, together with its oversight powers and any associated guidance for local authorities, to determine if they are still fit for purpose, particularly in relation to the control and management of Zone Ex.

4. I ask that The FA - as the governing body that oversees football - lead a national campaign to bring about a sea-change in attitudes towards supporter behaviours

The appalling behaviour of supporters on Euro Sunday should be a wake-up call for us all. For too long, the actions of a minority of England fans have been tolerated as a part of our national culture (albeit an embarrassing one), rather than confronted head-on.

The FA and Wembley, working with others, should step up action on eradicating such behaviours from football, including:

- refusing to allow entry to fans who arrive chanting foul abuse and/ or are clearly under the influence of alcohol and/ or drugs
- stricter enforcement (with police support) against those behaving badly inside the stadium, with consideration being given to ejections also leading to an automatic exclusion and ban from all football grounds (not just Wembley)
- more proactive engagement with the Football Safety Officers Association around intelligence-sharing, particularly with regards to fan behaviours
- a considerable step-up action again to stamp out racism by the FA, Premier League and English Football League

- Appoint the Football Supporters Association (supported by the FA) to a leading role in working with fans and others to eradicate these behaviours

5. I recommend that the Government consider strengthening the penalties for football-related disorder, particularly behaviours which recklessly endanger lives and these penalties should be well understood and robustly enforced

The existing enforcement mechanisms available to the police and other enforcement officers do not offer enough deterrent against those determined to use the cover of football matches to commit criminal offences. Tailgating, for example, should become a criminal offence. Sanctions for those breaking into football stadiums and/ or recklessly endangering lives is weak.

It is welcomed by the Review that the Prime Minister has committed to making it possible to obtain a football banning order against a person convicted of online racist offences.

In light of expert advice provided to this Review by Daniel Greenberg CB, we recommend that the Home Office considers options for strengthening the legal framework surrounding football-related disorder, with a particular focus on addressing the weaknesses and gaps identified in this Review. Specifically, the Home Office should consider:

- ensuring that the FBO regime to ensure drugs-related disorderly behaviour is treated in the same way as alcohol-related disorder
- identifying a suitable legislative mechanism for deterring the practice of tailgating, such as through an expanded FBO regime or through the application of PNDs
- identifying a suitable legislative mechanism for a new offence of endangering public safety in a stadium through reckless behaviour, such as interfering with emergency doors, triggering fire alarms or damaging barriers and other safety infrastructure, with penalties comparable to those for endangering the safety of an aircraft
- Greater urgency to introduce the Online Safety Bill should be given as it is a real opportunity to stiffen penalties for racism and hate speech online

6. Recommendations specifically for the FA/Wembley and key partners

6.a The FA and Wembley should strengthen plans for safety both physical and human, ahead of any matches or events of significant risk. This should include but not be limited to:

- The physical fences and means of separating and filtering unticketed fans from those with legitimate access.
- Particular attention should be made to ensuring those entering through gates provided for wheelchair users and other more vulnerable members of society are not endangered by the reckless actions of others.
- A staff survey of all those involved with security, stewarding and safety on Euro Sunday so the FA can be doubly sure their views are taken into any future changes
- Security plans should be regularly peer reviewed by experienced safety and security professionals to ensure rigour
- The incoming Chair of the FA should take steps to be sure that she and the FA Board have suitable oversight of safety and security at Wembley Stadium

6.b. A more joined up approach between Wembley and the MPS is required to managing public safety on match-days, including joint tasking and debriefing of operational teams

6.c The key partners represented on the Wembley SAG, most notably the MPS, the FA and Brent Council, need to make a concerted effort to proactively solicit and listen to each other's concerns and avoid any single agency from becoming too dominant.

Introduction

On Sunday 11 July Wembley Stadium hosted the final of the 2020 UEFA European Championship, commonly known as Euro 2020. The 8pm match between England and Italy men's teams was the culmination of a tournament which had begun one month earlier and comprised 51 matches in 11 cities across Europe. The final finished at 10.54pm after Italy won a penalty shootout. Subsequently, three black England players, who had missed their penalties, faced a torrent of online abuse for their performance.

Following the final UEFA launched disciplinary proceedings against the Football Association (FA) for the disorder in and around the stadium. They also issued charges relating to disturbances during national anthems, invasion of the pitch, throwing objects and lighting of a flare. This process concluded with a fine of €100,000. For the first time in the FA's history, England was ordered to play a men's international football match behind closed doors as a sanction, with a further sanction of another match behind closed doors suspended for two years.

On 29 July, the FA Board appointed Baroness Casey of Blackstock to undertake an Independent Review of events surrounding the UEFA Euro 2020 final at Wembley. The terms of reference set out the FA's wish to "understand what happened during the course of the day of the Final, and determine lessons learnt to ensure there is no repeat of the actions and events of that day".

The scope of the Review required Baroness Casey to:

- a. establish a full timeline of what occurred during the day of the final ("Euro Sunday"), both within Wembley Stadium and the surrounding area; including examining events and decisions made in advance of, and during, the final
- b. examine the planning and preparedness of The FA and The FA's tournament delivery partners for the final and identify any issues or gaps:
- c. assess the roles and responsibilities and the adequacy of the response to events, both inside Wembley Stadium and the surrounding area, on the day of the final;
- d. examine the arrangements for the security of Wembley Stadium for the final, identify any areas of weakness and recommend necessary changes;
- e. identify any lessons to be learned and to make recommendations to ensure there is no repeat of the same scenes at other major events at Wembley Stadium.

Baroness Casey was supported in her Review by Crest Advisory, a consultancy which specialises in supporting independent reviews and inquiries, and developing research, strategy and communications on policing and justice.

In total, the Review team conducted meetings with:

- The Football Association
- Wembley National Stadium Ltd
- The London Borough of Brent
- The Sports Grounds Safety Authority
- The British Transport Police
- The Metropolitan Police Service
- London Underground
- Chiltern Railways
- The Greater London Authority
- The UK Football Policing Unit
- Quintain Ltd
- The London Ambulance Service
- The London Fire Brigade
- Level Playing Field
- The Football Supporters Association
- Witnesses to the final, including friends and family members of England players

The team is grateful for the cooperation of all organisations listed above and are indebted to the staff who gave their time and expertise so generously.

The Review team received the full support of FA and Wembley staff and management, Brent Council and the Metropolitan Police Service in undertaking this Review. We are grateful for all their assistance through this process which included multiple interviews and access to all information requested.

The Review team conducted two meetings with colleagues in DCMS to consult with them on the findings and recommendations.

The Review team were able to take account of the Government commissioned fan-led review of football governance (The Crouch Review).

The team also undertook an analysis of 400 complaints made to the FA by ticket holders about their experiences at the national stadium.

In addition, the Review worked with UEFA to offer all non-hospitality ticket holders to the Euro 2020 final the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience via an electronic survey. This survey, sent on behalf of the Review by UEFA, received more than 7,700 complete responses. The Review team is grateful to those who took the time to complete the survey. The findings have been analysed and incorporated throughout the report and a summary of the results is also published as an addendum to this report. The team is thankful to UEFA for their help in facilitating this survey.

The Review team also examined over 300 pieces of documentary evidence relating to the preparations and delivery of the Euro 2020 tournament matches at Wembley, including:

- CCTV footage of disorder inside and outside of Wembley Stadium from 292 cameras on the day of the final
- communications between Euro 2020 delivery partners in the run up to, and on, Euro Sunday
- documents relating to the impact of Covid-19 on tournament preparations and on delivery from multiple organisations
- records relating to stewarding and security operations at Wembley Stadium during the tournament
- arrests by the Metropolitan Police Service and British Transport Police relating to the tournament
- complaints received by the FA about the final and other Euro 2020 fixtures held at Wembley
- Analysis of the UEFA survey of 7,700 non-hospitality ticket holders
- the MPS and BTP pre-match intelligence and tactical plans for the Euro 2020 final
- A written submission to the Review by Brent Council, and additional documents provided by council staff present at Wembley during the final

To assist Baroness Casey, the Review commissioned a series of reports by leading practitioners and academics. These were:

- a legal opinion on the adequacy of existing legislation around football disorder with particular reference to tailgating, the use of drugs by football fans and reckless behaviour in a stadium which endangers others by Daniel Greenberg
- an examination of crowd safety incidents on the day of the final by Eric Stuart QPM, drawing on a review of documentation provided by Wembley Stadium, analysis of CCTV and interviews
- an independent estimate of the numbers of people who gained access to Wembley Stadium without a ticket and their means of entry by Jason Mosley, a former detective and CCTV analyst at West Midlands Police
- an assessment of the foreseeability of ticketless individuals travelling to Wembley and attempting to enter the stadium and what if any measures may have prevented this from Professor Geoff Pearson, of Manchester University
- an analysis of what, if any, role social media played in coordinating or inciting disorder on the day of the final. This was provided SignifyAI, an ethical data science consultancy which specialises in researching online abuse and racism relating to professional football

These reports, and a summary of the ticket holder survey results, are published as addendums to the main report, which draws on their conclusions and references where appropriate.

This report sets out the work of the Review team, their findings and Baroness Casey's recommendations on how to prevent a repeat occurrence of what happened.

Chapter 1: Euro Sunday: the chronology covers the arrival of fans at the stadium, the antisocial behaviour and general lawlessness which engulfed Olympic Way, breaches of the stadium security and the exit of fans at egress.

Chapter 2: Crowd Safety: Near misses sets out the general principles of crowd safety, and examines a series of 'near miss' incidents that could have caused significant injury or loss of life drawing principally on the views of Eric Stuart QPM.

Chapter 3: Planning and organisation in the run-up to Euro Sunday sets out unique circumstances which made Euro Sunday a 'perfect storm' including the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the national euphoria surrounding England's presence in the final.

Chapter 4: Intelligence and foresight in the run-up to Euro Sunday examines what the FA, Wembley, and other partners anticipated ahead of Euro Sunday.

Chapter 5: Wembley Operations and Stewarding explores the security and stewarding operation on Euro Sunday with reference to problems which were earlier identified during the tournament and known to the stadium and its partners.

Chapter 6: Policing and Public Order looks at key issues surrounding the policing of football matches, with a focus on how Euro Sunday was policed by the MPS and BTP.

Chapter 7: Enforcement examines the current legislative framework around football disorder in light of Euro Sunday. It contains a summary of a legal opinion by Daniel Greenberg CB on the powers which are currently available to deal with such events.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and recommendations summarises the conclusions of the report and sets out what needs to change to ensure there can never be a repeat of these events.

Timeline

Time	Incident
08:00	Fans begin to arrive in the area around Wembley Stadium
09:02	Brent Council official reports ticketless fans queuing outside pubs near the stadium
10:00	Crowds arrive into Wembley consuming large quantities of alcohol
11:30	MPS Silver Commander requests additional officers be sent to Wembley ahead of main deployment
11:35	Large crowds gather at the bottom of the Olympic Steps
12:00	Fans force bus to a halt on Fulton Road and climb on its sides
12:00	Stadium Safety Officer briefs for stewarding and security supervisors
12:15	Additional officers requested at 11:30 arrive and rescue stranded bus
13:00	MPS Match Commander briefing starts at Brent Civic Centre by stadium as flares are set off and fans scale traffic lights nearby
13:30	BTP redeploy officers from central London to Wembley
13:45	FA asks MPS when more police will arrive. They are advised it will be 3pm
14:30	MPS deploys 175 officers at Wembley 30 minutes earlier than planned
14:30	Fireworks, smoke bombs and glass bottles are thrown on Olympic Way
15:53	Crowd attempts to kick down barriers at Bobby Moore Bridge before police arrive
16:12	MPS tweets advising against travel to Wembley without a ticket
16:30	The stadium opens the Outer Security Perimeter (OSP) entrances as planned
16:58	The Safety Officer activates doors/gates for entry
17:01	Stewards detain the first person for tailgating (at Gate A)

17:25	A crowd breaches the top of the Spanish steps. The Safety Officer locks all turnstiles.
17:33	MPS sends more reserves to Wembley bringing the total to 553
17:43	A crowd becomes violent outside the Co-op on Olympic Way
17:46	After deploying response teams as reinforcements, the Safety Officer unlocks turnstiles due to increasing crowd density on the outer concourse
18:01	The Safety Officer temporarily drops Covid-19 lateral flow checks due to crowd density. They are reinstated at 18.41.
18:07	A crowd knocks down the fence line and breaches Club Wembley OSP
18:29	A crowd attempts to breach Gate M disabled pass gate, police and stewards repel most of those involved
18:34	Around 70 people breach Gate K disabled pass gate when staff use it to eject a tailgater
18:45	A crowd breaches Turnstile/Gate G
18:45	200 people breach Gate H disabled pass gate
18:47	90 people breach Gate H emergency fire door after a fan opens it from inside. This is repeated at 19.41
18:47	A crowd breaches Pass Gate C after security opens the gate
18:47	Stadium staff open Gate D disabled pass gate to eject people who had tailgated. Crowd attempts to breach the gate for the first time. 20 people gain entry to the inner door but are held back by police and stewards. This is repeated a further five times at 18.56, 19.00, 19.15, 19.44 and 19.46
18:53	Police deployed to all turnstiles at the request of Safety Officer Safety Office increases the power on emergency fire door magnet locks from 25% (the usual setting) to 100%
18:54	Crowd breaches Gate C disabled pass gate: 70 people gain entry to the inner stadium areas. This is repeated at 19.10
18:54	Crowd breaches Gate G fire doors by forcing them open from the outside. 350 people gain entry into the inner stadium areas. This is repeated at 19.06. Safety Officer increased power on magnetic fire door locks to 100%

19:11	Stadium staff open Gate B disabled pass gate to eject people who had tailgated. Crowd attempts to breach the gate. 20 people gain entry to the inner door but are held back by police and stewards
19:31	Police deploy to the bottom of the Olympic Steps after crowd collapses fence
19:56	Crowd charges Olympic Steps OSP as England national anthem played
19:58	Two Police Support Units 'fast walk' with batons to drive back crowd on Olympic Steps
20:00	England v Italy kicks off
20:02	Luke Shaw scores for England. Crowds charge outer gate at the South West Ramp
20:37	Repairs required on the large emergency exit doors at Turnstile G following breach
21:15	Police warn tactical partners groups are circling Wembley looking for weaknesses
21:38	Crowd pushes over temporary signage structure by Olympic Steps trapping two people briefly
22:02	Extra time begins
22:49	Crowd breaches Gate G fire doors for the third time by forcing the unmanned external door open from the outside. 30 people gain entry into the inner stadium areas.
22:52	Safety Officer opens doors for egress
22:54	Final whistle after Italy beat England on penalties
23:10	Fans push over portable toilets outside of the Stadium on Olympic Way
00:30	Main egress completed

Chapter 1: Euro Sunday: the chronology

1 Arrival

1.1 The early start

On the morning of 11 July, staff from Brent Council were out at Wembley early. They wanted to check that the area was clean and tidy, the streets had been set up with portaloos and clear signage, and street furniture had been removed. For all parties concerned, it was important that the right tone had been set for the biggest football match in the borough since the 1966 World Cup final.

They found litter from overnight drinking and ticketless fans looking for pubs.

At 9.02am, one official alerted council colleagues, FA and Wembley managers, the police and other local partners via WhatsApp. He wrote: *“Talking to fans...none with tickets, just here for the occasion. Might be a big feature of the day.”*

Shortly afterwards, a colleague in the Brent licensing team replied that pubs had told her earlier in the week the phones had been ringing off the hook with fans hoping to reserve seats for the game. She wrote: *“Expectation therefore is that our streets will be full of street drinking particularly with people not attending the game as most just want to come for the atmosphere.”*

Both predictions proved correct.

By midday, an estimated 10,000 fans had already arrived in the Wembley area. Some were local to north London, but many had travelled from across London and the whole of the United Kingdom by tube, national rail and bus. CCTV images and accounts from those on the ground at the time show many were carrying copious amounts of alcohol and appear intent on holding a street party.

“We both noticed people within the crowd had crates of alcohol and some had brought their own ‘picnic cool boxes’ selling homemade cocktails.” - Brent Council official

“People on the train arrived with a carriage full of crates...People came up readily supplied with bottles of it – in their bags, crates, etc.” - Brent Council Official

Some fans had begun drinking heavily, even before they arrived at Wembley that morning. Many arrived already drunk and carrying bags full of bottles of alcohol.

The survey of Euro Sunday ticket holders carried out by the Review found that 30 per cent of respondents who got to Wembley before noon, either by London Underground or by national rail, saw “a lot” of alcohol consumed during their journey.

“I saw a lot of people who had been drinking for a long period of time and were in a bad way. Both on the train and around the stadium.” - Euro 2020 final ticket holder

Control room staff in central London noted this too.

“I’ve been doing this for over a decade and have worked on various other celebratory events, including New Year’s Eve. I have never seen drunkenness like this so early on in the day.” - London Underground official

“I remember walking into the control room about nine o’clock, and there were England fans drinking as I walked in. And it was really, really early on and the alcohol was flowing. And I thought, ‘this is going to be a hard day’. I felt it was going to be really challenging to hold on to perimeters.” - Greater London Authority official

Many early arrivals headed for the pubs and bars around Wembley with queues forming outside Box Park by 9.30am. Others bought large quantities from the Co-op and Sainsbury’s supermarkets situated less than 100 metres from the stadium’s outer security perimeter or from Butler’s food and wine shop on Olympic Way nearby. All these shops had agreed to not sell alcohol in glass bottles on the day of the final at the request of the council.

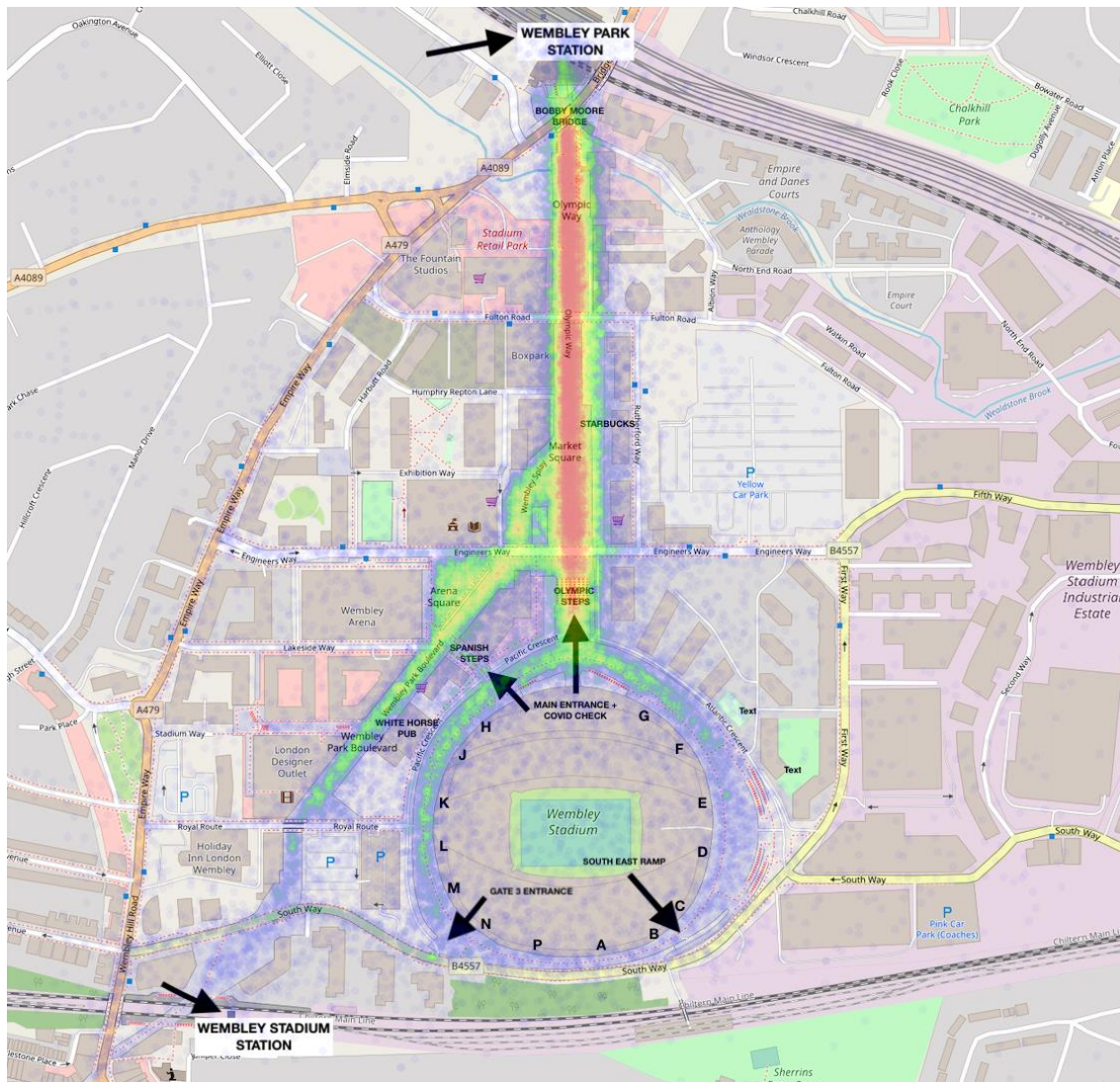
However, council officials observed drop off deliveries of alcohol being made by well-known online food and drink retailers.

“A new phenomenon seemed to be the use of moped delivery services to bring alcohol directly to customers within the crowd.” - Brent Council submission to Review

1.2 Huge use of alcohol and drugs on the street

The scale of the drinking which followed is illustrated by the results of the Review’s survey of ticket holders. More than 7,000 respondents (91 per cent) said they saw “a lot” of alcohol consumption when they first arrived at Wembley. The heat map below shows how much of the wider Wembley footprint became an impromptu and unregulated ‘street party’ that morning of Euro Sunday.

Heatmap of alcohol use (across the day)

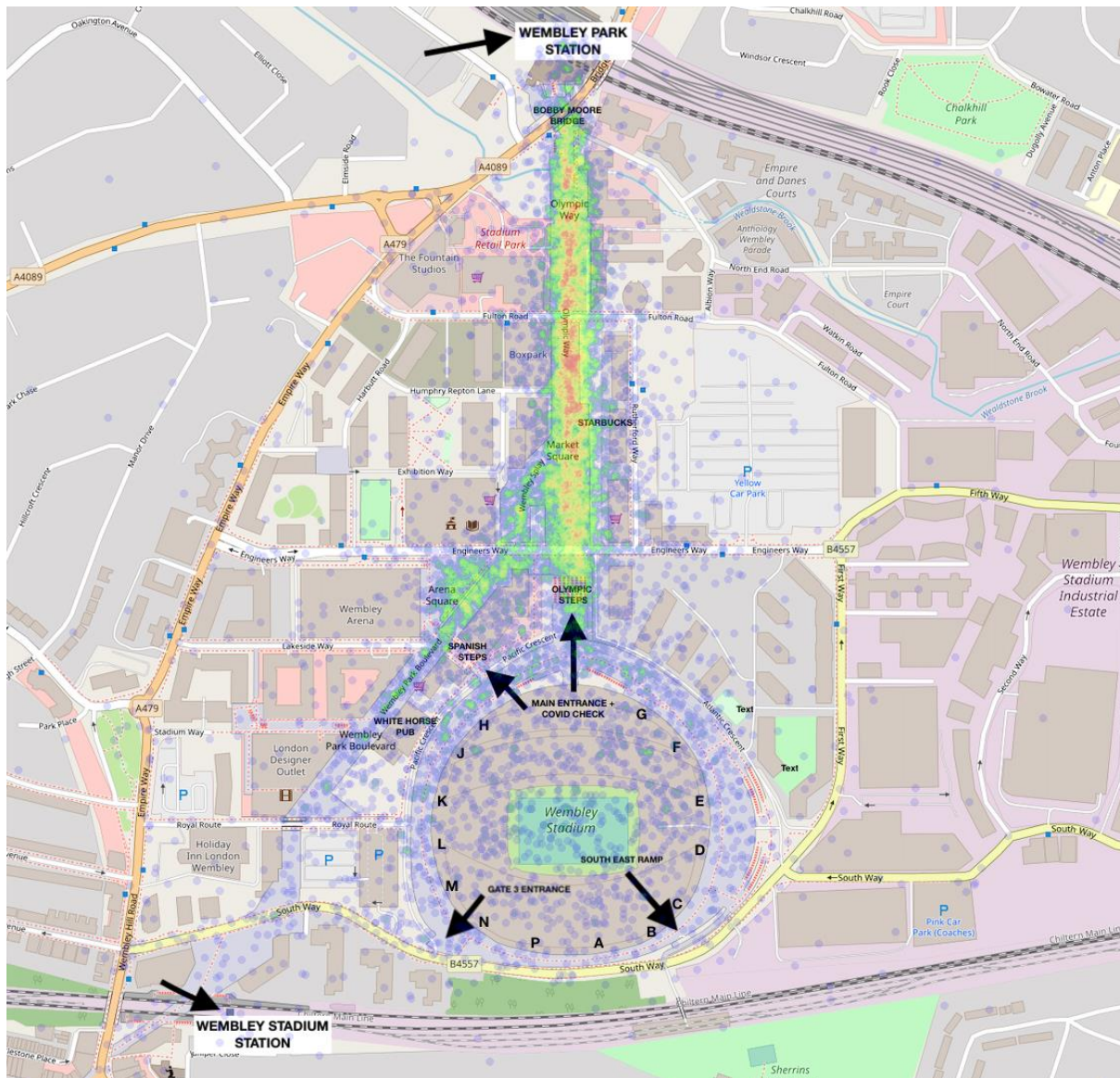


The proportion of people who say they saw alcohol consumption remained steady at over 80 per cent throughout the day from before 9am until after 8pm.

And it was not only alcohol.

Eyewitness accounts given to the media in the immediate aftermath of Euro Sunday state that there was use of drugs, in particular cocaine, among the crowd. These are supported by the Review's survey, which suggests illegal-drug taking must have been widespread and taken place in plain sight. More than 3,500 respondents (47 per cent) said they saw illegal drug taking when they arrived at Wembley. The heat map below suggests this took place some distance from Olympic Steps, presumably due to concerns that there would be a police presence there.

Heatmap of illegal drug use (across the day)



There was no notable police presence on Olympic Way until noon, when, according to documents provided by the MPS, 21 intelligence-gathering “spotters” were deployed.

The only partner to deploy staff in numbers on Olympic Way that morning was Brent Council. They had ten staff from Regulatory Services on the ground by 10am and, given what they observed, they brought forward the deployment of a team of enforcement officers, including licensing and trading standards, to 11am.

At 11.39am a council public safety official observed fans spilling into Engineers Way forcing a car to swerve around them. She advised colleagues to close the road immediately rather than wait until 2pm as planned.

1.3 Behaviour deteriorated

As the crowds continued to build and become more boisterous, fans forced a single decker bus to halt at 12.00pm. It had to close down for safety and to await evacuation. The bus was apprehended on Fulton Road, which is one of the two roads that crosses Olympic Way. The bus was swamped by fans climbing all over it.

Running in parallel to this the MPS redeployed a London-wide reserve team of public order officers to Wembley. This deployment of officers was brought in after the MPS Silver Commander had received calls at 11.30am from colleagues in Wembley now concerned about the early arrival of drunk and drug-using crowds. This MPS team were able to rescue the bus.

For most staff interviewed by this Review, this was the moment it became clear that events at Wembley were not going as expected. It was clear that Olympic Way had become an area of unregulated, unchallenged disorder.

“The people on the bus was the first indication to us that things weren’t in the right place... the first red flag was people on the bus and Fulton Road...that was the trigger for me.” - Brent Council official

“The bus incident was a massive red flag. I was getting calls that there were lots of people were out there - and it was apparent it would grow.” - FA/Wembley official

“We had planned to do a three to three shift. But then we got our first 999 call at 12.46 in relation to the bus...we were able to send some resources that were initially all from core.” - London Ambulance Service crew member

By now the crowds on Olympic Way had begun to impede the movement of people from Wembley Park station to the stadium, and to fill Wembley Park Boulevard Area between the Wembley Arena and Alameda residential building.

“Before you knew it, Olympic Way was looking very busy and people were already looking drunk. By 1pm you could see it was drunk and disorderly, it was apparent most people were not ticket holders. These were people looking for somewhere to go.” - Greater London Authority official

On the 1pm tactical partners call, the FA and Wembley informed other agencies that the stadium footprint had been busy since early morning. The BTP reported that the rail network across England was “extremely busy”. The MPS said London was

“extremely busy already” and asked other organisations to “bear with us in getting people to you”. Wembley, along with Leicester Square, was now a priority, the MPS added.

It was apparent to everybody now that, for a very significant number of fans, an unplanned for ‘carnival’ had begun early and Wembley was one of the key venues.

1.4 Escalation of disorder

At 1pm, the MPS Match Commander held his pre-match briefing in the Brent Council Civic Centre directly opposite the Olympic Steps leading up to the stadium. Outside, numerous fans had climbed atop traffic lights and lamp posts and smoke from flares was easily visible from the room the briefing was held in.

A number of MPS officers were called out of the briefing to deal with incidents unfolding outside and by 1.30pm, a significant number of fans were congregating around the bottom of the Olympic Steps.

At 1.45pm an FA official was sufficiently concerned about the size and behavior of the crowds to telephone the Silver Commander for the MPS Euro 2020 operation across London to ask when the next deployment of police would be coming. He was told that there were similar problems across the capital and the main deployment of police at Wembley would be at 3pm as scheduled.

By 2pm a large crowd had gathered at the foot of the Olympic Steps where the fencing for the queue lanes had recently been erected.

By 2.30pm Wembley advised the external manager not to go near Olympic Way due to broken glass from bottles being thrown in the air. Brent Council staff reported the crowd was too dense to move through safely.

Many interviewees said the behaviour they witnessed was extreme and unusual even for a football crowd.

“It was like a medieval football match. Stuff was getting chucked in the air - it was dangerous. People were climbing the trees and climbing traffic lights. Things had buckled.” - Brent Council official

“For me the flares caused a real concern. I remember someone standing on a concrete wall with a red flare. That was unusual. It is rare to get a pyro at Wembley, it usually happens more in Europe.” - FA/Wembley official

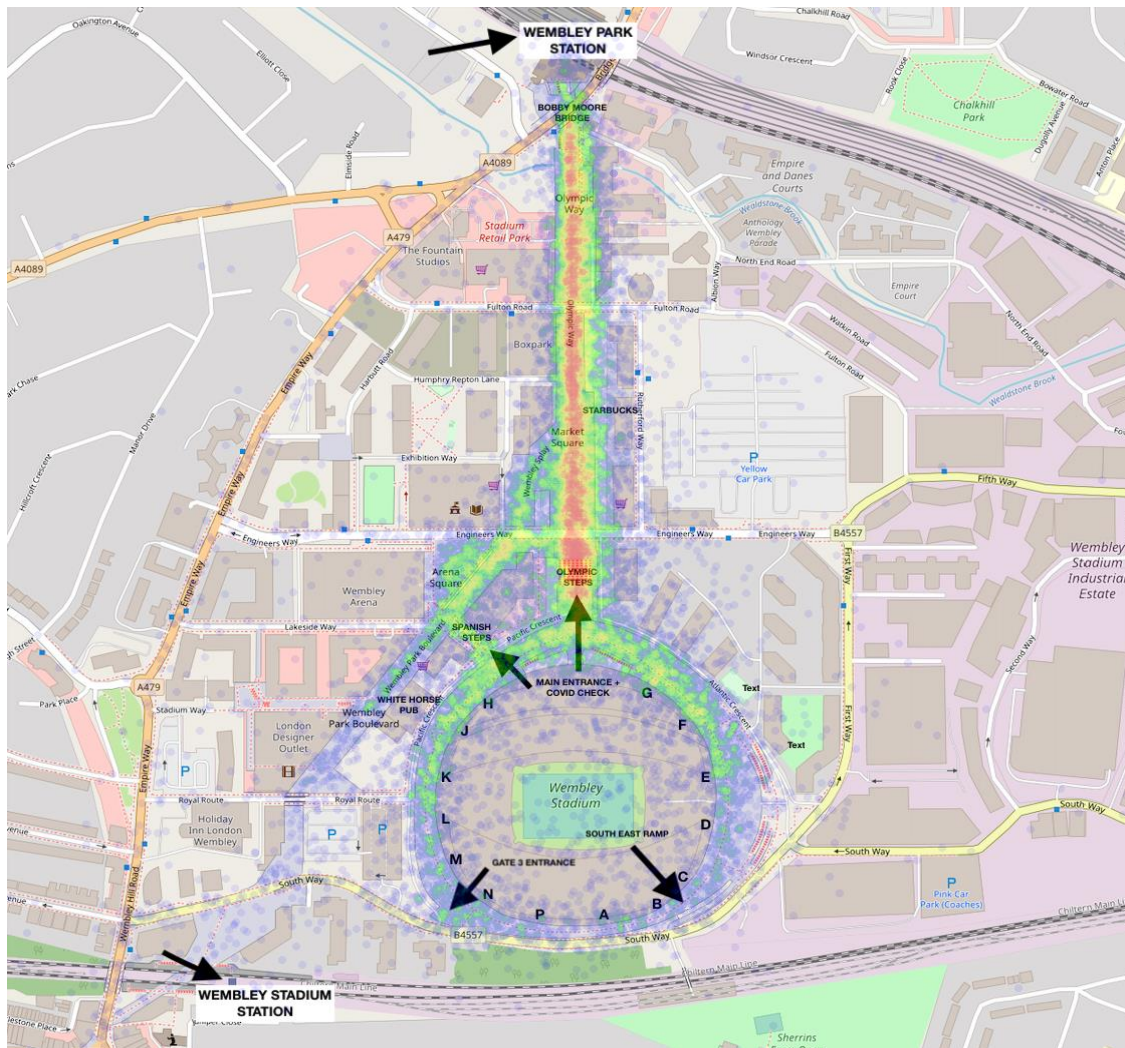
At 2.30pm, the MPS records show that the bulk of the MPS public order officers planned for Euro Sunday had arrived at Wembley. These were 175 officers from 7 police support units (PSUs), including 75 officers who had originally been tasked to patrol the wider north London area, encompassing Kilburn and Harrow. They were now ordered to remain near the stadium due to the public order situation.

At 3pm a further 50 public order officers arrived, accompanied by 100 specialist public officers from the MPS Territorial Support Group (TSG). These were to be deployed inside the stadium and on the concourse specifically to deter ticketless fans seeking to tailgate through turnstiles.

By this time, the situation outside the stadium was considered too unsafe for volunteers to be deployed to advise arriving fans about ticket and bag checks. Council staff would subsequently withdraw for their own safety due to the major levels of violent disorder on Olympic Way.

Ticket holders and legitimate fans felt unsafe too. More than 2,200 respondents to the Review survey said they witnessed “a lot” of threatening behaviour when they arrived in the Wembley area and the heat map below suggests this was endemic along Olympic Way.

Heatmap of threats and abusive behaviour (across the day)



Testimony from ticket-holding fans make clear how terrible the approach to the stadium had become, particularly for fans with disabilities.

“Was like a war zone, never seen anything like it. Vandalism, yob behaviour, broken glass, glass being thrown, highly drunk people, very horrible atmosphere for a lone female. Police barely seen.” - Review survey respondent

“I witnessed bottles and cans being thrown at people, children covering behind parents to hide, trees being ripped up and thrown, climbing on roofs and throwing things into the crowds.” - Review survey respondent

Disabled fans were particularly affected by the crowd’s behaviour.

“I saw people in wheelchairs struggling to get through the mosh pits, wheeling over cans and bottles and God knows what else.” - Euro 2020 ticket holder complaint to FA

Shortly before 4pm, fans kicked over barriers on Bobby Moore Bridge and police were deployed to support council stewards.

The Co-op shop was reported to be running out of beer by 4pm and would subsequently close when a police officer was hit over the head with a bottle and a crowd attempted to smash its windows. A local pub was later forced to lock customers inside and close, due to fears a crowd of several hundred were planning to smash up the premises if they were refused entry.

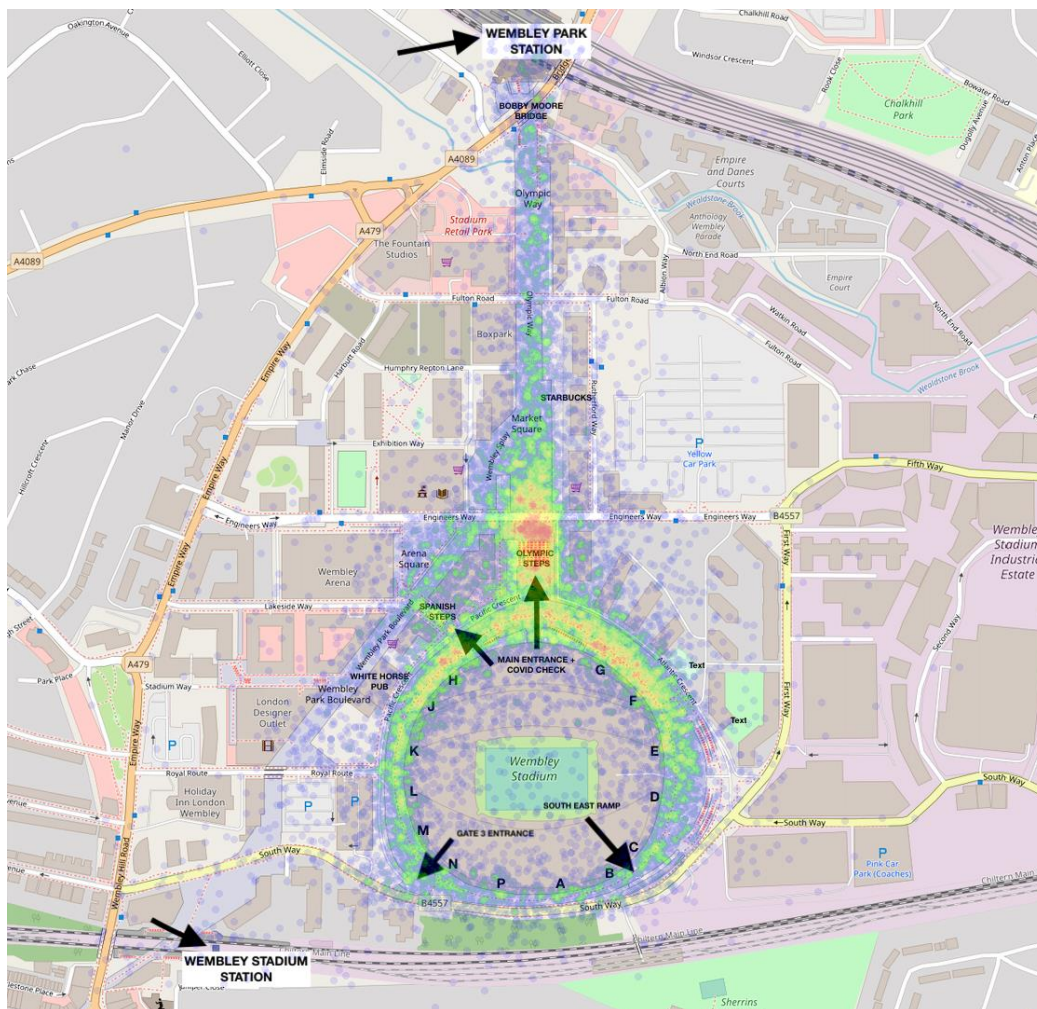
At 5pm, the council and police licensing team withdrew for their own safety due to broken glass and bottle-throwing.

“Time and again the word people used was ‘toxic’. They described the atmosphere as toxic. This was said on the day and after. Families of players, people who worked here, people who had been around football for a while. It was an atmosphere that they did not associate with football.” - FA/Wembley official

“An uncomfortable feeling of unease that I have not ever experienced before as disorder and violence seemed inevitable.” - England fan home and away since 1969

By this point in the afternoon, discussion among ticketless fans about trying to get into the stadium appears likely to have been widespread. Analysis of the responses to the Review survey shows that 1,130 ticket-holding fans who arrived at Wembley between 3pm and 5pm heard others discussing getting into Wembley without a ticket. A heat map analysis shows talk of getting in without a ticket was concentrated among the fans who had gathered at the foot of Olympic Steps.

Heatmap of people discussing getting in without a ticket (across the day)



By late afternoon, according to London Underground data, around 3,000 people were arriving every 15 minutes at Wembley Park Underground station.

At 4.13pm the MPS tweeted warning people not to travel to Wembley without a ticket. Other agencies and organisations, including the London Mayor’s office, retweeted it. This was the first coordinated message to tell people without tickets not to come to Wembley.

On the 4.30pm tactical partners call, the scale of the challenge was clear. The City Hall control room said the estimated number of people outside Wembley was unprecedented and larger than the stadium’s capacity.

A senior council official described the situation on the ground as “pretty tense” and noted the crowd had “gradually built up back to Wembley Park.” He added that “a lot of the fans don’t have tickets.”

Significantly, the MPS said there was “a worry large numbers of unticketed fans will try to push onto the concourse” and “contingency plans were now a priority.”

By the time the police warning reached the Wembley control room via the FA official on the call, attempts to breach the OSP had already begun.

“My mechanisms in place tell me I’ll see tailgaters and I know there will be more than before because it is the final...but nobody came to us with a sense of urgency. Nobody said ‘ticketless fans are going to force their way through.’” - FA/Wembley official

2. Breaches at the outer security perimeter (OSP)

2.1 The layout of the OSP

The Euro Sunday safety and security operation at Wembley began at the OSP. This was a series of fences and barriers set up outside the stadium to manage the flow of people into the stadium and ensure only those with tickets and the correct Covid-19 status would get near the turnstiles.

There were five points on the OSP where fans could pass through. Each featured a series of ‘lanes’ formed by ‘ped’ barriers. At the first checkpoint fans had to show stewards that they had proof of double vaccination against Covid-19 or a negative lateral flow test result. Once that check had been passed, fans would progress down the lanes towards the stadium and show stewards they had a ticket, either a print out, or an electronic version on their mobile phone.

Fans who provided these documents would be allowed to proceed to the stadium’s gates. For fans arriving from Olympic Way, this would be up the Olympic Steps at the front of Wembley or the nearby Spanish Steps. The other points to pass through the OSP were at the East Gate and on the south side of the stadium.

The FA has told the Review that the OSP was implemented based on risk assessments taking into account planning restrictions and the layout around the stadium, and had been trialled prior to the tournament. Furthermore, no attempts were made to breach them during the previous 7 Euro matches at Wembley.

The MPS told the Review that it had raised concerns with the stadium about the position of the OSP and the risk of bottlenecks, particularly as capacity increased through the tournament.

“We raised this again and again. if you keep the OSP the same every time with more people coming in there are going to be problems.” - MPS senior officer

However, in hindsight, some interviewees have questioned the effectiveness of the OSP's design and construction.

"In Wembley, the outer perimeter is hard to manage because of the residential blocks. Instead of a large fence you can police with various entry points, you have a soft perimeter. Once fans see you have a weak spot, that's when you have got a problem." - FA/Wembley official

The OSP was staffed by stewards and security guards rather than the police, who did not have responsibility for crowd safety except in exceptional circumstances. Several Wembley external security managers interviewed post the final told the Review they had had concerns about the strength of the fencing should it come under assault.

"I was concerned from day one of the competition that the heras fencing was insufficient." - Wembley external security manager supervisor

"Our biggest concern was the OSP fence. We reported it...we were told [by Wembley officials] it would hold and we would be backed up by the police and they would make it work." - Wembley external security manager

Since Euro Sunday Wembley have reviewed their OSP arrangements to be used in future.

The stewarding of Euro Sunday is examined in depth in Chapter 5.

2.2 The pre-planning of ticketless fans

At 4.30pm, with the support of UEFA and the MPS, the stadium control room opened the OSP. This was half an hour earlier than planned and was a response to the situation outside the stadium and to relieve some of the pressure in the crowds.

Many stewards the Review spoke to believed there was a significant element of planning and preparation by some of those without tickets who may have swapped information or copied screenshots from sites such as WhatsApp, Snapchat and Telegram.

This is supported by accounts from legitimate supporters who queued up with ticketless fans at the OSP.

"As we queued for the first Covid checkpoint people were showing us group chats and fake "ticket validated" screenshots." - Euro 2020 ticket holder

“Lots of people in my queue had fake tickets and/or were offering to pay fans with tickets to let them come through the turnstile with them.” - Euro 2020 ticket holder

For nearly an hour, there were no reports of ticketless fans using force or violence to get past. Instead, those individuals who did try to get through the OSP used subterfuge aided by pre-prepared fake documentation.

“Within minutes of opening up we had people trying to blag their way in with false accreditation.” - Wembley external safety manager

It is not unusual at Wembley for a limited number of ticketless fans to attempt to gain entry. This is covered at Chapter 4 in this report. Both Wembley and UEFA had stepped up action to deal with this issue after the Denmark game.

At 5.25pm the situation changed significantly as large groups of men attempted and sometimes succeeded in penetrating various physical points in the OSP.

2.3 The Spanish Steps

At this point around 100 men charged the OSP at the top of the Spanish Steps causing the barriers to collapse completely. This group punched stewards, the police, and anyone in their way, and made it into the main stadium concourse.

This was the first of many attempts to break through the OSP using brute force, most likely by individuals who had not come prepared with fake tickets. It came as a surprise to Wembley staff.

“Until the Spanish Steps, I felt nothing was out of the normal. Yes, it’s busy and there is stupid behaviour, but nothing is threatening me. I haven’t thought ‘I’m in serious trouble’. The crowd is painful but we ramped up numbers to deal with that. I can’t tell you what a surprise that moment was - it came from left field.” - FA/Wembley official

“A key focus for us was antisocial behaviour in the final and the semi-final. Nothing in our history from previous games was saying we anticipated anything at the Spanish Steps was going to happen. It was a ‘bang’ when that happened.” - FA/Wembley official

“No one was ready for what came. But at the time ... it wasn’t like they weren’t jumping over beforehand. It was when they saw people go in, then they started jumping...” - FA/Wembley official

By this point, another 100 specialist public order police officers from a pan-London reserve had arrived at Wembley. These units, including two from the TSG, were ordered to deploy immediately on arrival. With horses and dog units, there were now 553 officers at the stadium.

Despite their presence, attempts to breach the OSP continued and became increasingly determined.

“Large groups of fans were observed working together to attack specific points and cause breaches. This would then draw in response teams, stewards and police, allowing these fans to charge an area far further away.” - FA internal timeline

One senior FA official reported that they witnessed around 20 such attempts on the OSP in 25 minutes.

2.4 Club Wembley

At 6pm the first of three assaults on Wembley’s VIP entrance took place when a crowd surged forward and forced their way through the Club Wembley OSP. At this point the MPS deployed dog units to the concourses.

At 6.07pm a crowd breached the Club Wembley OSP knocking down the fence line. The Safety Officer closed the door leading to the Club Wembley turnstiles and halted ingress¹ at the OSP until 6:15pm when mounted police arrived.

At 6.26pm, a crowd pushed down multiple fences on Atlantic Crescent in a domino effect and attempted to get onto the upper Wembley outer concourse via the stairs and Club Wembley and Staff entrances. Footage of this incident was widely circulated on social media. Again, mounted police deployed to clear the area.

A further breach occurred on Atlantic Crescent and then Pacific Crescent when a group broke through fences and charged past stewards towards the media entrance at B2. In this case, ticketless fans attempted to break fences and violently force their way past stewards and security to gain access into the B2 area. Many ran up the stairs towards the L1 outer concourse as stewards and staff tried to hold up the fence line to prevent access.

At around this time, Wembley’s security operation came under intense pressure with some staff struggling to send and receive important information. The stadium’s internal timeline prepared after Euro Sunday notes:

¹ In a stadium event, ingress refers to the amount of people and traffic coming into an event, and egress is the amount leaving and coming out of an event

“All call signs [were] instructed to try and remain calm and concise with their radio messages. They were under a lot of pressure and some messages were shouted or incoherent for one 10 minute period.”

2.5 Dropped Covid-19 checks due to crowd density

While the stadium was grappling with major security problems caused by the attacks on the OSP, staff were also acutely aware of crowd safety issues. In particular, the control room became concerned about the effect the Covid-19 check had at the OSP and the inability to control the crowd and queues safely.

Despite the installation of an additional mast, the mobile phone signal was still insufficient to allow such a large number of people to rapidly access the web-based NHS App. In addition, it was taking stewards time to weed out ticketless fans who had come to Wembley without being able to show either vaccination status or lateral flow test results. As a result, queues were building up and there was an increasing risk that crowd density in the OSP barrier lanes would rise to unsafe levels.

At 6.01pm the Safety Officer decided to suspend the Covid-19 check from the OSP. It was reinstated at 6.41pm.

This was not an easy decision to take. Though it reduced crowd density, it inevitably brought ticketless fans closer to the stadium. In effect, the safety of the crowd became the overriding priority of the stadium.

“We have already seen these breaches, we know there is a mixture of fans and ticketless people. By releasing the checks, we let them get close to the stadium...it meant we would have to deal with these people and it would be a problem on our outer doors. But we knew if we don't do that we will have an injury in those lanes.” - FA/Wembley official

At 6.21pm, the control room asked UEFA to automatically activate all tickets for the final so that stewards did not have to do this at the OSP. This decision was also based on the need to prevent queues or crowd density building up, because of the time being taken turning away ticketless fans.

There was a constant trade-off between managing security and crowd density. The decision to allow people, including ticketless fans, to come closer to stadium was about managing the risk of injury and ensuring everyone in the crowd was safe:

“To use a crude term, we then went into a whack-a-mole stage. This is part of the process – we've not seen all the elements we saw later. We release people to an area where we have more control. We see them

separate away from ticketed fans; they roam around, whereas the ticketed fans move to their own turnstile. Now there is no longer a safety threat from heavy congestion. When that problem was removed, now we move onto the next problems; we know several points of breach. At that point, we wondered if they would tailgate but we never foresaw the heavy breach on the fire doors.” - FA/Wembley official

2.6 The Olympic Steps

The Olympic Steps were the centrepiece of the OSP, overlooked by television cameras broadcasting the build-up to the final. Crowds had gathered at the foot of the steps since around 1.30pm and many legitimate fans had passed through without incident after the OSP opened.

That changed at 6.31pm when ticketless groups broke through in some numbers on the west side of the steps. MPS officers on the steps deployed to the top of the steps to help to stewards secure the area.

At 7.56pm, probably in response to the England national anthem being played inside the stadium, another large group surged through the OSP and up Olympic Steps. Hundreds more followed into the breach from the plaza in front of the steps. They were met at the top of the steps by two PSUs who deployed a fast walk with batons raised. The first wave turned around and ran back down the steps meeting the second wave who were still running up.

At this point, the MPS deployed significant public order resources across the top of Olympic Steps and took control of the steps and all ingress into the stadium. For the next three hours, these officers stood shoulder to shoulder across the steps, deterring the intoxicated crowd from further attempts to surge the stadium.

They faced a crowd which gathered on the steps, continually tried to push forward, threw missiles, including flares, at the police, and were willing to fight them. This deployment of police was critical to preventing the disorder escalating even further and potentially disrupting the match itself.

One council official described the scene to senior colleagues as “like a medieval siege.”

As part of its examination of what happened on Euro Sunday, the Review asked Professor Geoff Pearson, an expert on football disorder and its subcultures, including ‘jibbing’, to consider the foreseeability of disorder outside Wembley Stadium.

While his report is considered in depth in Chapter 4, and published in full as an addendum, the Review believes elements of his analysis of crowd behaviour ahead of the match are worth noting here.

In summary, Professor Pearson believes that the first attempts to enter Wembley without a ticket were most likely planned in advance and carried out by experienced 'jibbers'. These attempts may well have inspired more opportunistic and violent copycat attempts to gain entry to the stadium, particularly as kick-off approached.

Pearson writes that, due to limited bar capacity, no big screens, and poor mobile phone signal, by early evening:

'Thousands of highly intoxicated fans were now left very close to the stadium but with no means of watching the most significant match in their lives. In this crowd are some individuals who will have travelled with the intention of 'jibbing' into the stadium but many would have initially intended to find a pub to watch the match, whether near Wembley or even in another part of London, but have now run out of opportunity for the first and time for the second. News of early successful jibs would have started to reach individuals in this crowd through social media and word of mouth and with the knowledge of the number of unsold seats at Wembley.'

Pearson notes that the biggest charge at the OSP on Olympic Steps coincided with the national anthems being sung which would have been audible to those outside.

'Experienced jibbers would have planned to gain access to the stadium well before this time [the national anthems] when the turnstiles would be expected to quiet again...so while this does look like a coordinated attempt to break into the stadium, my suspicion is that this will not have been planned much in advance but was instead an outcome of how the evening developed. It also meant that this attempt to 'jib' into the stadium would be disorderly and violent rather than one based on more typical methods of subterfuge.'

3. Breaches at the pass gates and turnstiles

3.1 Early tailgaters

The first attempt to tailgate into the Euro 2020 final was detected at 5.01pm at Gate A, according to radio logs of messages sent by stewards to the Wembley control room. This individual was successfully caught by stewards and ejected from the stadium through the pass gates used to facilitate wheelchair users and other people with mobility issues. This is normal practice.

Over the next 25 minutes, dozens, if not hundreds, more tailgating attempts were made. CCTV analysis shows that Wembley stewards and security intercepted many of them. These individuals were ejected via the pass gates back onto the stadium concourse.

While Wembley and the police had expected tailgating and put plans in place, including deploying 33 TSG officers on the stadium concourse near the turnstiles, it was apparent that parts of the security operation were at risk of being overwhelmed.

At 5.26 pm, the Safety Officer made a very significant decision to lock down all turnstiles in response to the breach of the OSP on the Spanish Steps. The FA's internal timeline notes:

“The lockdown was called to prevent large numbers of ticketless fans from gaining unauthorised access into the stadium and to allow time to have resources be it stewards or police in place to deny/deter/prevent access. It is not common to call a stadium lockdown.”

Though it was announced over the stadium PA system that all the turnstiles had been closed, it is understandable that many ticketed fans were frustrated and did not understand what was happening.

Locking down the turnstiles as thousands of fans wanted to gain entry to the stadium meant a risk of the queues becoming too dense. People pushed forward assuming that there was movement at the front of the queue through a turnstile and into the stadium.

Monitoring this situation was vital, and as such, the Safety Officer re-opened the turnstiles at 5.46pm due to the rising crowd density on the concourse, despite knowing it would give tailgaters a fresh opportunity to get in.

“[I] have to unlock turnstiles to let people in after I locked them down - whether I was set or not - because those people weren't moving, and the queue was only being added to. I had to accept what was in the queue and let it come into the stadium.” - Safety Officer

In this situation the Safety Officer made the right decision to prioritise safety over security.

To help stewards spot tailgating, the Safety Officer then put a five second delay on each turnstile. The stewards continued to identify and eject individual tailgaters and eject them through the pass gates. However, because these individuals could not be

arrested due to the numbers involved and practical considerations, they were effectively 'recycled' onto the concourse, free to try again at a different set of turnstiles.

3.2 Targeting fans with disabilities

Disturbingly, it is clear that ticketless fans targeted disabled supporters in a predatory fashion near the turnstiles.

"The problem was getting each and every time the stewards opened the disabled gates to let [my son] or any wheelchair user in, they were met with a rush of non-paying people charging the gate barging past and pushing disabled people and stewards out the way. I myself had to physically guard [my son] to get in through the gate." - Fan testimony from Level Playing Field

"My son, who needs 24/7 care, was stuck in the middle of this in his wheelchair. He is unable to move due to DMD [Duchenne muscular dystrophy]. Both English and Italian fans came to help him. He would have been badly hurt. It ruined his experience." - Fan testimony from Level Playing Field

In one appalling incident, a ticketless fan tried to impersonate a steward and hijack a disabled child and separated him from his father, in order to trick his way through a pass gate.

"He's then taken [son's] wheelchair and pushed it towards the door...Just as we got to the door we twigged what was going on and it turned out he's just an England fan in a high-viz jacket that was literally hijacking a wheelchair to get into the stadium." - Testimony via Level Playing Field

At 6.21pm, the Safety Officer asked stewards if at all possible to stop ejecting tailgaters through disabled access pass gates and use the B2 security entrance instead. This was due to concerns that groups of ticketless fans were attempting to seize the opportunity to surge in.

As the match kick-off became imminent, fans became more desperate and used greater force, including at pass gates used by disabled fans to gain entry to the stadium.

Rather than target the turnstiles one by one, many chose to take part in massed attacks on the pass gates and fire doors.

3.3 Mass breaches

There were 17 mass breaches of the stadium that day. Analysis of Wembley's records and of internal and external CCTV cameras shows that between 6.29pm and 7.46pm 16 mass breaches took place.

Pass gates are there for fans unable to use the turnstiles, such as those with disabilities, including people using wheelchairs. The fan approaches the door from the outside, shows their ticket, the outer door is opened, and the person enters a cubicle inside. This is built with wheelchairs in mind. Once inside, the outer door closes the inner door opens and the fan is able to go forward. The space inside is limited to a small number of people and a steward.

It is clear from the CCTV footage that hundreds of fans violently forced their way into these cubicles with absolutely no regard for anyone needing to use them.

3.3.1 Breaches of pass gates

Eight breaches occurred when staff opened pass gates from inside to eject a tailgater and were ambushed by a group on the concourse who typically held the external door open allowing others to rush through.

This occurred once at Gate B, six times at Gate D and once at Gate K. Six of these breaches were foiled by stewards and police who forced the intruders back out. In one breach, at Gate D, approximately 130 people got into the stadium. The success or failure of the breach at Gate K was unclear from the CCTV footage.

Three mass breaches occurred when ticketless fans used brute force to open the pass gates. CCTV images show the metal doors bending due to the pressure exerted on them before they gave way.

At 6.29pm, approximately 10 people forced open a pass gate at Gate M but were held back by security staff and failed to get into the inner stadium.

At 6.45pm, approximately 200 people broke through a pass gate at Gate H and got into the inner stadium. CCTV images show large numbers of people on the concourse rushing through after seeing others force it open.

At 6.54pm, approximately 70 people gained entry to the inner stadium at Gate C after forcing the pass gate open from the concourse.

3.3.2 Breaches of emergency doors

The largest breaches took place through emergency fire doors. During a 21 minute period between 6.47pm and 7.08pm, approximately 690 people broke through.

On the first occasion, at 6.47pm, a fan entered Gate H using a ticket before doubling back on himself and running to the emergency fire door. He operated the emergency exit bar, allowing a group of approximately 90 people to surge in and get into the inner stadium in around 20 seconds.

At Gate G, at 6.54pm, a major breach occurred when approximately 350 people got into the inner stadium after the emergency fire doors were forced open from the outside. This would have required a high degree of force, a group of people, and, potentially, the use of tools.

At this point the TSG units were deployed to turnstiles to help stewards and security. The Safety Officer also increased the power on the electromagnetic locks on the emergency doors from 25% to 100%. This was the second highly significant decision made by the Safety Officer. The circumstances he, other stadium colleagues, and the police were operating in were highly unusual. This decision might have impeded the evacuation of the stadium in the event of a fire or another emergency if the locks were not powered down first. At all times he was required to make split second calls to balance safety and security.

At Gate G, where the fire door had been destroyed as the locking mechanism was wrecked, the emergency doors were breached again in two waves at 7.06pm and 7.08pm. Approximately 250 more people got into the inner stadium after initially becoming wedged in the doorway and collapsing on top of each other. CCTV shows a man carrying a very young child nearly lose his footing in the stampede to get in.

For those standing inside the stadium near Gate G, including a number of England players' families, it was a terrifying experience.

“All of a sudden there was a rush from behind people trying to get through. Another person just pulled me out and asked me to get behind him in the queue. I was with my son and we were in bits, I was scared for my life.” - Partner of England footballer

“There was a wave of bodies just flung to the floor, including a young lad in a wheelchair - it was terrifying, disgraceful.” - Father of England footballer

With the door broken, security had to improvise a means to close and hold shut these doors for the rest of the evening. They did so using a heavy-duty fork lift truck. The stadium carried out repair works on the emergency door during the game. However,

this did not prevent a further breach of this gate when, at 10.49pm, the 17th and final mass breach took place during the penalty shootout as the stadium was preparing to open its doors to let people out.

As kick-off approached, and the numbers of ticketed fans inside the stadium increased, the control room progressively reduced the numbers of turnstiles open at each gate.

Correspondingly, attempts to gain entry by force became increasingly desperate and culminated in deliberate acts of sabotage against some of the stadium's critical safety features.

The emergency door at Gate H was deliberately opened a second time at 7.41 pm. In an apparently coordinated move, a young man ran to the door from within the stadium without warning and operated the emergency exit bar. This allowed approximately 100 people into the inner stadium in around 30 seconds. People can be seen being forced to the floor and trampled underfoot by the force of the crowd entering from behind.

Accounts of legitimate fans have provided some insight into the reckless and entitled mentality of these groups.

"I overheard talk of the following... 'loads of us are going to get in through the fire exit door, there are already hundreds who have got in without a ticket, so we should be fine if we do the same thing, they won't be able to stop us as there are too many of us'." - Euro 2020 survey respondent

"As we were talking one lad in grey walking even quicker, overheard something we said [about ticketless fans gaining entry] and retorted 'It's a once in a lifetime experience, I'm not going to miss it for anything'." - Euro 2020 ticket holder complaint to FA

Such was the unrelenting and aggressive nature of the tailgating and attempts to force through pass-gates and fire doors, some security staff doubt that having more police would have made a significant difference.

"I'm not sure ten more police units would have worked." - Wembley external security manager

"We needed a PSU at every turnstile but even that might not have held." - Wembley external safety manager

"It's the first time I've seen someone run at and kick the [police] dogs." - FA/Wembley official

Independent analysis of CCTV footage by Jason Moseley, specialist investigator, on behalf of the Review, indicates that between 1,776 and 1,964 people gained entry to Wembley, either through tailgating or taking part in a mass breach. Of these, between 1,254 and 1,386 gained entry to the inner areas, while around 400 were ejected by stewards and security.

These figures include a margin for error of +/- 5% and are based on examining footage from internal and external CCTV cameras covering parts of the stadium where breaches were recorded as occurring by Wembley records and accounts by non-FA/Wembley delivery partners present in the stadium during the final.

The full report which these figures and analysis are based upon are published as an addendum to this report.

4. Post kick-off

4.1 Inside the 'bowl' of the stadium

Those who gained entry to the inner stadium, or 'bowl', without tickets mostly ran straight ahead to evade the stewards and security guards conducting bag checks inside the turnstiles.

While some made their way to higher levels, many ran through to level 1. This was the one part of the stadium operating at full capacity with no spare seats. When ticket holders arrived, it quickly became overcrowded, forcing some intruders and legitimate fans to stand on the stadium staircases.

"I think the plan for them wasn't to occupy the aisles but to get a seat. But the majority burst through level 1 which was at full capacity so they thought they'd see lots of seats available, but they didn't." - FA/Stadium official

Disabled fans were particularly badly affected by the presence of so many unticketed fans on level 1.

"Throughout the whole first half people kept blocking my view and [there were] way too many people...I felt very unsafe. I could hear some people saying ticketless people were in their seats." - Testimony via Level Playing Field

"You had people jumping over fans in wheelchairs. It wasn't human behaviour. You don't expect people to behave like that." - Sports ground safety authority

Some families and those with young children found the open drug-taking and overcrowding a frightening experience.

“People were taking cocaine in front of us and smoking drugs behind us. My sons cried for most of the game, scared by the events surrounding us.” - Review survey respondent

“My son spent the game with louts stood next to him on the steps with the stewards only input being to take a picture for them on their phone...We ended up leaving before the end and to be honest our trip home was the best part of our evening.” - Euro 2020 ticket holder complaint to FA

Fans who challenged poor behaviours, including racist abuse and foul language, were threatened with violence.

“One fan tried to hit me personally because I was saying not to boo the Italian national anthem. I witnessed a fight by the bar area and that was set off just because somebody bumped into someone else.” - Review survey respondent

“A large group of drunken, drugged men (25yrs old approx.) suddenly filled the area around us and spent the entire game shrieking racist chants, swear words etc behind my 12yr son, when I asked them to tone it down due to my son being there they threatened violence etc.” - Review survey respondent

Nearly half the complaints the FA received following the match referenced inadequate stewarding or stewards failing to act to address issues within the stadium.

This was, in part, the result of the decision to redeploy some stewards away from the 'bowl' to help their colleagues defend the turnstiles and pass gates. As a result, there were insufficient numbers of stewards and security staff to assist ticket holders who found intruders in their seats or respond to other concerns. As it should be, stadium safety and security was prioritised over service.

“We were in a Catch 22 situation. Unable to eject and take positive action against the troublemakers. Removing ticketless from seating areas but unable to eject just meant losing even more scarce resources with no obvious gain...We were unable to provide the level of service and protection to spectators that should have been expected.” - Wembley level manager

“The bays suffered because we had to prioritise the turnstiles.” - Wembley level manager

“As a customer I can understand their perspective, you can imagine the threats. And the response teams are still on the outside doors, so we are not able to be present inside.” - FA/Wembley official

Despite this, some stewards did react to the worst incidents during the game - often supported by legitimate fans.

“When the England fans breached our area, both the England and Italy fans helped intervene. Stewards came in and then guarded the area to make things safer. This should be acknowledged.” - Italy supporter

It was clear to stadium managers that there had been multiple breaches involving large numbers. In addition, they believed they had no choice other than to accept the presence of the ticketless fans who had got into the stadium. In their view, it was unclear how they could differentiate them from legitimate fans or remove them from the stands without causing serious disorder. Furthermore, ejecting them risked letting even larger numbers of ticketless fans on the concourse.

“Once the match started there were some issues, some were obnoxious and violent but we couldn’t get them out as we were told not to re-open the pass gates.” - Wembley level manager

“There was the question of ‘how to get rid of these people’ but staff were all fully focused on containment.” - Wembley level manager

4.2 Outside the stadium after kick-off

Though the turnstiles were now locked down and the match had begun, the crowds of ticketless fans did not disperse. Aerial footage from the MPS indicates a crowd of some 6,000 people who remained outside Wembley, on the steps and for the next three hours sought other ways to break in, including launching attacks on fire doors and pass gates.

At 8.03pm, when England scored, the roar from the stadium crowd prompted a group of fans near the South West ramp to charge the OSP.

Some organisations who had a presence on the ground outside the stadium even after the match started felt the crowd’s mood actually got worse after the kick-off.

“Once the game has started, and people realise, actually, there's nothing...‘I've got to watch this game.’...[I]t was just a bit more of an edge to it.” - London Ambulance Service crew member

At 8.30pm, police with dogs swept the concourse to try to remove ticketless fans. Twenty minutes later fighting broke out between fans on the concourse and at 8.58pm some fans attempted to break in at Gate M.

On the Olympic Way, some fans continued to behave with a reckless disregard for the safety of themselves and other people, pulling down metal barriers to build a giant trampoline and attempting to bounce on it.

At this point, members of Wembley's logistics team went out into the crowd at the request of the Stadium Manager and dismantled the remaining barriers at the foot of the Olympic Steps in case the stadium needed to be evacuated. This required great courage given the violent mob around them.

At 9.38pm, a number of ticketless fans climbed on top of a large temporary signage structure next to Olympic Way steps. A crowd then pushed the structure down and temporarily trapped one man underneath for around one minute.

The London Fire Brigade was alerted and attended the site but were unable to drive through because a hostile vehicle barrier had not been lifted in time for their arrival. A team of firefighters prepared to deploy on foot with equipment supported by a mounted police escort for their own protection from the crowd while colleagues went ahead to inspect the structure. This advanced crew found themselves in the middle of what they described as 'just short of a civil disturbance'. This left them in a 'compromised position'.

5. The end of the game

5.1 Opening the doors

As the game progressed, the priority of Wembley and the police was, increasingly, establishing how they could safely open the stadium doors to let people leave at the end when so many ticketless fans remained outside.

During the 9.15pm tactical partners call, the MPS reported groups were “circling the stadium looking for points of weakness” while the council had noted a “huge group standing off with police at the top of the [Olympic] steps”.

Interviewees told the Review that this group, estimated by a police helicopter to number up to 6,000 people, remained outside the stadium throughout despite being unable to watch the match even on their phones due to the poor signal.

“It was constant for 6 hours - even in extra time, there were people standing like zombies on the line, trying to get in. The police helicopter said, ‘I’m estimating 6,000 people’. They were just standing there, not even watching the game on their phones.” - FA/Wembley official

This presented a potentially critical challenge for Wembley’s Safety Officer in particular. In previous games he had opened the stadium doors typically 15 minutes before the final whistle to let out the small numbers of people who wanted to leave early and avoid queues.

The situation outside made that impossible. There was a serious risk that thousands of ticketless fans would rush into the stadium through the same doors others, including children and disabled fans, were leaving by.

“The minute I open the door, the venue is open to anyone and everyone. The risk was those standing outside would go for it.” - Safety Officer

After Italy equalised, the match finished 1-1. After a goalless extra time, it was apparent to stadium officials, stewards and the police that the result of the penalty shootout could have a decisive effect on stadium safety.

“It was going to be a hard exit. I had to judge when to open the doors, based on the penalty outcome.” - Safety Officer

At 10.38pm, the Safety Officer reduced power on the emergency door magnetic locks to 25% in preparation for opening them to allow exit from the stadium.

“You could hear a pin drop in the control room. Even the toss of the coin went against us as it went to the England end where the ticketless fans got in. I was scanning which area would break first - onto the pitch or through Olympic Way.” - FA/Wembley official

At 10.52pm, after England missed their fourth penalty, the Safety Officer opened the doors for exit. Two minutes later fans started to leave the stadium after the last England penalty was missed.

Sadly, stadium officials, the police and other colleagues involved with the planning and execution of the final were all concerned about the possible consequences of England winning.

“I wanted Italy to win under penalties, I was begging for the scenario that unfolded because there was pressure building and building and building

and I was just, 'If they win, that charge is uncontrollable'." - Greater London Authority official

"I'm not sure if that [police] line would have held if England had won." - Wembley external safety manager

"Thank God England lost. If they had won you would have to open the doors to let people out and the stadium would have been stormed." - Sports Ground Safety Authority inspector

"If England had won, I think it would have been horrific. And we'd have had to have declared a major incident, both central London and Wembley, I can guarantee that we would have been on our knees." - London Emergency Services Official

5.2 Exit from Wembley

While the result was disappointing for the fans who had hoped to see England win its first major trophy since 1966, it helped to stabilise the security and safety situation at Wembley. The loss removed the motivation from the ticketless hordes outside to get into the stadium and made exiting far safer for those inside.

The large crowd gathering at the foot of the Olympic Steps began to disperse, though the atmosphere remained unpleasant. As fans left the stadium area, some pushed over the portable toilets on Olympic Way.

"The smell in the air was extremely strong and horrid, best described as a mix of alcohol and urine. Lots of rubbish was all over the ground and steps, consisting of broken glass, cans and food wrappers." - Brent Council official personal log

Further down at the cordons, Wembley managed to control the flow of people entering Wembley Park. But bottles were thrown at stewards and several members of staff were assaulted.

Worse, there were threats and racist abuse directed at Italy fans based in the UK, who were not part of the bubble of fans flown into Heathrow.

"On the train, we had staff intervene to protect Italian fans from being abused. One family of three generations, grandparent and grandchild were shouted at by England fans on the way in." - Chiltern rail official

"Italian supporters were subjected to racist abuse on the way to the stadium and away from it." - Euro 2020 survey respondent

5.3 Transport capacity

The remaining challenge was to ensure that such a large crowd, including the excess created by the ticketless fans, were able to travel home so late at night. This was a concern to the MPS who raised the issue and was part of their reasoning for the 3pm to 3am shift pattern so they would be ready to deal with any disorder on Olympic Way after the match whilst fans waited to leave the area.

London Underground had earlier in the day reported problems with capacity due to train drivers on the Metropolitan Line calling in sick at short notice and the loss of a control room team on the Bakerloo Line due to a Covid-19 alert. While managers had been confident about the 'forward' journeys taking fans to Wembley, they were concerned about the 'return' following the match.

Wembley had spent the morning booking 50 coaches as a contingency and, though the Underground had been able to recover some capacity through the day, there was still the risk that some of the crowd would be stranded.

"We knew we had risk, and that capacity would be tight. The coaches were a mitigation." - Transport official

On the 9.15pm tactical partners call, the council had expressed concerns that there were more people on the Wembley footprint than the transport system had capacity for. However, exact numbers were unknown.

No agency has been able to provide the Review with a robust estimate of crowd numbers on the Wembley footprint at its peak.

Data provided by London Underground indicates that up to 100,000 people travelled to Wembley through the day but a significant number of them returned to central London after spending a limited time near the stadium.

The Review estimated that at the end of the match there were approximately 75,000 people on the Wembley footprint allowing for ticketless fans inside and outside the stadium.

However, the result of the match was also an important factor in determining whether all the fans would get home.

"This isn't just an issue of absolute capacity. It is also about timing. If people don't leave the stadium in good time and they hang around then obviously that can cause issues." - London Underground official

“In the end, we cleared the crowd with 2-3 trains to spare. This included the Italian supporters who stayed to celebrate.” - London Underground official

5.4 Racist abuse of England players

England’s defeat in the penalty shootout sparked an immediate wave of racial abuse on social media which was aimed at the three players who had missed penalties for England. This mirrored the experience for some in the ground. Supporters described what happened the moment that the penalties were missed:

“Sadly and predictably there was some racist abuse after the penalty shootout - although around me people quickly called it out and the abuse stopped almost immediately.” - Euro 2020 survey respondent

“Some fans were incredibly racist during the penalty shootout towards some of the young, black players.” - Euro 2020 survey respondent

“There was racist abuse in the stands aimed at Saka after the penalty miss.” - Euro 2020 survey respondent

5.5 Clear up

By midnight Olympic Way was clear of fans and the clean-up operation began. Typically, football fans leave around 3 tonnes of rubbish behind them after a big game at Wembley. Teams are often deployed during the match so that as people go home afterwards the area is relatively clear. This was impossible after the final. Instead of 3 tonnes of rubbish, staff had to clear 31 tonnes. They were left with masses of broken glass, with trees uprooted from the ground, with urine and faeces to deal with and all the rubbish from the whole day and night.

“Bloody hell what have people done.” - Brent Council Councillor
Whatsapp group in response to a picture of the aftermath at 00.13 hours.

The clean-up operation took a full five days and those staff involved said they never wanted to do it again.

Chapter 2: Crowd Safety: Near Misses

The prevailing view in the aftermath of Euro Sunday was that the scenes at Wembley had been ugly and disgraceful. The thugs who lied, threatened or fought their way into the stadium risked the safety of themselves and others.

Many of those present at Euro Sunday, including a significant number of legitimate fans, subsequently expressed the view, whether in complaints to the FA, responses to the Review's survey or in interviews, that what they witnessed or experienced was more serious and, in some instances, extremely dangerous.

In order to assess these claims, the Review team commissioned an independent report by crowd safety expert Eric Stuart QPM, which is published in full as an addendum to this report. Mr Stuart's conclusions are clear.

“There is no doubt in my mind that a series of incidents occurred that were a sequence of very near misses and any one of these could have led to significant injuries or death(s) occurring.”

During the course of this Review, the Review team has been presented with no evidence that would contradict this conclusion. Indeed, when these findings were relayed to the FA Wembley Stadium Safety Officer he agreed that the description of a 'near miss' was apt, with several incidents 'not far off' having led to fatalities. His decision making on the day and night in question showed outstanding professionalism and courage by doing so probably saved lives. Thankfully we will never know otherwise.

This chapter explores those incidents in more detail.

1 Understanding crowd safety in context

There are many ways in which crowds - and specifically crowds around and within football stadiums - can become dangerously and physically unstable when certain circumstances occur.

In most circumstances, both physical and psychological factors are likely to have played a significant part, including:

- the 'motivation' of the crowd, with limited means of watching the game close to the ground
- The 'tease factor', spurred on by knowledge that there were around 25,000 seats likely to be empty

- The availability of alcohol and drugs in very high quantities, which can desensitise those involved

Mr Stuart’s report explains the most potentially dangerous crowd scenarios that might have been pertinent to Wembley Stadium on 11 July. These are summarised in the table below.

Crowd scenario considered	Description/ rationale
Excess crowds overloaded in large spaces	Too many people are present, even in seemingly large and open spaces, leading to crowds suffering asphyxia
Excess crowds overloaded in confined spaces	As above, but in smaller spaces (e.g. in or around buildings with limited entrances or exits)
Door wedging	Too many people try to enter a doorway at the same time
Progressive crowd collapse and entrapment	At high densities, ‘ripples’ or ‘crowd quakes’ can run through crowds, ultimately leading to a crowd collapse with people stacked on top of each other
Progressive crowd collapse on staircases (internal or external)	Inability to see the steps once within a crowd creates the risk of falling on a staircase
Barrier collapse and entrapment/ entanglement	In certain scenarios, the barriers themselves - while normally beneficial to crowd safety - can become the hazard that can inflict injury
Slip, trip or fall in a moving crowd with potential trampling	As crowd density increases, the risk of being tripped or tripping another also increases
Self-crushing crowd	Crowds that are directed or take routes in opposite directions come face to face, leading to crushing, for example, with the crowd in front turning into the onrushing crowd behind

The next section considers whether and, if so, how these scenarios might have played out on 11 July.

2 Near misses on 11 July

Below, is a summary of the evidence with regards to each of the above scenarios, drawing on Mr Stuart’s independent report, as well as interviews with staff at Wembley.

2.1 Excess crowds overloaded in large spaces

The Review has found no evidence that crowd density around Wembley ever reached the level required for a mass fatality crush incident on 11 July. There are accounts

that refer to reports of ‘crushing’ at the bottom of the Spanish Steps at around 7.30pm, although the timing of this is difficult to verify.² However, while there were indeed periods when a large and dense crowd had to be crossed by many hundreds of people, which would have been physically challenging, the situation never amounted to a prolonged period of crushing.

2.1 Excess crowds overloaded in confined spaces and ‘door wedging’

This was deemed to be one of the highest risk scenarios during the final. In his independent report, Mr Stuart highlights the scale of the challenge.

Each of these incidents resulted in large numbers of people being confined into small spaces with a high-pressure crowd pushing forward and a solid object, such as a metal door reinforced by staff, pushing against them. In other words, they were incidents which might have resulted in severe injury or worse.

Some of the more egregious examples of these ‘wedging’ incidents are summarised below.

Time	Location	Camera	Incident
18:46	Gate H	C275	Pass gate is breached causing over 100 people to surge through in two waves. A collapse of staff and public on floor lasts about 15 seconds. An emergency gate is then opened from the inside and another 80 or so surge through that.
18:56	Pass Gate D	C72	A prolonged jamming of the pass gate for 15 minutes as crowds are pushed back but try to enter. The duration of this compression is extremely disturbing.
19:02	Pass Gate D	C64	During the above incident, the exit gate is also breached.
19:15	Pass Gate D	C72	A coordinated opening of the door from outside by a male who does not appear to be a steward or staff but wearing a hi-vis jacket, and a simultaneous surge from a group of males. This seems planned.
19:15	Pass Gate D	C64	The inside picture of the above scenario where the door is held, and pressure applied to force the crowd back out.
19:19	Gate J Level 1	C315	Around 100 storm a gate which is forced open from the outside. Over a minute of compression occurs before the door is closed.
19:41	Gate H	C275	A male runs towards the fire doors just off shot, then returns back followed by 100-120 people who surge through.

² CCTV footage suggests crowd density was greater at around 18.30. See the further discussion in Eric Stuart’s report.

19:21	Block J Pass gate	C52	A steward opens a pass gate and scores run into it, jamming the insides before being forced back out by police.
19:44, 19:46 and 19:47	Block D Pass Gate	C318	A pass gate is opened, and hundreds run into it, jamming the insides before being forced back out by stewards.
20:03	Gate C Level 1	C56	Hundreds run towards an open gate. In this case few make it before police drive them back.

It is important to be clear that these incidents do not imply a criticism of Wembley stewards. They had an obligation to attempt to maintain the integrity of the perimeter. Indeed, had stewards permitted substantial numbers of unticketed, unsearched, drunk individuals into the stadium, the consequences might have been far more serious.

2.2 Progressive crowd collapse and entrapment

The Review has seen limited evidence of such incidents on 11 July. However, the density of crowds on several occasions was sufficient, had the right trigger been present (such as a fight breaking out), for such an incident to occur. In particular, several stakeholders pointed to the risk of progressive crowd collapse at the bottom of the Olympic Steps just before kick-off, when high density crowds pushed against stewards and barriers and pushed sideways into an existing crowd.

2.3 Progressive crowd collapse on staircases

Mr Stuart's report outlines a number of instances where a staircase collapse was likely. One of those most risky instances arose as a result of a policing tactic to 'baton push' against crowds surging up the Olympic Steps towards the stadium just before kick-off. This caused crowds running upstairs to turn and retreat, where they met onrushing crowds coming up behind them (figure 01). The design of the steps, with shallow levels and regular flat platform areas, potentially prevented a more serious incident from occurring but, as Mr Stuart comments: 'crowd compression and double direction movement with speed is extremely dangerous.'

It is important to be clear that while the risk to safety was 'caused' by the police action, this does not imply their actions were wrong. They were not. Had they given ground and allowed their lines to be breached, many thousands more might have attacked the turnstiles and pass gates, creating an even more dangerous situation. Any blame in terms of the risks to public safety should lie with the behaviour of those individuals who took it upon themselves to try and illegally gain entry to the stadium.

Crowd breach on Olympic Steps



Mr Stuart's conclusions around the potential for incidents at the Olympic Steps to have resulted in a much worse outcome are supported by Professor Geoff Pearson, an expert on football-related disorder, whose full report is published as an addendum to this report. Professor Pearson concludes:

“By 18.00, the crowds by the Olympic Steps and in the spaces around this had become congested and disorderly, with reports of regular pyrotechnics and bottle throwing. By 19.00, CCTV stills from the bottom of the Olympic Steps show a dangerously-crushed crowd pushing against unstable railing.”

Professor Pearson goes on to suggest that an intervention by officers at this stage would have required the use of coercive force, which could have exacerbated the problem of crushing and 'potentially caused a progressive crowd collapse'.

2.4 Barrier collapse and entrapment / entanglement

Mr Stuart notes a number of incidents where entrapment or entanglement with barriers seems to have occurred, including one incident in which barriers were stacked and seemingly used as a trampoline. These are detailed in his full report.

2.5 Slip, trip or fall in a moving crowd with potential for trampling

Analysis of CCTV footage reveals a number of incidents, which might have led to serious injury or worse. For example, at 5.25pm a surge of 100 individuals to the top of the Spanish steps caused barriers to collapse and led to a number of individuals being trampled, including a young male who fell and was temporarily 'buried' by other people falling on top of him. Although he climbed free he subsequently suffered a seizure and was treated at the scene.

In another incident at 6.45pm (Gate G), a female is seen being knocked down and trampled on by others, until another man recovers her from the floor. Later, at the same gate, footage from a phone being used within the stadium captures a series of disturbing incidents as ticketless individuals rush towards the door, including a man carrying a small child being swept in backwards through the door. He fell backwards hanging on to the child, falling over those behind him as he was pushed in.

From this footage, it does appear remarkable that there were not more serious injuries reported.

2.6 Self-crushing crowd

Mr Stuart's report cites a number of specific instances that are not captured on CCTV that might have led to self-crushing, had circumstances been different.

In one such incident, a male entered into an exit area via a pass gate or emergency exit and operated a smoke flare in this confined space. The consequences of this in safety terms might have been disastrous. Those seeking to evacuate would have likely met with an incoming wall of those trying to force entry through the opened emergency gates.

Mr Stuart also comments on the possible outcome of an England victory. Had England won, the 6,000-strong crowd outside, which remained there for the whole duration of the match, would likely have been motivated to seek entry for the presentation of the trophy. It is plausible that they would have done so at the same time as many of those inside began to leave. As Mr Stuart concludes:

“The prospect of a surging, ingressing drunken crowd in the event of England victory at the same time as the crowd is egressing is a frightening one. Had the weather not turned wet, and had England won the game, the consequences need little imagination.”

Many of those interviewed said that by the end of the night the prospect of England winning and the hordes of men outside the stadium could have been terrible. Victory was perceived by those present to be a very real public safety risk.

3 Conclusion

Based on the evidence presented during the course of this Review, it is difficult not to conclude that the events of 11 July, while clearly appalling, could very easily have been far worse, leading to serious injuries or even fatalities.

The Wembley staff, Safety Officer, Stadium Director, stewards and the MPS on the ground were left in an unenviable position by the behaviour of many those who attended, often without tickets. The decisions made by the FA Wembley Stadium Safety Officer outlined in Chapter two in detail - dropping the OSP to allow fans to come onto the outer concourse unchecked, locking down and reopening the turnstiles, and determining when to release the doors for egress at the end of the match - were significant and exceptionally brave. Had these decisions not been taken, it is likely that events that day may have resulted in considerably more injuries or even fatalities.

Mr Stuart's report concludes:

“With the frequency of incidents at so many locations, especially simultaneously, there was a significant threat to life on the day of the final and having studied the footage, I consider that (some of those) present were lucky that nothing more serious occurred.”

Although as far as is known there were no life changing injuries on the day and indeed no fatalities, the proximity of these events to something more calamitous ought to ensure that the recommendations of this Review are listened to as appropriate.

Chapter 3: Planning and organisation in the run-up to Euro Sunday

1 The context for Euro 2020

1.1 Organisation of the tournament

Even before the Covid-19 pandemic struck, Euro 2020 was a uniquely ambitious and exciting tournament. In 2012, UEFA had decided to stage these European Championships in 13 cities across the continent to celebrate its 60th anniversary. This would, it was hoped, spread the celebration across different nations and make the tournament more accessible to supporters. It was the first time a major sporting tournament had been held in so many different countries and represented a major shift from previous Euros which were typically hosted by one or two nations.

In 2014, England was awarded the right to host the semi-finals and the final with these matches to be played at Wembley. In 2017, Wembley's role expanded significantly when UEFA removed Brussels from the roster of cities and reallocated three group matches and one 'round of 16' match to London. In April 2021, another match was reallocated to Wembley after the Irish government could not guarantee 25 per cent capacity at Dublin's stadium due to Covid-19. In total, eight matches were to be played at Wembley between 13 June and 11 July.

Like other Euro 2020 host cities, London planned and delivered Euro 2020 matches via a Local Organising Structure (LOS). The LOS was accountable to UEFA and provided oversight and assurance for Euro 2020 in London. Led by the FA (including the stadium team), other core members of the LOS included the Greater London Authority (GLA), as 'host city' and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), as 'host country'. During the tournament, the LOS strategic partner calls and tactical partner calls were attended by other key delivery partners such as the MPS, the BTP, Transport for London and Brent Council, where Wembley Stadium is located.

Tactical partner calls were held on every Wembley match day, typically at 1pm, 4.30pm and 9pm, allowing the stadium, the police, the GLA, Brent Council and others to share information and keep partners informed about what was happening on the ground.

Separately, the Cabinet Office prepared daily reports drawing together information from across government relevant to tournament delivery ranging from the weather forecast to public health matters. It shared these with the LOS and other organisations.

The FA, Wembley and some stakeholders were confident that planning and partnership working around the tournament was effective.

“We had great involvement from the government, and everyone was around the table. Maybe not asking the right questions, but they were all there – you couldn’t have had a better buy-in process. It wasn’t a worry in the weeks before the tournament.” - FA/Wembley official

“There were lots of tactical partnership calls before the event and during. It was an incredibly coordinated multi-agency approach - nobody was lacking in situational awareness.” - BTP officer

1.2 Showcasing Wembley

Euro 2020 represented a chance to showcase Wembley stadium, Wembley environs and good partnership working. The stadium was staging eight matches: two more than during Euro 96 when England had hosted the entire tournament. These matches were to be played in barely three weeks. It was the first major tournament that the stadium had hosted since it was completely rebuilt between 2001 and 2007 at a cost of £789 million.

The FA, DCMS and the GLA apparently viewed Euro 2020 as an opportunity to demonstrate to FIFA that London and Wembley could deliver the final of a major tournament ahead of a potential joint bid by the UK and Ireland to host the 2030 World Cup. Although the Euros were a major tournament in their own right, there was excitement at the prospect of the World Cup bid and many organisations involved in delivering Euro 2020 were aware of this bigger picture.

Euro 2020 would be the first time that large football crowds attended Wembley Stadium following changes to its structure and setting. In 2020, the famous Wembley ‘pedway’ ramps had been demolished and replaced with the Olympic Steps.

In the days and weeks following Euro Sunday, a number of media reports questioned whether the physical changes, especially the steps, contributed to the disorder. All of these changes had gone through a rigorous and lengthy local area planning process which Brent Council, the MPS, local residents and other interested parties had fully participated in. The Review neither revisits these debates nor finds that planning was a cause of the disorder.

Euro 2020 was a major tournament and opportunity for the United Kingdom, for London, for Brent Council and for Wembley, as well as our national football teams.

2 Covid-19 factor domination

2.1 Covid-19 regulations

Throughout the Review process, there has been a single consistent message from all organisations involved in delivering Euro 2020: Covid-19 complicated and dominated everything.

The most visible impacts of the pandemic were the 12 month delay, announced by UEFA in March 2020, and the reduced capacity at Wembley and at other participating stadia due to restrictions on social gatherings. The need to facilitate compliance with the Covid-19 regulations or, in the case of the police, to enforce them, was also a constant consideration for those delivering the tournament.

When Euro 2020 began, Covid-19 regulations in England made gatherings of more than 30 people illegal. Mask-wearing was mandatory on public transport and in shops and other indoor public settings. Though pubs, cafes and restaurants were open, groups were limited to six people inside them. Nightclubs remained closed and people were still advised to work at home if possible.

The pandemic also brought Whitehall into operational decision-making in a way which was previously unthinkable. Both the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Cabinet Office, in particular, via the Covid-19 Taskforce, were involved in planning and overseeing the delivery of Euro 2020.

These restrictions, and the changes to them determined by central government, sometimes at short notice, affected the design and delivery of the tournament in a number of ways, which are explored below.

2.2 Changes in capacity

Wembley was able to stage Euro 2020 matches by taking part in the government's Events Research Programme (ERP) designed to examine the risk of coronavirus transmission from attendance at larger gatherings. The ERP comprised 31 sporting, musical and cultural events from late April to late July. Through the DCMS, the government would determine how many people could attend matches at Wembley. Their main concern was ensuring compliance with the ERP guidelines for any gathering of people. The influence the government had over the operations of organisations such as Transport for London and the MPS in relation to a sporting event was unusual.

The government initially set the capacity at Wembley for England's group matches against Croatia, Scotland and the Czech Republic at 22,500. On 14 June, the government announced that capacity for the 'round of 16' match at Wembley, and two semi-finals and the final would be raised to 40,000.

During this time, it was apparent to the LOS that UEFA wanted a larger capacity for the semi-final and final and the facility to allow overseas fans and VIPs to attend and

were actively considering switching them to Budapest, as Hungary had no Covid-19 regulations.

“Capacity was always an ongoing conversation, especially because Budapest was pushing. That was always a standard conversation with the government around capacity. If we didn’t, the whole week [the semi-finals and final] would have gone to Budapest.” - FA/Wembley official

The planning for the Euros is years and months in the making. Meeting the conditions that UEFA request for their events involves a lengthy process. For example, all the catering contracts for Wembley Stadium were changed for this event and this took close to a year to action. Prior to the pandemic, reorganising the location of the last three games would never have been considered by UEFA or anyone else.

On 22 June, the government announced that capacity for the semi-finals and final would be further raised to 67,000. This secured Wembley as the venue for the rest of the tournament.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said the final “promised to be an unforgettable moment in our national recovery from the pandemic”.

Some stakeholders however, expressed concern that capacity was being changed at short notice with insufficient regard to whether it could be made to work.

“There was a constant tension around capacity, the operators like Wembley, transport providers and the police, were not party to decisions around capacity but recipients of it.” - Transport official

“DCMS were very directive about this and not really willing to consult on it...it’s 67,000, make it work. So, in effect, you then try to hit capacity. It’s clearly within the gift of government to make that sort of decision, but it presents challenges that other people have got to sort out. Other people are writing cheques that everyone then has to cash.” - Football policing official

*“We were asked about the capacity increase before the final. ‘What about 65,000?’ We always said ‘You can **but** the factors are a lack of fan zones and the OSP on people who need to come through and will become impatient with the wait’.” - MPS senior officer*

Some said that the repeated changes in attendance allowed at Wembley introduced a degree of uncertainty which had to be factored into planning repeatedly.

“We were increasing the capacity of the stadium without knowing who would progress to the next stage and therefore which fans would be there or how many would be based on diaspora communities.” - Police officer

“We went in with pretty massive unknowns about attendance. As the tournament progressed we were going into planning with uncertainty around the number of people we would have to deal with.” - Transport official

Despite these concerns no one questioned the government's decision to work to retain the tournament in London. Indeed, it is unthinkable that any government would not have strived to achieve this.

Finally, reduced capacity at Wembley meant fans knew that there were empty seats at the stadium. There were ongoing discussions, led by the chief executive of Brent Council, Carolyn Downs, that it might be a better option to fill the stadium to full capacity:

“Carolyn spoke to her contacts in the government...UEFA and the FA were keen. The sense was it was too late – and everyone was looking at Covid and how it would look.” - Brent Council official

“I genuinely thought they [the government] would go to full capacity...It is the easiest thing for us to switch everything on - rather than delivering a plan with 67,000 – because all the staff won’t forget anything.” - FA/Stadium official

As the England team progressed through to the later stages, the fact that there were empty seats in the stadium became a topic of speculation. Following the semi-final against Denmark, several national newspapers, including the *Daily Mail*, reported that security was to be “beefed up” to combat the number of breaches by ticketless supporters.³ *The I* newspaper also reported on Tik Tok influencers who had shared videos that appeared “to show football supporters bypassing ticket barriers for their chance to watch a slice of the action without paying” after the Denmark game.⁴

The fact that the reduced capacity, driven by Covid-19, meant there was space in the stadium was well covered in the media, and on social media. This contributed to the

³ Daily Mail, 8 July, “Wembley security beefed up for Euro 2020 final after HUNDREDS of ticketless fans stormed stadium to watch England's semi-final victory - and other supporters say Covid status checks were NOT thorough enough as they entered” accessed online: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-9770669/FA-increase-number-stewards-place-Wembley-Euro-2020-final.html>

⁴ I News, 8 July, “England vs Denmark: Fans boast about sneaking into Wembley Stadium without a ticket for Euro 2020 semi-final” accessed online: <https://i.news.co.uk/news/england-vs-denmark-wembley-stadium-fans-without-ticket-euro-2020-semi-final-1093248>

sense that fans might be able either to buy a ticket legitimately or turn up and attempt to enter illegally.

2.3 Controlling Covid-19 and the Events Research Programme

Wembley's permission to operate with large crowds under the ERP came with many strings attached.

Firstly, it had a 'disapplication' from the Covid-19 regulations, meaning some of the restrictions did not apply within the immediate environs of the stadium. The 'line of disapplication' was tightly drawn around the stadium. At the start of the tournament it did not extend any distance down Olympic Way.

The increase in stadium capacity after England's group games presented the police with a problem because they would be expected to disperse any gathering of more than 30 people. Inside the disapplication zone, this would not be an issue. But if a queue of more than 30 people formed outside this area, police action would be required.

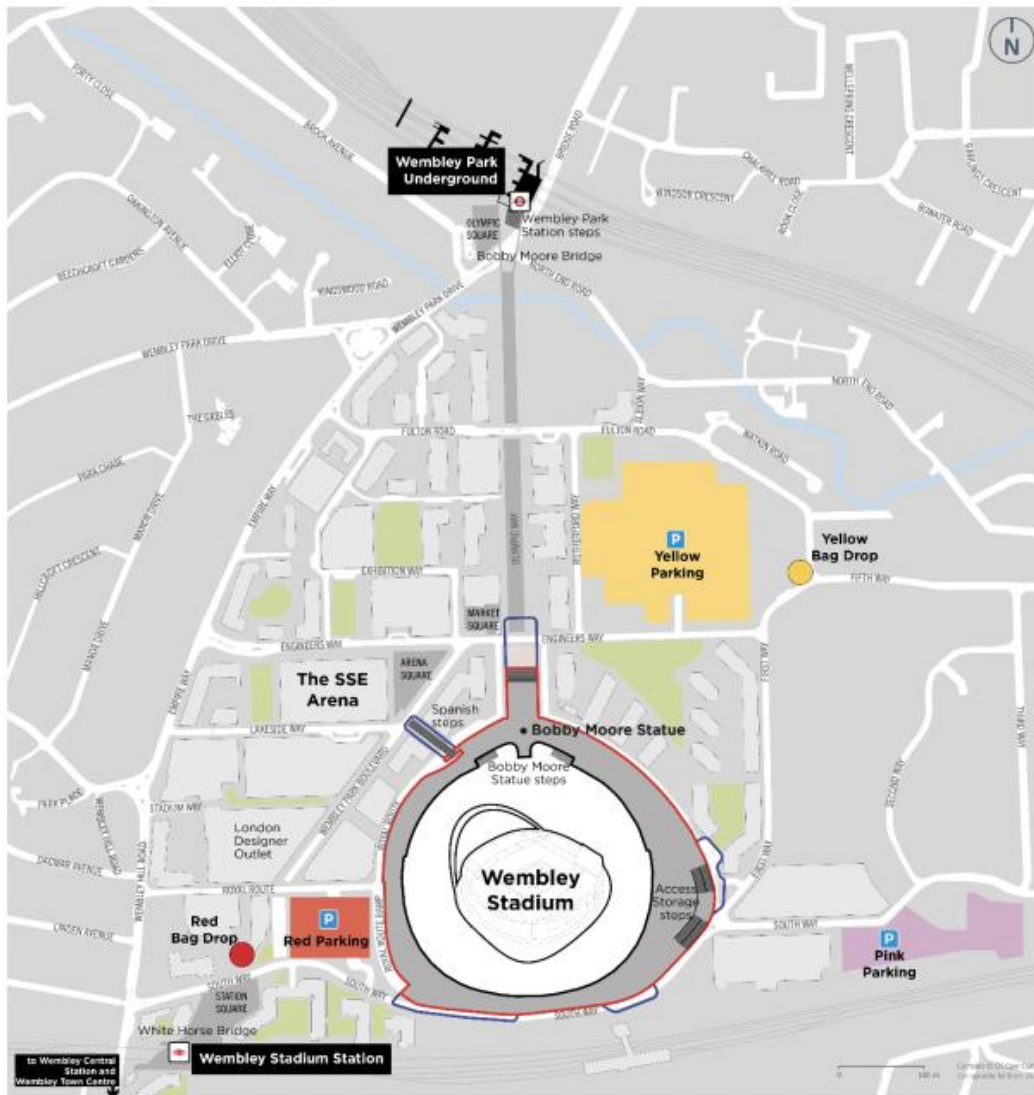
The prospect of the police breaking up groups of England fans as they had their tickets checked had concerning implications for public order.

"We had a lot of reassurances before the tournament that if there were any unofficial gatherings the police would quickly move them on." -
London Emergency Services Official

In May 2021, the FA wrote to DCMS to make it clear that it wanted the disapplication zone to be as large as possible. The FA wanted the restrictions to be disappplied for the stadium, and other areas outside the OSP and open to the public such as Olympic Way.

The FA argued that these areas needed to be disappplied, as it was likely that spectators would gather there in large numbers since they had done so for other events under the ERP, including the FA Cup and Carabao Cup finals.

Covid-19 regulation disapplication line around Wembley Stadium



The MPS raised the disapplication zone in the run-up to the final with the FA and with DCMS. In due course DCMS agreed to extend the disapplication zone a short distance down Olympic Way to allow queues to form legally. The slight extension came into effect on 29 June for the 'round of 16' Germany v England game (the red line in the above picture shows the original disapplication line and the blue line shows how far it was extended). This was a narrow discussion relating only to the queues and steps. While the narrow addition of the steps was resolved, this issue illustrates that complying with Covid-19 regulations consumed organisational time and effort and could be in contradiction with public order principles.

The issue of extending the ERP to a wider footprint in the end represented a lot of work for nothing. On Euro Sunday there was an unprecedented spike of Covid-19 in the stadium and wider area. Test and Trace data found that 2,295 people who attended the game were likely to have been infectious and a further 3,404 people potentially caught coronavirus at, or travelling to/from the game.

2.4 Covid-19 and screening tests

Another condition of allowing crowds at Wembley was that ticket holders had to provide evidence of a negative Covid-19 lateral flow test or proof of full vaccination at the OSP when showing their ticket. This required fans to be able to access the web-based NHS app on smartphones via a mobile phone signal.

The MPS told the Review that it raised concerns about the mobile phone signal at Wembley during initial tournament planning. Wembley told the Review problems with it emerged significantly when capacity hit 40,000 for England's 'round of 16' match and then when capacity increased for subsequent matches.

“At the Germany game we saw little incidents. At the semi-finals it was a significant problem. To a point, we had to accept someone coming up and showing the ‘circle of death’ loading on their app.” - FA/Wembley official

The MPS raised concerns about Covid-19 checks creating a risk of public order problems with the Wembley Safety Advisory Group ahead of the final.

“If you keep the OSP the same every time with more people coming in, there is far less signal capacity. Then where they were placed and where they are going to be used. It was always going to be a problem.” - MPS senior officer

An extra mobile phone mast was provided in an attempt to solve this problem for the final. However, staff considered the lateral flow check represented a tension between controlling Covid-19 and controlling a crowd safely.

“At the OSP, you see the queue building up. At some point, something has to give; an injury may occur because the sheer numbers create risk. We will either have quite a lot of injuries through pushing and shoving or congestion which would never stop.” - FA/Wembley official

Brent Council, who had public health responsibilities as the local London Borough, considered the Covid-19 check to be largely worthless and unenforceable since it used home-based testing.

2.5 Limited fan zones

Fan zones have become a tried and tested means to accommodate the desire of football supporters unable to get tickets for a significant match to still watch it as part

of a crowd. Staged in parks or other open air spaces, supporters follow a game on a giant screen with the facility to buy food and drink, including alcohol.

Capacity in a fan zone can vary from several hundred people to much larger crowds which would otherwise fill a mid-sized stadium. During the 2018 World Cup, London's Hyde Park staged a fan zone for 30,000 people to watch England's semi-final against Croatia. In June, however, the Covid-19 regulations which restricted gatherings to a maximum of 30 people made it impossible to set up a suitably sized fan zone outside of the ERP.

Ahead of the tournament, the GLA secured agreement from DCMS to set up a fan zone in Trafalgar Square with a capacity of 750 under the ERP for England's matches against Croatia on 13 June, against Scotland on 18 June and against the Czech Republic on 22 June.

Both the GLA and the MPS believed that if England progressed through to the latter stages of the tournament, a significant increase in fan zone capacity would be required.

The MPS has told the Review that it repeatedly raised its concerns about the lack of fan zones as England progressed through the tournament with DCMS and the Home Office. In all, the MPS expressed its view that there was a need for a large capacity fan zone somewhere in London on repeated occasions.

"In order to manage crowds and the people that would come [on the day of the final] you would need to have a fan zone and the fan zone needed to have a lot of capacity. Fan zones are part of the fabric and fixture of a football tournament now. People expect to come to Trafalgar Square"
- MPS senior officer

On 23 June, the day after England qualified for the 'round of 16', a senior police officer raised concerns with the Home Office at a meeting of the UK Football Policing Unit about the "invidious" position it faced in enforcing Covid-19 regulations while maintaining public order with large football crowds.

The MPS again requested the Home Office ask DCMS for a review of fan zone provision for England's subsequent matches with a view to increase capacity so supporters had legitimate places to gather together.

The MPS discussed its concerns with the GLA, which also believed fans needed managed spaces where they could gather to watch matches if England progressed into the latter stages of the tournament. GLA officials raised the possibility of a much larger fan zone in Hyde Park for the final with DCMS. This was ruled out by the

government on the grounds that this would not be possible because ERP could not accommodate any more events.

In addition, government argued that the fan zone set up in Trafalgar Square had not been necessary for England's match against Scotland and this weakened the case for additional fan zone capacity in later rounds though the others believed take-up was affected by heavy rain while the MPS believed the balloting system was to blame.

In the days leading up to the final, GLA officials continued to explore alternatives to a large fan zone including a series of smaller fan zones throughout Hyde Park. This idea was dropped once it proved impractical and too costly.

In previous tournaments, Wembley established two outdoor fan zones around Wembley Stadium called Arena Square and the Events Pad. Arena Square can hold up to 1,800 people and is located outside The SSE Arena, directly opposite Brent Civic Centre, while the Events Pad can hold 1,750 people and is located outside the London Designer Outlet.

When used, both fan zones are barriered spaces and do not require pre-booked tickets for entry, meaning ticketless fans who have travelled to Wembley on the spur of the moment have somewhere to go. This was not possible due to Covid-19 regulations. Even if these spaces had been used for fan zones these may not have been able to absorb all the supporters who made impromptu journeys to Wembley because they would have been ticketed, with proof of full vaccination or negative lateral flow test a condition of entry.

On 28 June, one day before the England game against Germany, the issue of fan zones was raised during a strategic partner call and recorded in the minutes. DCMS said "conversations are ongoing with the Euros team on possible Fan Zone expansion if England progress".

On 30 June, the MPS was told by the Home Office following a meeting of the Cabinet Office's Covid-19 taskforce about the semi-finals and final that their position on the need for a fan zone was "with DMCS".

"We pretty much got dismissed which frustrated me. It wasn't a proper explanation or a proper understanding - it was just a 'no'. For me this was a fundamental foreseeable issue we kept on raising with those responsible for managing access to the Event Research Programme, it was something of a frustration that it wasn't taken as seriously as it should have been." - MPS senior officer

On 5 July, just ahead of the semi-finals, during another strategic partner call, the GLA asked if any considerations had been made if England made it to the final. The

response from DCMS was “consideration [had] been given to different fan zone options. There is no scope to make the existing one an ERP or create additional fan zones.”

DCMS officials told the Review that requests from both the MPS and the GLA for a large capacity fan zone were considered carefully and the decision not to explore ways to permit one involved a number of different government departments. Government was concerned that sanctioning a major gathering of football fans outside a stadium would undermine public health messaging which was aimed at maintaining compliance with Covid-19 regulations right up until ‘freedom day’ on 19 July. It would have entailed significant change to the ERP pilot.

In conclusion, partners went into the semi-finals and the final with the issue of fan zones unresolved insofar as the MPS and other partners saw the need for one and yet the government felt unable to meet it due to the requirements of managing Covid-19 and public health.

2.6 Pubs and bars in Wembley

Pubs and bars had reopened in England on 17 May at the start of the ending of lockdown restrictions. However, their capacity was significantly reduced by the need to maintain social distancing and rules which prevented more than 6 people or two households from mixing.

These regulations had been scheduled to be lifted completely on 21 June. However, three days after Euro 2020 began, the government announced that the so-called ‘freedom day’ would be postponed by four weeks.

As a result, Euro 2020 would be completed before pubs and bars could return to full capacity. This became a major issue for all involved with managing Wembley, the tournament and Olympic Way. It meant that capacity in bars and pubs on the footprint such as Box Park on Olympic Way, and the White Horse by the Spanish Steps leading up to the stadium, remained drastically reduced. These and other venues can collectively accommodate 9,000 people under normal circumstances, allowing significant numbers of football supporters to enjoy the atmosphere at Wembley on match day and watch the football with other fans. During Euro 2020, capacity was reduced to only 1,500.

Brent Council officers and the FA were worried about the lack of space for fans to drink and eat ahead of the matches in the final week. In minutes of a partnership meeting, a Brent senior officer said

“There will be escalated challenges this week. The main issue is larger numbers gathering and drinking on Olympic Way due to restricted capacity in local pubs and bars.”

2.7 Transport

On the rail network, where mask-wearing was mandatory, the BTP was concerned how its officers would strike a balance between their public health and public order responsibilities during the tournament.

On 13 June, the Department for Transport asked the BTP to contribute to cross-government discussions about raising capacity at Wembley under the ERP for later rounds in the tournament. The BTP told the department on 21 June that its officers would not be able to enforce Covid-19 regulations if stadium capacity rose above 40,000. In the BTP’s view, larger crowds and alcohol consumption on trains by football fans would result in widespread non-compliance with the regulations. They also believed that attempts by its officers to enforce the regulations would result in disorder and therefore delays and disruption on the rail network.

“The minute we got to the critical mass being less willing to comply, there was no way we could enforce Covid rules. It’s much easier when 99% of people are wearing masks on Monday morning versus 90,000 people not doing it.” - BTP officer

This illustrates that a key agency was aware of the challenge of enforcing regulations and sought support from the government to be excluded from the obligation to do so.

2.8 ‘Freedom Day’

The decision to delay so-called ‘freedom day’ (the lifting of all remaining Covid-19 restrictions) by a month, meant that Euro 2020 games in England were played in an atmosphere of anticipation that it would be very soon safe and permitted to gather in large numbers.

There had already been indications that, given sufficient cause for celebration, football crowds would gather when all but the strongest lockdown restrictions were in place. In June 2020, more than 2,000 Liverpool fans gathered outside Anfield to celebrate the club’s first league title for 30 years. During the same month, crowds numbering in the hundreds gathered in Leeds and Coventry to celebrate the promotions of their teams.

Professor Geoff Pearson has been a member of the Policing and Security Workgroup for the SPI-B arm for SAGE, the government’s key scientific advisory body during the Covid-19 pandemic. In his opinion commissioned by the Review, he notes

“[I]t is possible that the relative lack of opportunity to engage in carnivalesque gatherings as a result of the lockdown regulations would have made gathering before the Euro 2020 Final more appealing and increased the number of fans who attended.”

Certainly some interviewees felt that Euro 2020 games at Wembley had become a valve some people were using to release the pressures of lockdown.

“We had colleagues at most games and even the first games they were reporting back that the fans were on different level of volume and boisterousness. You felt it was pent up, coming out for the first time after a year and a half...the fans were raucous, absolutely raucous.” - GLA official

2.9 Everyone was struggling to get ‘match fit’

Like all stadiums, Wembley was warming up after nearly 18 months of inactivity due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The cancellation of matches and music events during lockdown left the FA with an anticipated £300m loss. A total of 124 positions were made redundant in 2020, including a number of experienced staff.

In March 2020, the suspension of sporting, music and other mass events forced many stewards and security guards to find work in other sectors such as supermarkets, or take up entirely new roles, for example, as delivery drivers for online retailers. The pandemic reduced the pool of experienced stewards and security staff available to Wembley as it scaled up its operations. This issue is explored in more depth in Chapter 5.

The wider football infrastructure was also gearing back up. Many specialist football policing teams had been redeployed during the pandemic and intelligence sources had dried up due to the absence of regular football matches. It meant that their operations were also less experienced and tested.

“Spotters have been unable to get into pubs, there have been no spectators discussing their plans.” - Stadium safety official

“Frankly, after eighteen months away with Covid, like anyone, I think everyone was a bit rusty at a major event. So it's like an amateur boxer having some sparring sessions at his local club, and then going in the ring with Tyson Fury. So you have no lead up to actually make sure everything was running smoothly.” - Football policing official

3 Warning signs

Although there may not have been a clear hazard warning about what was ahead there were warning signs. A number of officials did raise concerns about fan behaviour inside and outside the stadium as England progressed through the tournament.

In interviews, stadium officials told the Review they had noticed that at England's opening match against Croatia on 13 June, supporters were behaving in more challenging or reckless ways compared to pre-pandemic crowds. A supporter fell from level 5 of the stadium to level 2 suffering serious injuries and there were higher than usual levels of drunkenness during this England v Croatia match.

“Tournament fans were different to what we'd seen before inside the stadium...Very much high jinks and intoxicated behaviour.” - FA/Wembley official

Some safety managers who supervised stewards during the tournament told the Review that, with hindsight, it was apparent fan behaviours had regressed dramatically since lockdown.

“The crowd behaviour was building but not to the levels we could have expected on the night. It was like football in the 80s but with crowds with no boundaries as to what they would do.” - Wembley level manager

“Yes, with hindsight there were larger numbers unticketed which grew throughout the tournament, behaviour deteriorated and general numbers grew.” - Wembley level manager

A written submission from Brent Council to the Review indicates that as England progressed through the tournament, antisocial behaviour increased around the stadium. When England played Scotland, the council noticed ticketless fans gathering for the first time in the plaza at the end of Olympic Way. On the day of the following match, against the Czech Republic, the council issued 17 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for public urination, street drinking and littering near the stadium.

The council's concerns about fan behaviour inside and outside the stadium escalated significantly after England played Germany in the 'round of 16' with stadium capacity increased to 40,000. Some fans arrived in the morning without tickets and began drinking on Olympic Way outside the Co-op supermarket and Butlers convenience store. By the afternoon they were climbing on street furniture such as bins, benches and lamp posts, and throwing glass bottles in the air. The council subsequently issued 22 FPNs for public urination.

“People were buying crates of beer. That’s something that I hadn’t seen before at Wembley (football games).” - Sports Ground Safety Authority official

Other ticketless fans gathered outside the White Horse pub and moved to the foot of the Spanish Steps during this match, prompting a Euro 2020 Fans Embassy representative to warn police there could be trouble unless this crowd was moved on.

Brent officials were now concerned about off-licence sales to supporters who could not get into pubs and bars to watch matches due to Covid-19 restrictions.

“We were concerned after the Scotland game but it was the Germany game that really worried us. People were openly saying they had no tickets. They were partying until 6pm. None of this is normal for Wembley.” - Brent Council official

Brent Council chief executive Carolyn Downs was sufficiently concerned about the gathering of crowds around the White Horse and on Olympic Way to speak to the MPS Match Commander after the match and request they ensure officers move them on. In addition, Downs asked her staff to explore options to stop shops selling alcohol completely if England progressed in the tournament. Her team believed that they did not have that power and that it would be for the police to apply to a magistrates court.

Downs was sufficiently concerned about the disorder surrounding the Germany game on 29 June to raise it not only with her own staff but with the Cabinet Office and MPS.

On 30 June, a meeting of senior government officials was convened by the Cabinet Office’s Covid-19 Taskforce. The meeting’s purpose was solely Covid-19 related, and was not due to consider any other issues regarding the tournament. Downs, however, used the meeting to raise her concerns about fan behaviour outside Wembley when England had played Germany. Downs told the meeting that the atmosphere had been “toxic” and the council was unhappy about ticketless fans gathering by the stadium. The chief executive of the Sports Ground Safety Authority also expressed his concerns about fan behaviour, having witnessed “trampolining” on empty seats covered with UEFA branded tarpaulins.

Though the MPS were not invited to this meeting, Downs repeated her views about the toxic atmosphere to a senior MPS officer later that day.

The following day (1 July) the Wembley Safety Advisory Group (WSAG) met at the request of Downs to discuss Brent and the SGSA’s concerns ahead of the semi-final matches.

Safety Advisory Groups (SAG) meet in order to consider events at a stadium or sports ground which present a significant public safety risk. Though advisory by nature, a SAG is typically chaired by the local council which issues a stadium with the safety certificate it needs in order to operate. Prior to the tournament, the Wembley SAG met on 18 March and 4 June to discuss tournament preparations.

At this meeting it was clear that the MPS were angry not to have been invited to the Cabinet Office 'challenge session' on 30 June as a delivery partner. They had feedback from the Home Office which they believed questioned their operational independence. This was unfortunate as it set the tone for the WSAG on 1 July.

A video recording of the 1 July WSAG, chaired by Brent Council's Director of Community Safety and attended by officials from the FA, Wembley, the SGSA, the MPS and Brent, makes it clear there was shared concern that the levels of intoxication within the stadium had become unprecedented.

An SGSA official present at England's game against Germany told the meeting they "had never seen behaviour like it...They were all drunk on the concourse, you know, there was beer going everywhere." The official described persistent standing around the stadium as "dreadful", and concluded that the prospect of similar behaviour if England reached the semi-finals, with a larger number of fans inside the stadium, was "really, really frightening".

A Brent Council official recounted intervening personally to prevent a drunken fan falling from the parapet of level 5 while celebrating an England goal. They concluded: "As for the drunkenness and spillage...I've been in the stadium for a number of years, and I haven't seen that kind of mess or behaviour."

Stadium records seen by the Review show that 56 people required medical treatment during the match against Germany, with people taken to hospital for drunkenness, injuries suffered when falling down steps, and heart problems.

The Wembley officials agreed that fan behaviour had changed from before the pandemic, but described it as "jubilant". One told the meeting: "I do think we do have to take into account we've never, ever faced anything on the back of a pandemic. And I definitely feel that there is a release that happened on that day."

The stadium promised to increase stewarding on level 5 in the semi-finals again by redeploying staff from outside the stadium following kick-off. Drinks per person were further reduced, from four pints to two.

However, the SGSA official expressed a preference for a total alcohol ban if England reached the semi-finals, to prevent fans injuring themselves seriously. They told the

meeting: "I have never seen that behaviour at Wembley before. And, you know, there is no way you can deal with that behaviour."

When the meeting discussed fan behaviours outside the stadium, the MPS Silver Commander for Euro 2020 did not agree with the view that the atmosphere was toxic when England played Germany. Their information was that the England fans were "exuberant and happy" and that the atmosphere was no different from other high stakes football matches at Wembley, such as a play off final. He concluded that the police were preparing for "more of the same" behaviour should England progress to the semi-finals.

Nobody at the WSAG challenged the MPS' position, despite the council and the SGSA having different opinions.

Nor did anybody at the meeting attempt to reconcile the police view that there was nothing unusual about what was happening outside the stadium with the concerns strongly expressed about the unprecedented fan behaviour inside the stadium.

The meeting concluded with an agreement to support the MPS Silver Commander in asking for a larger number of police officers for future matches. The MPS subsequently added in an extra TSG unit of 33 officers inside Wembley on top of the two TSG units. The MPS told the Review that this decision reflected concerns about the adequacy of stewarding within the stadium.

The MPS told the Review that it debriefed after each match at Wembley, fed back to the WSAG and increased officer numbers there steadily through the tournament and tasked them to be more assertive in moving on fans who gathered outside the stadium.

When England played Denmark in the semi-final, the crowd of fans which gathered ahead of the match on Olympic Way increased in size and noise. The council issued 24 FPNs for public urination or defecation, and described the consumption of alcohol as "prolific". Again, glass and cans were thrown in the air and street furniture climbed on. For the first time, a small crowd of around 200 ticketless fans gathered at the foot of Olympic Steps during the match.

By the time of the final, a pattern of new behaviours around England games had emerged at Wembley including unusual levels of intoxication, hesitant stewarding within the stadium, and ticketless crowds drinking, throwing glass, and climbing on street furniture outside the stadium. It is striking that these behaviours characterised much of the disorder on Euro Sunday, albeit on a vastly greater scale and from earlier in the day. The warning signs were there. Unfortunately, though raised by Downs and by a safety official, these were not heeded.

4 National euphoria

4.1 England's progress to the final

There was, of course, no guarantee that the England team would feature in the latter stages of the tournament. Many bookmakers initially made England fifth favourites - behind France, Italy, Germany and Belgium. It was perhaps these initially modest expectations which made England's run to the final so thrilling.

Certainly, the national narrative in the days leading up to the final was that England playing in a final was unexpected and playing in a final at Wembley might never happen again. This sentiment that 'the normal rules' did not apply was evident in much of the media coverage. Some reports compared England's opportunity to win a major tournament to a Halley's Comet, which visits Earth every 75 years. One writer advised that "the delirium dial should be cranked as far as it will go, leap into the madness of the moment conscious that the chance might never come again".⁵

Excitement at the prospect of an England win extended well beyond the footballing world and was exercising government too.

The day before the final, Downing Street and the Royal Household held discussions with the FA, the GLA, and the MPS to consider how the Prime Minister and members of the Royal Family could congratulate a victorious England team in person. These discussions remained ongoing on the morning of the final.

The Prime Minister wrote an open letter to England's players saying that they had "already made history [and] lifted the spirits of the whole country" while the Queen released a statement recalling how 55 years earlier she had presented the World Cup to a victorious England side.

It would have been remarkable had these discussions and statements not occurred. Nevertheless, they underline how the Euro 2020 final had become much more than a football match. It was now an occasion of national significance and England's presence in it was itself a historic achievement worthy of great celebration.

It is evident from media coverage in the days before the final that there was a widespread belief that celebrations would be accompanied by heavy alcohol consumption and that, where possible, this should be accommodated. The British Beer

⁵ The Telegraph, 10 July "This is a moment we thought would never come - seize the day" accessed online: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/euro-2021/2021/07/10/moment-thought-would-never-come-seize-day/>

and Pub Association issued a press release estimating that 1,000 pints per second would be drunk during the match.⁶

On 6 July the government had extended licensing hours to 11.15pm for the day of the final to allow people watching in pubs to drink through extra time and a penalty shootout should this occur. Though intended to prevent public order problems arising if pubs had to close before matches finished, this was announced on Sky News ahead of any agreement or consultation with MPS and other partners about the consequences.

Human resources experts were quoted encouraging employers to allow their staff to come into work later on Monday morning while other coverage suggested 8 million people had booked that day off as annual leave. Businesses were encouraged to close early on Sunday to allow their employees to watch the match and open late the following morning to help them recover from hangovers.⁷

A petition to give workers a one-off bank holiday on Monday 12 July gained traction, with various outlets reporting that the Prime Minister was seriously considering this if England won.⁸ A government spokesman declined to rule out declaring Monday an impromptu Bank Holiday to allow celebrations of a win to continue.⁹ A number of schools were reported to have advised parents they could bring their children into lessons later than 9am in recognition of the likely desire from families to stay up late.

The MPS tactical plan for the Euro 2020 final anticipated alcohol could be a defining feature of the celebrations.

“A euphoria that has not been seen since Euro 96... This has fuelled the levels of alcohol consumption, boisterous jubilant behaviour and ASB [antisocial behaviour]. The late KO [kick-off] on a Sunday is likely to significantly increase this behaviour pre-match and lead to unprecedented scenes of celebration or potentially disorder depending on the result.”

In some instances, drunken behaviours which would attract condemnation as reckless or criminal in any other context were seemingly tolerated. When photographs

⁶ British Beer and Pub Association, 8 July, “England fans to enjoy over 7 MILLION pints extra on Sunday due to Euros final, but pubs to lose out on £9 million from match due to restrictions” accessed online: <https://beerandpub.com/2021/07/08/england-fans-to-enjoy-over-7-million-pints-extra-on-sunday-due-to-euros-final-but-pubs-to-lose-out-on-9-million-from-match-due-to-restrictions/>

⁷ Sky News, 9 July, “Euro 2020 final: Schools open late and businesses close early for some as PM flies the flag from No 10” accessed online: <https://news.sky.com/story/euro-2020-final-schools-open-late-and-businesses-close-early-for-some-as-pm-flies-the-flag-from-no-10-12352280>

⁸ BBC, 9 July, “Calls grow for extra bank holiday if England win” accessed online: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-57774782>

⁹ The Mirror, 9 July, “Boris Johnson refuses to rule out extra Bank Holiday if England win Euro 2020” accessed online: <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/boris-johnson-refuses-rule-out-24494587>

emerged of a group of fans halting and climbing on top of a double decker bus in central London after England beat Denmark, they were described only as “fired up”.¹⁰

Overall, the euphoria was a wonderful thing. The Review does not question it at all. It was right for the country to feel excited and proud.

It did mean, however, that the prevailing sentiment on the eve of the final was that fans who transgressed should be tolerated, or even encouraged to let loose, because this was a once in a lifetime moment.

5 The perfect storm

When interviewed after the event, when watching the WSAG three hour debrief, and also looking at the media coverage it is clear that, with the benefit of hindsight, everyone involved could see that there were a unique and unusual set of factors that meant what occurred was a ‘perfect storm’.

“I firmly believe that what we saw that night was a perfect storm. It was the first home tournament since 1996, we had almost two years of being locked up, there was a growing momentum with each game - passion was growing with each game.” - FA/Wembley official

“The passion and momentum engendered drinking and antisocial behaviour, there were no fan zones. A 34,000 capacity fan zones was planned for Greenwich and Trafalgar Square could have had 10-12,000, but instead had 750 sit down tickets. Where can people who want to celebrate go? They go to Wembley to enjoy the environment of the stadium.” - FA/Wembley official

“There was a perfect storm of no away fans so no modification for people’s behaviour, the competitiveness of England coupled with its ease into the final, and COVID rules meaning that there was nowhere for people to go...we were increasing capacity of the stadium without knowing who would progress to the next stage and therefore which fans would be there or how many.” - BTP official

“You can take your pick on the top element in the perfect storm.” - Brent Council official

¹⁰ The Sun, 9 July, “THREE LIE-INS Euro 2020: Schools & firms to open late on Monday as fans nurse hangovers after Sunday’s final amid Bank Holiday calls” accessed online: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/sport/15537881/firms-schools-open-later-after-euro-2020-final/>

“Whenever anything happens people say it’s unique, and often it’s not. But I think in this scenario there is a fair shout for this being a unique set of circumstances. That’s around the Covid regulations, trying to pick a policing operation through the middle of it, it was the first final England have been in, obviously, since 1966. So that did make it unique as well.”
- Police comment

“There were a number of unprecedented elements at play due to the pandemic. We also had an unprecedented number of people that turned up to the event, as well as the fact that England made it to the Euro final...it was a perfect storm.” - London Emergency Services official

“Absolutely [it would have helped] If you’d have had a larger social distance, fan zones to have controllable manageable crowds and give people a focus or somewhere to go and watch it and celebrate with friends.” - London Emergency Services official

“Every game was becoming a bigger and bigger challenge - particularly the England games as the excitement around games was growing and the number of people traveling to Wembley without tickets was increasing.” - Transport official

“You don’t have one overall plan. In this case, everyone had their own plan. There was lots of reliance on agencies delivering their own plans, so there was nobody responsible for challenging people properly.” - GLA official

“The takeaway is that this wasn’t a bad tournament - it was actually well managed. That night was a culmination of events that whilst not totally unexpected, was not expected on the scale that it ended up.” - FA/Wembley official.

In summary, the perfect storm was dominated by Covid-19 and the need to adjust plans at a very late stage in the tournament. The key elements of that storm were:

- empty seats in the stadium that everybody was aware of
- the ERP was limited only to the stadium concourse and steps
- Wembley had to undertake Covid-19 screening tests close to the stadium
- there was no capacity across London for more sizeable fan zones
- the availability of places to drink or eat near Wembley was vastly reduced
- the national euphoria in the run-up to the first final since 1996
- the proximity of ‘freedom day’, meaning the possibility of freedom from all Covid-19 regulations and the release that that would bring
- the key partners were rusty after two years of no major events

- the England team were winning and in the final

Chapter 4: Intelligence and foresight in the run-up to Euro Sunday

This chapter is a continuation of the run up to Euro Sunday, specifically looking at intelligence and social media.

In the immediate aftermath, many argued in the press and on social media that these events were foreseeable. They suggested that the FA, Wembley Stadium and their partners, in particular the police, should have seen this disorder coming. In their view, it was obvious that some fans would attempt to gain entry to the most important match England had played for 55 years even without a ticket since there would be a large number of empty seats.

There was reporting about the practice of ‘jibbing’ into football matches, typically by tailgating ticketed fans through turnstiles. This included interviews with individuals who claimed to have done so previously¹¹ and speculation that some fans had discussed opportunities to ‘jib in’ on social media.

1 Pre-match police intelligence

1.1 Pre-match MPS intelligence

To inform its plans for the Euro 2020 tournament, the MPS appointed a dedicated crime and intelligence coordinator. The initial assessment for the tournament, produced on 11 May, stated the risk of pre-planned football disorder was “low” while the risk of spontaneous football disorder was “moderate”.

A separate intelligence assessment was subsequently made for each match held at Wembley to inform the plans of the MPS Match Commander. This information was shared with the Safety Officer at Wembley.

The MPS intelligence assessment produced on 10 July for the final found the likelihood of pre-planned serious disorder was “very low” while the likelihood of spontaneous serious disorder was “very high”. In particular, it assessed the likelihood of fans “congregating in roads, drinking outside designated zones, climbing street furniture, throwing objects and discharging fireworks and flares” as “very high”.

However, the geographical scope of these reports was relatively broad. The MPS report of 10 July related to London as a whole and the locations of particular concern referenced were in the centre of the city. It stated:

¹¹ The Sun, 15 July, “Yob put flare up bum, drank 20 ciders, snorted coke and then stormed Wembley for England vs Italy Euro 2020 final” accessed online <https://www.thesun.co.uk/sport/15595227/england-fan-flare-bum-strolled-into-wembley/>

“Particular high density crowds are assessed to converge in Leicester Square, Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly Circus, London Bridge, and Borough both pre and post match. Those areas with high concentrations of licensed premises within pedestrianised/semi-pedestrianised town centres will become focal points for celebration.” - MPS intelligence report

The assessment referenced Wembley as a potential destination for ticketless supporters only in the context of England having won the final:

“If England win the Euro 2020 final it is highly likely experienced fan behaviours will be more intensified and prolonged, with higher numbers and greater ferocity...it is also possible that England fans watching the game at various fan zones across London will travel to the Wembley footprint in the event of an England victory to participate in the post match atmosphere.” - MPS intelligence report

1.2 The MPS match risk assessment

The MPS Match Commander for the final produced his tactical plan on 9 July, drawing on the intelligence assessment. He wrote that there was a high risk of “extremely high levels of drunken antisocial behaviour” taking place around Wembley.

Among the most foreseeable and likely threats identified in the plan were:

- incidents of antisocial behaviour, breach of the peace and low level public order offences
- spontaneous disorder, particularly related to excess alcohol consumption
- breaches of Covid-19 regulations prior to them being lifted through ticketless fans gathering

In a more detailed risk matrix, the Match Commander assessed the likelihood of ticketless people and the local community wanting to be in the Wembley area as “medium” and its impact as “high”. A separate entry assessed the risk of ticketless fans and Covid-19 breaches as “high” with the impact as “medium”.

1.3 Pre-match BTP intelligence

BTP made a similar assessment. In a pre-final intelligence report of 8 July, it graded the risk of pre-planned disorder as “low” and spontaneous disorder as “high”. It noted there was intelligence of risk groups, travelling into London on the day of the final and provided details.

Similarly to the MPS, the BTP risk assessment stated that England winning or losing the match would be a significant factor in whether disorder occurred, with the implicit assumption that disorder was more likely to occur after the Final.

“A positive or negative result could drastically impact on the mood and behaviours of the crowd. This will create the potential for disorder and impact public safety on those using the railway to travel to and from these events.”

In summary, the police intelligence recognised the significance of the Euro 2020 final and anticipated the risk of disorder, but did not identify the potential for ticketless England fans to arrive at Wembley on Sunday morning.

2 Pre-match views of Wembley, the FA and Euro 2020 partners

Officials at the FA, Wembley Stadium, Brent Council and the GLA each confirmed to the Review that they also did not foresee what was an unprecedented pre-match gathering of fans outside the stadium.

“There was acknowledgement of what was seen in previous games - and how it would be managed by police and us. That wasn't enough, clearly, because there wasn't a discussion of ‘this is an England final, the country is going to go mad, so loads of people are going to turn up. How to deal with that?’” - FA/Wembley official

“I could never have pre-empted what happened on that day – I have never seen it before, not even in Champions League finals or the Olympics etc. There is no way on earth I could have pre-empted it.” - Brent Council official

“No one, including my organization, predicted the events of the 11th.” - Sports Ground Safety Authority official

There is no doubt that each of these individuals and their organisations recognised the significance of the final in footballing terms. It was a proud moment in football, for the stadium, for Brent Council and for London. However, the Review has not seen any evidence to suggest that any individual or organisation raised the possibility of a crowd gathering of the order of magnitude such as was seen on the morning of 11 July. As a result, no consideration was given to what steps might be required to manage it.

3 Pre match intelligence on tailgating

The FA was aware ahead of the final that people had been gaining entry to Wembley without tickets during Euro 2020. The first signs were during England's group games

against Scotland and the Czech Republic, when players' families found people in their seats and complained via the team security and liaison officials.

"I think people worked out that you could sit wherever you wanted during the Croatia game. There were less than 30,000 people so if you didn't like your seat you could move and no one was going to ask. It's the first game where people learn these things." - Former FA official

Following England's match against Germany, when one person was ejected for tailgating, a fans' representative approached the FA about ticketless fans trying to tailgate and recommended a proper security presence.

Despite this, Wembley did not consider tailgating a major problem at this point in the tournament.

"The numbers were considered small, there was no red flag in meetings."
- FA/Wembley official

"The FA talked about it as small numbers, but it didn't appear they knew how many people exactly." - Local government official

"We reported tailgating from the Germany match...but nothing on that scale [of the final]." - Safety manager

This view changed when England played Denmark in the semi-final. There was media coverage reporting that ticketless fans had got in and that Covid-19 checks were "lax". Stadium records show that 25 people were ejected for tailgating, though the perception from some was the actual number was significantly higher, and there were more complaints from players' families and from UEFA.

"There were too many people in our row for the semi-final, so I had my (child) on my lap for the whole game. It affected other families as well. That was why we wanted to get to the ground early for the final." - Partner of England player

UEFA raised concerns with the FA as its tournament organiser and staff at Wembley were asked to take action for the final.

As part of this, the stadium asked the MPS to re-deploy one of the TSG units of 33 officers on the stadium concourse near the OSP and near the turnstiles specifically to deter tailgaters.

The other two TSG units were to be deployed inside the stadium to respond to disorder in the stands as originally planned.

“When I think of tailgating I recall [the senior MPS officer] saying he will help me with that. He listened to that as an issue. They were being responsive.” - FA/Wembley official

The decision to move one of the TSG units from inside the ground to the stadium concourse on the other side of the turnstiles was not taken lightly. It was important enough to be discussed at a meeting between the Wembley Safety Officer and the MPS Gold and Silver commanders for the tournament on 10 July. The MPS told the Review during these conversations that stewarding arrangements were insufficient and needed improvement.

It reflects the risks identified in the MPS Match Commander’s tactical plan for the final and indicates that neither Wembley nor the MPS were ignorant of tailgating ahead of the final.

4 Pre-match social media coverage on tailgating

Following the final, there was considerable speculation about the role social media, such as Twitter, played in encouraging a ‘mass jib’ at Wembley.

To test this, the Review commissioned research by SignifyAI, an ethical data science company with experience of analysing football-related social media, to determine to what extent Euro 2020 disorder was coordinated and incited using social media.

SignifyAI has examined more than 31,500 Twitter posts and additional Euro 2020-related content from TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. Its report is published in full as an addendum.

Their analysis found that less than 1 per cent of match day content related to disorder or jibbing and there were no instances of pro-jibbing posts going viral and spreading rapidly across social networks.

In addition, SignifyAI examined a number of specific lines of enquiry for the Review. One link to a private Telegram account purportedly offering information or tips on how to jib was shared on Twitter but only on one occasion. It was referenced in other tweets 11 times.

The small number of posts on Twitter and TikTok featuring people boasting about getting into England’s semi-final without a ticket attracted very few viewers. Posts asking for advice on how to jib typically received between 0 and 2 interactions.

The posts relating to jibbing which received significant levels of engagement online were negative or hostile to the practice.

Overall, SignifyAI has concluded that the low number of comments and retweets on posts about disorder and jibbing indicate public social media was not used to organise or incite disorder or jibbing to a significant extent.

While there was content about jibbing in the public domain, it did not go viral and was therefore highly unlikely to come to the attention of people who were not actively searching for it already due to a prior interest.

It is important to note that SignifyAI's analysis does not include closed social media such as WhatsApp and Telegram, where information about tailgating may have been shared.

5 Intelligence coming together

5.1 The attention was on central London

The Review was frequently told that there was no history of disorder around England games played at Wembley prior to Euro 2020, and that nobody raised the possibility that this was going to change.

“After the semi-final, Olympic Way became a place where people wanted to hang out. We hadn't seen that before. Brent and the FA hadn't seen that before. The only reason you go to Wembley is to go to the stadium - there is nothing to do on Olympic Way.” - Greater London Authority official

“Not many people come to Wembley early to just hang around.” - BTP official

Instead, the focus was on central London and iconic locations for crowds such as Leicester Square and Trafalgar Square, where 69 people were injured and more than 200 arrested after England's defeat against Germany in the semi-final of Euro 96.

“The police's focus was central London. The poor fan behaviour at Wembley during the Germany game was not considered by the police to be unprecedented, and therefore it was not thought it could get worse during the final. But they did think central London would get wrecked.” - Brent Council official

Another suggested that the absence of disorder at previous matches had contributed to an assumption that Wembley would be fine even allowing for the unprecedented nature of England in a final.

“When we got to the two semi-finals I said ‘this is great - we’re back to normal again’. I was confident at how the stadium were managing it, especially going from no games after 18 months.” - Sports Ground Safety Authority official

“People piled back into town after the Germany v England game and England v Denmark. My assumption was the Met had resources to gear up for that. Generally disorder occurs after an England match and not beforehand. Everything on paper would have said [central London] is where your resources are needed.” - Local government official

Others noted that the belief that Wembley would be fine was so firm, there was no contingency plan in place to manage a major crowd build-up near the stadium.

“Nobody thought about 20,000 empty seats and whether people would be able to break in...we all should have been shouting louder.” - Football policing official

“I expected 60,000 fans and a small concerning element.” - Wembley level manager

“Nothing happened that could have allowed us to predict the final. We knew people would be excited for the final, but not that they would come out so early.” - BTP officer

5.2 Plans in place for England versus Scotland

Before the tournament began, England’s group match against Scotland at Wembley had been identified as a significant risk to public order. The footballing rivalry between the two nations was well known, and Euro 2020 was the first tournament Scotland had qualified for since 1998.

As a result, the focus of intelligence-gathering ahead of the tournament was on the travel plans of Scotland fans and in particular any risk groups. Police Scotland, the BTP, the MPS and UK Football Policing Unit worked closely together in preparing for the match, using familiar tactics from club football, including checking travel and hotel bookings.

“There was a good intelligence picture from Scotland and there were advance warnings about the number which would be expected to come down. This game took much of the focus at the beginning of the tournament.” - Football policing official

There was a proactive communications strategy discouraging Scotland fans from travelling to London without a ticket for the match. The Mayor of London Sadiq Khan wrote an open letter to Scotland fans advising them that public gatherings would not be allowed, while First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and the Scotland Football Supporters Association asked fans not to travel.

Reflecting back, FA and Wembley officials noted there was less focus on deterring ticketless fans from travelling to Wembley for the final.

“We didn’t have that message in for the Final. That was a lesson. We didn’t have clear communication saying, ‘do not come to Wembley’. It did come very late 2 days before about London. But it wasn’t a huge campaign. Scotland was more planned.” - FA/Wembley official

The BTP mounted a five day operation around the match instead of the standard two day operation in place for England’s other group matches, and identified the day before as a “red” day, meaning it was of particularly high concern. While large numbers of Scotland fans did travel to London, there was no disorder at Wembley and few incidents in central London.

“Once Scotland was done I think everybody had a sigh of relief and thought ‘the worst is done’.” - Greater London Authority official

“There were still a lot of meetings but no major fears about disorder after what had been a relatively smooth Scotland game around Wembley.” - Quintain Ltd official

5.3 Limitations of the intelligence for the final

Many stakeholders suggested that there were natural limitations to the intelligence available to the police and Wembley, given England were playing a home game in a pandemic. Intelligence about football-related disorder typically relies on the planned movements of risk groups of fans intent on causing disorder, or the planned movements of large numbers of fans travelling long distances.

All stakeholders acknowledged that there was good intelligence about the numbers of Scotland fans heading to London, based in part on train and hotel bookings. However, the travel plans of ticketless England fans heading to Wembley would be harder to identify in advance, since it would be difficult to distinguish these plans from regular journeys into London on a weekend in July.

Some recognised in hindsight the unique circumstances of a ‘home’ tournament final. The absence of any advance warning of a large movement towards the stadium did

not mean it could not, or would not, take place. They questioned how traditional police football intelligence techniques could have detected this.

“It is doubtful that there is a piece of intelligence that would have let us know that England fans would be turning up at Wembley because you don’t buy tickets in advance - you just tap in.” - BTP officer

“Could this have been foreseen? Some might say yes, some might say no. You also have to consider the issue that people have not been out drinking for a long time and then suddenly we’re all going out for this big event.” - London Emergency Services Official

Several people the Review spoke to argued that the events of 11 July showed that police intelligence about football requires a greater depth of understanding than some other forms of public order policing.

“[Football] is different to other forms of public order - invariably there’s not a lot of planning that goes on with these things. I think football intelligence needs people who understand the dynamics of football and how fans behave. You need liaison officers who understand groups.” - Football policing official

We were intelligence-led for the final and I’d argue that approach doesn’t work for events of national significance.” - FA/Wembley official

“I do wonder where the intel was for the police. They told us after that there was nothing, and there probably wasn’t a great deal, but there would have been something. There should have been an inkling that larger numbers would attend.” - Sports Ground Safety Authority inspector

Several interviewees questioned how effective the MPS intelligence gathering process had been. Many of the people gathering intelligence and a great deal of soft intelligence disappeared due to Covid-19. Many police forces have specialist football club liaison officers and there are spotters deployed for football clubs. All of these officers were deployed away from football whilst no matches were being played. This undoubtedly would have added to the lack of intelligence and indeed the ‘football common sense’ that would normally be present.

“There was no intelligence for us to base any of our decisions on, it was just us going ‘what’s our experience with these types of events?’ And in theory, it was a ‘stay at home’. But actually we’ve then reverted back to what’s our experience when we’ve hosted events.” - London Emergency Services official

5.4 The 'perfect storm'

By the time of the final, Wembley had hosted seven Euro 2020 matches in just over three weeks. As mentioned in Chapter 3, although the challenges which had emerged relating to safety, security and Covid-19 had been identified and addressed, this was on a case-by-case basis.

Multiple stakeholders told the Review that the frequency of matches meant a habit had formed of viewing these problems as discrete tactical issues to be fixed by practical measures rather than considering the wider strategic implications.

They recognised the historical nature of the final in footballing terms, but operationally viewed it as another high profile football match, rather than a moment of national significance.

"What you have is incremental improvements on the last game and looking ahead to the next game. You saw behaviours from the last game...tailgaters and what to do about it. You see pockets of incidents and things to be addressed ahead of the next game, rather than a fundamental change of focus. We were so involved in it and didn't see an overview of how mad the country was going." - FA/Wembley official

"If I take a Wembley event as a national moment, and we're just planning for that one game, rather than all the things before, I'd have looked at it differently." - Greater London Authority official

"There was a failure of imagination to not think about allowances for if England were in the final. It was a completely different event." - Wembley level manager

"I look back and think 'why didn't we see it'; because you're so caught up going through Covid stuff. With no Covid and anything else, the Euros would still be a hugely complex project. But you did kick yourself and say why didn't we take the helicopter view and say 'everyone is supercharged for Sunday' - that's the problem." - FA/Wembley official

"It wasn't fresh minds working on it at that point. Once you get to the end of a tournament, you're in the routine of it." - Greater London Authority official

"The FA, Brent and the police. They do this all time, they have a well-rehearsed set up and therefore this was sorted." - Greater London Authority official

In the run-up to Euro Sunday, adjustments were made by all those involved. The police changed the risk of disorder category of the match from B to C thereby upping the level of police resources across London that day, Wembley upped the levels of stewards and added a financial incentive to meet their numbers. Brent Council deployed early on the day with their own enforcement teams. But no one spotted all the warning signs and no one involved in the planning thought of what might happen, what the worst case scenario was and what indeed did happen on the Sunday.

6 Expert opinion on foreseeability

The Review team asked Professor Geoff Pearson, the UK's leading expert on football-related disorder, to provide his written opinions on the foreseeability of:

- England fans travelling to Wembley without tickets ahead of the Euro 2020 Final
- Disorder among England fans outside Wembley Stadium ahead of the Euro 2020 Final
- Attempts by ticketless England fans to enter Wembley Stadium on the day of the Euro 2020 Final

His report is published in full as an addendum. The conclusions are summarised below.

6.1 The foreseeability of ticketless England fans travelling to Wembley

Pearson notes that a 'collective expression of identity' is a fundamental feature of the experience for a large subculture of fans who tend to dominate the travelling support of English clubs and the national team. This collective expression of identity is not limited to the stadium itself, and fans will seek to gather in large groups, particularly pre-match, usually in large pubs or outdoor spaces, in order to chant, display colours, and engage in social consumption of alcohol. England matches away from home and in international tournaments are known for attracting large numbers of ticketless fans who want to take part in the 'carnival' around the match.

As such, he concludes that it was a 'certainty' that thousands of ticketless fans would travel to London for the final, and likely that the numbers would be in the tens of thousands. Given the absence of alternative large gathering spaces, such as fan zones, and the attractiveness of new spaces near to the stadium, it was also 'highly likely' that large numbers of ticketless fans would travel to Wembley stadium's environs ahead of the final.

6.2 The foreseeability of disorder outside Wembley ahead of the final

Pearson notes that ‘crowds following the England national team have a reputation for being large, intoxicated, and boisterous.’ Having said that, Wembley has not historically been a magnet for large numbers of ticketless fans to gather to celebrate either pre- or post-match, and ‘does not have a reputation as being a stadium where violence of disorder are commonplace’.

He concludes that, given the history of England fans and the lack of alternative open spaces to gather, it was always ‘highly probable’ that there would be persistent, if low-level, anti-social behaviour in the environs of Wembley throughout the day, and that this would get worse as the day progressed, the crowd increased, and individuals became more intoxicated. Some element of disorder was also highly probable around Wembley. However, by the time it had become clear that there were still thousands of intoxicated ticketless fans outside Wembley with nowhere to go to watch the match (in the period between 6pm and 8pm), further serious disorder related to attempts to break into the stadium became highly probable.

6.3 The foreseeability of ticketless fans breaking into Wembley for the final

It was ‘incontrovertible’ that large numbers of fans were going to descend on London for the final. In the absence of attractive locations to celebrate, and, as the evening wore on, to watch on television, Wembley was always going to be a magnet for many of those fans. The only uncertain factor was whether this would be thousands or tens of thousands of fans.

Pearson concludes that while it was a ‘certainty’ that ticketless fans would seek to gain access to Wembley stadium and that there would be a ‘jib’, it was reasonable to assume this would be in the low hundreds. Therefore ‘it was not inevitable that there would be attempts at a “mass jib” on the scale seen simply because there were thousands of intoxicated ticketless fans around Wembley in the build-up to the match’.

This expert view reinforces the Review’s own findings summarised below.

7 Summary of the run up to Euro Sunday

As outlined in chapter 3, there were warning signs that were there to see. It may have been the case that each of those warning signs were too small or deemed too minor to be taken together and or seen within a bigger picture. Each individual agency looked through their own lens or silo, akin to everyone having their own head torch on but no one putting the full lights on in the room. This was an oversight. Those that did raise concerns were ignored or unheard.

The pandemic made seeking and finding pre-match intelligence more of a challenge. That said, if partners had stood back and looked at the major risks from a strategic

perspective, including all the elements of the 'perfect storm', it is likely they would have foreseen a far higher level of risk than they did.

It is more challenging to judge whether the waves of violent crowds descending on Wembley stadium could have been foreseen. This Review believes that the majority of partners suffered what could be described as a failure of judging risk when planning ahead of the final. They were aware the country was in a state of euphoria; they knew Covid-19 restrictions made managing mass gatherings more challenging, with the usual pressure valve of fan zones, bars and pubs not available; that Wembley's iconic status made it an obvious place for people to congregate alongside central London locations like Trafalgar Square and Leicester Square. And to top it all, the England men's team was going to be in the first final for more than 50 years.

It was one of those situations that is almost so obvious that no one sees it. Too many organisations had their heads down in their own work and plans. The obvious was hidden to all but a few. All partners were planning and preparing for a football match, albeit the biggest game in the new Wembley's history. They missed, though, that this was not just a match but an event of national significance. That was foreseeable.

Chapter 5: Wembley Operations and Stewarding

Wembley is responsible for the safety of the spectators who attend events at the stadium when on its ground. The stadium is also responsible in the first instance for managing their behaviour within the stadium and on the concourse.

To discharge these responsibilities, Wembley operates a stewarding and security operation on football match days and at other events, such as music concerts. This is provided by its own stewards and supplemented through a network of security and stewarding contractors who typically hold 4 year contracts with Wembley.

These stewards and Security Industry Authority (SIA) staff work under the supervision of Wembley's senior management, including the Safety Officer and Stadium Director who control the stadium's physical security systems, such as turnstiles and CCTV, and manage the use of barriers and other crowd control equipment.

It should be noted that stewards are not police officers in that when trying to deal with disorder, their job is to 'steward': organise a particular event, or provide services to particular people, or take care of a particular place.

1 Euro Sunday

On the 11 July, after much long term planning and short term reworking, Wembley stood ready for the final. However, as this report outlines in the earlier chapters, no one, including those at Wembley was ready, or could have been ready, for the turmoil, destruction and deliberate disorder they were going to endure that day. By the time Wembley stadium opened the OSP at 4.30pm, it was too late to ensure a smooth ingress and positive experience for those fans attending. By noon that morning control of Olympic Way had already been lost.

Olympic Way was a mass crowd of drunk and intoxicated people, largely men, who later that day spent six hours trying to break into the stadium. The scenes that Wembley staff and stewards had to deal with speak for themselves. Many showed huge bravery and courage that day. They were, and are, a credit to Wembley and the FA. That includes the Safety Officer, the Stadium Director and the Head of External Operations at Wembley. Stewards also had to make potentially life or death decisions when emergency doors were destroyed and they had to move into those crowds to prevent crushes.

2 Stewarding

In the immediate aftermath of Euro Sunday there was considerable media scrutiny of their work at Wembley. Some coverage reported the stewards lacked experience and

training.¹² Other reports alleged stewards had accepted cash bribes or sold their accreditation in order to let people through the (OSP) or into the stadium through doors.¹³

Interviews with key staff, a survey of security stewarding companies, and an examination of records relating to security and safety at the stadium, have confirmed there were problems relating to stewarding during the tournament and that these problems were known to the FA and its partners, including the police, Brent council and the SGSA, ahead of the final.

2.1 Quantity

Wembley increased stewarding numbers through the tournament as the capacity at the stadium was increased. Indeed, the final records provided to the Review show how numbers were higher for the Euro 2020 final than for a full capacity FA Cup final. Wembley offered a £20 bonus to stewards for working the final to reduce the risk of them dropping out given England were playing in the match.

Documents seen by the Review indicate the stadium had 1,936 stewards on the day - an increase of 254 from the semi-final, and more than is required for a crowd of 67,000. Records show that 120 booked stewards did not turn up, but these shortfalls were partly offset by 79 unbooked stewards who were overbooked by the stadium as a contingency.

This included 10 more response teams, which patrol the stadium to deal with incidents as they arise than would normally be deployed for an FA Cup Final.

¹² The Independent, 17 July 'A serious failure of security and stewarding': Questions mount over FA's handling of Euro 2020 final'. accessed online: <https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/euro-2020-final-fans-security-stewards-b1885242.html>

¹³ The Sun, 17 July, "Wembley stewards arrested after 'attempting to flog passes to England's Euro final for £4,500'" accessed online: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/sport/15620387/wembley-stewards-arrested-attempting-selling-passes-euro-final/>

Crowd Safety Staff Numbers for Euro 2020 tournament

Game x of 8	Total Booked	Total Shortages	Total Backfill	Total On Site	Staff Coverage	Capacity
13th June: 1 of 8	1679	140	41	1580	94%	22,500
18th June: 2 of 8	1619	156	13	1476	91%	22,500
22nd June: 3 of 8	1628	68	32	1592	98%	22,500
26th June: 4 of 8	1619	151	38	1506	93%	22,500
29th June: 5 of 8	1619	151	38	1506	93%	42,000
6th July: 6 of 8	1828	163	52	1717	94%	50,000
7th July: 7 of 8	1836	209	55	1682	92%	65,000
11th July: 8 of 8	1977	120	79	1936	98%	67,000

All nine stewarding companies operating told the Review that they achieved the numbers of stewards booked by Wembley for the final. One company stated that its response teams, who patrol the stadium and are called to specific problems, were more often used to supplement fixed positions where stewards are based for the duration of a match, for example, on stairways or by the pitch.

Interviews with some supervisors suggested that the system used for accounting for numbers of stewards was not 100 per cent accurate. It allowed some stewards to arrive late and miss their initial briefings or have their deployment excluded from overall head counts. A new system has been introduced by Wembley to deal with these concerns.

However, the perception from some level managers in the stadium was that they were short of staff through the tournament.

“From the moment we re-opened the stadium we were always considerably below [staffing levels] on level 1 for stewards and SIA [security guards] but with the low capacity games that didn’t matter so much.” - Wembley level manager

“Turnstiles were always short staffed and were always having to backfill from response teams.” - Wembley level manager

“We were always short staffed. We know what we need to do the job then get told what we are getting but on the day, this is often not achieved.” - Wembley level manager

The numbers of stewards booked for the final were in line with what Wembley would have booked for a full occupancy event. Indeed they felt that they had overbooked to make sure they could deal with the last three games.

2.2 Quality

Wembley has acknowledged that the stewarding during the day was inadequate in terms of experience and skills. With commendable honesty, the Safety Officer said that too many did not have the skills and confidence to handle the fan behaviours they were confronted with.

“Out of 100 staff, 10-15 were tried and tested in experience. You had a lot of 18-24 year olds who were given to staff as a provision. But you had to take them because you needed the staff.” - Safety Officer

He noted that due to the Covid-19 pandemic there had been no opportunity for young stewards to gain event experience until the tournament began.

“If you’re 18 years old you haven’t worked an event in your life, and many others were in lockdown for the last two years.” - Safety Officer

His views were echoed by the majority of the stewarding companies which responded to the survey and/or were interviewed.

They collectively estimated that between 30% to 40% of staff had either not worked at Wembley before or had done no stewarding of football matches anywhere at the start of the tournament.

In addition, some security companies and most of the external security managers who responded to the survey commented upon the age and lack of wider life experience of significant numbers of the stewards.

“For many of our employees, this was the first time they had experienced an event of this magnitude.” - Stewarding company manager

“A lot of familiar faces had left [during the pandemic].” - Stewarding company manager

Lack of experience was particularly noticeable in the stewarding of Olympic Way during egress.

In order to manage the ‘pulse’ of the crowd leaving the stadium along Olympic Way and walking towards Wembley Park Underground station, teams of stewards are

deployed at several intervals. These teams staff temporary cordons which halt the crowd for several minutes to allow space to free up in the station.

After England played Denmark in the semi-final these cordons were staffed by 25 stewards who were approximately 18 to 19 years old. A member of staff told the Review they heard comments on the radio such as “I’m not doing this anymore, if you want to sack me, sack me.”

Wembley is responsible for an additional cordon (EP1) which prevents people queue-jumping into Wembley Park Underground station. After England’s semi-final, the BTP was forced to step in when some fans forced their way through it and the stewards effectively abandoned their post.

An internal BTP post-tournament review notes:

“When the barriers fell over, stewards did not attempt to stop the crowds...feedback was sent to the Safety Advisory Group, particularly around the behaviour of the stewards as it was felt they basically ‘gave up’ once the extent of the breach was clear.”

BTP raised this with Wembley who terminated the contract of this stewarding supervisor ahead of the final.

On the debrief of the WSAG held after the final, it was said that some new stewards gained experience through the tournament.

“There were a lot of new stewards due to Covid, but knowledge increased as the games went on.” - FA/Wembley official

“The level of stewarding for the semi-finals had improved significantly. The difference was evident.” – SGSA official

2.3 The national picture

It is important to note that the staffing problems which affected Euro 2020 are not unique to Wembley and are representative of an industry hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit.

“National shortages of staff across the events industry (with many of those leaving it during Covid being the most experienced) cannot be blamed upon the FA, Wembley or the security and stewarding providers.” - Eric Stuart QPM, Crowd Safety Expert

A survey of members of UK Crowd Management Association (UKCMA) members in December 2020 suggested between 40 per cent and 50 per cent of companies had lost staff, turnover and profit during the pandemic.¹⁴

The Review has been told that many experienced stewards and security guards left the UK events industry and returned to eastern Europe, or found employment in other sectors such as online retail delivery or supermarkets.

A snap poll undertaken by UKCMA in mid-October showed security companies had a bleak outlook around the provision of staff at events in the coming months. 56 per cent felt the situation with staff shortages is getting worse and the same amount felt extremely worried about meeting demand and managing public safety as they head into winter.

This is a situation that is exercising many people in both the sports world and safety world more generally. Some football clubs are moving to direct employment of stewards where their business can justify it and others are also highly aware of the safety issues that have arisen after the Covid-19 lockdown.

2.4 The violence and abuse experienced by stewards

It is important to recognise that confronting these stewards were perhaps the most intoxicated and aggressive crowds Wembley stadium has ever seen. Every respondent to the Review's survey of stewarding and security companies considered the crowd behaviours and actions for the final to have been abnormal, even for football fans.

"It was scary, even for me." - Wembley level manager with armed forces experience

"This was not a usual 'loutish' crowd...I have enough experience to spot those." - Wembley level manager

"It was hand-to-hand combat, groups of 40-50 men at a time." - Wembley level manager

A number commented on the crowd feeling it had the right to go where it wanted and act as it pleased during the final.

¹⁴ UKCMA in a letter to the Securities Industries Authority (1 March 2021).

“[The crowd had] the attitude, ‘We are going to break through this and get through’ with absolutely no fear of getting caught.” - Wembley external security manager

“People [were] using photos of tickets and then instead of laughing when caught, would become aggressive.” - Wembley external security manager

“One ‘fan’ just punched a policeman out of nowhere, no build up to the incident, just walked up and punched him...never seen anything like that.” - Wembley external safety manager

This extreme aggression is reflected in stadium safety records for the final which show stewards were punched and kicked, crushed in doorways and stamped on. One suffered a broken wrist, another received burns.

The threats, aggression, violence, smoke and flare use, throwing of missiles - including faeces - excessive consumption of alcohol and cocaine all combined to fuel a febrile atmosphere, which left many staff fearing for their own safety.

“It felt like an invasion and we were the last line of defence.” - Wembley level manager

“[I] was stuck in a [pass gate] airlock with a staff member trapped in a corner in a really dangerous environment. At another point I was lifted off my feet and thrown against a door so hard that the door ‘porthole’ left a bruised imprint on my back.” - Wembley level manager

“We were on a hairline between what happened and something far, far worse. I have never sworn on a radio before, but I did that day and I am not proud of it.” - Wembley level manager

Many stewarding and security managers believe that high levels of drug use, particularly cocaine, may explain some of the unusually reckless and aggressive behaviour. This view was supported by officials from SGSA present during the final.

“Drug usage was noticeable. It took 4 or 5 stewards to try and hold someone down - more than the number it usually takes when fans are drunk.” - SGSA official

It is notable that ticket holders concur with these views. A majority of respondents to the Review’s survey of ticket holders agreed that the amount of disorderly behaviour at the final was greater than anyone could have anticipated. Those who attend more

than 20 football matches a year were no less likely to have this view than less seasoned supporters.

2.5 Courage

Despite the lack of experience of many stewards present, and the complaints made to the FA about inaction within the stadium, it is evident that some staff performed their duties with courage and determination.

A number of fans who responded to the Review's survey made positive comments about the efforts they witnessed in the face of appalling aggression and recklessness.

A sample is reproduced below.

"A small handful of stewards managed to shut the double fire-exit doors, which had been breached, I guess as most of those outside these ones were already in. My wife and I stared in amazement. It happened so fast. Those stewards moved pretty fast; they deserve a commendation and pay bonus." - Euro 2020 final ticket holder

"As I entered the ground I told the steward about the number of people who were trying to cut in. He said that he would definitely get them. He had already thrown out 200 people. But as he kicked people out, the people were coming back in. The guy just spent the whole day with his eye on ticketless fans." - Fan representative

"A male pushed behind me and tailgated in and was stopped by a female steward who was on her own. Luckily a male steward witnessed and helped detain the tailgater." - Euro 2020 survey respondent

"There were England fans screaming and trying to square up to Italian fans in the stands but security quickly intervened and stayed in the area for the rest of the game. Really good job inside the stadium." - Euro 2020 survey respondent

Mr Jason Moseley, a former homicide and serious crime detective with the West Midlands Police, remarked upon the efforts of staff on turnstiles in his CCTV analysis of the stadium breaches for the Review.

"The levels of violence and force used by people gaining unlawful entry were extremely high and would have caused any person of reasonable firmness present at the event to fear for their personal safety."

“I have noted security staff within the inner turnstile areas eject in excess of 400 people who had gained entry by tailgating or rushing the turnstile in sporadic and individual incidents of between 50 and 150 people per turnstile viewed.”

“In my opinion, these individual and sporadic breaches were dealt with by the security staff in a timely and well controlled manner despite the levels of violence which were displayed on occasions.”

2.6 Corruption

There have been claims that stewards and other staff at Wembley took bribes in order to let people into the stadium. One media report suggests that a steward told a ticketless fan to “put the money in my pocket as I’m patting you down”.¹⁵ Another individual was quoted as saying they saw a steward with “his pockets full of money”.¹⁶

These claims are inevitably difficult to examine since bribery is illegal and there is no incentive for those involved to incriminate themselves. The extent to which it took place may not be known. However, there was a perception from a substantial number of ticket holders who responded to the survey that bribes were being offered and taken on a large scale.

The survey asked attendees whether they personally witnessed stewards or security accepting bribes to allow individuals into the stadium without a ticket. The results showed that 386 of those surveyed (5 per cent) witnessed this happen.

“I saw money being exchanged between young stewards and supporters too.” - Euro 2020 survey respondent

“I saw a steward take money to allow a person to get through the barrier at the Covid check.” - Euro 2020 survey respondent

Some interviewees told the Review that they heard rumours of stewards taking money to let their friends into the stadium when England played Scotland and fed these back to the FA at the time.

Stadium officials accepted this during a debrief meeting of WSAG on 20 July following the tournament.

¹⁵ The Guardian, 13 July, “England fan who stormed Euro 2020 final at Wembley defends his actions” accessed online: <https://www.theguardian.com/football/2021/jul/13/england-fan-who-stormed-euros-final-defends-his-actions>

¹⁶ The Telegraph, 13 July, “Fans tell of drunken Wembley violence at Euro 2020 final and accuse stewards of taking bribes” accessed online: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/fans-tell-of-drunken-wembley-violence-at-euro-2020-final-and-accuse-stewards-of-taking-bribes-05f23lgrp>

“We were let down by a couple of stewards due to the pressures of the match and taking money to open doors to allow people into the stadium.”
- FA/Wembley official, WSAG minutes 20 July

In addition, the Review notes that one Wembley steward has admitted trying to sell wristbands and lanyards for the final, while a second man is due to go on trial for a similar offence shortly.¹⁷

3 Control room operations

On Euro Sunday, the Safety Officer and Stadium Manager were based in Wembley’s control room. The venue commander for the London Ambulance Service (LAS) was present too while the MPS Match Commander was in an adjoining room.

Despite this close proximity, on at least two occasions important information appears not to have been shared between them.

On the 4.30pm tactical partners call, the MPS Silver Commander for London advised that the police believed ticketless fans “will try to push onto the stadium concourse”. This information had not been shared directly with the Wembley control room and reached them subsequently via an FA colleague on the call after attempts to break through the OSP started.

Though unlikely to have made any significant difference given the ferocity of the fans and the weaknesses in the OSP, this was a breakdown in communication between the police and the stadium.

When the stadium went into lockdown at 5.36pm, it did not inform the LAS that it was now impossible to move in or out of the stadium. This meant that LAS would no longer be able to call on Wembley’s own medical teams for support on the concourse and around the stadium, and vice versa. The mutual support the LAS and Wembley could provide each other was part of LAS’s assumptions when planning for 10 ambulances and a foot team at the stadium at the final.

The LAS raised this during the WSAG debrief following the tournament.

“Was this [lockdown] declared an incident...I think some of those communications in the control room might have been assumed, but actually just information that the stadium was in lockdown that wasn’t necessarily shared.” - London Ambulance Service crew member

¹⁷ BBC, 30 July, “Euro 2020: Wembley steward admits theft over Euro final wristbands” accessed online: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-58031483>

LAS argued that an incident 'pod' in the control room should have been used and this would have ensured potentially vital information was shared.

While the stadium states they have good relations with the MPS and its current Match Commanders, the Review team observed the limitation of joint working during a visit to the stadium when England played Hungary on 12 October in a World Cup qualifying match.

No senior police officer took part in the Safety Officer's comprehensive briefing to his security and stewarding supervisors. When the Match Commander held his pre-match briefing with his officers, only the Safety Officer attended from the stadium side.

Wembley has pointed out that while the control rooms are technically separate the rooms can merge rapidly if required and the stadium's duty management team can come and go from the police room as required, as the Review team observed. The Review team noted that the post-match debrief in the control room was not attended by any police officers. Better communication, i.e. joint briefings before and after the matches, would be good practice and should be adopted by Wembley and the MPS.

4 Putting the house in order

It is a matter of public record that the violence, disorder and abuse experienced by stewards and staff at Wembley was horrific. The hordes in Wembley became more out of control and determined as the day went on. From 4.30pm until 10.54pm the stadium was under siege, defended by stewards and the MPS.

Wembley knew as they headed into that final that they had vulnerabilities in their stewarding operation. The issue of the OSP and other physical arrangements also require a review. And finally as a matter of good practice it would be sensible to undertake a staff survey of all those involved in the safety and security operations as a mass debrief post that Sunday so that all staff feel listened to and involved in any future actions taken.

Nationally, stewarding has been badly hit by the pandemic and this affected them on Euro Sunday. That this is the rule and not the exception is a matter of concern for all of us, and one that Wembley needs to resolve before they host another high-risk game.

The Review noted that many stewards and staff at Wembley were on the receiving end of totally unacceptable levels of abuse and violence. CCTV images show clearly the courage and bravery of so many and they should be thanked for their service.

Chapter 6: Policing and public order

1 Introduction

The policing of Euro Sunday, along with the stewarding, has already been the subject of considerable media scrutiny and, given its centrality to the response on the day, is inevitably a focus of this Review. In particular, there has been criticism of the lack of visible uniformed presence around Wembley Stadium early on the day and the inability to prevent significant levels of disorder and anti-social behaviour from occurring.

This chapter explores the police's preparation for, and response to, disorder on 11 July, including the decision to deploy officers during the afternoon, rather than earlier in the day. In doing so, it draws on the MPS' own internal review of the events in question, which has been carried out in parallel.

2 The 3pm deployment

2.1 MPS deployment

The decision by the MPS that the main police deployment at Wembley would take place from 3pm to 3am was central to the unfolding of events on Olympic Way. The intention was to ensure that, with a 12 hour shift, officers would be available in sufficient numbers to deal with the expected disorder both before and after the match, whether England won or lost. Even if the games went to extra time and penalties, there would be fresh police to tackle crime under deployment plans.

Many interviewees, who were not party to the planning of this match but nonetheless had extensive experience of matches involving England supporters, questioned whether this deployment plan was flawed, given that significant numbers of fans arrived on the Wembley footprint in the morning.

"Had I been asked, I would have gone with my instinct for self-preservation to neutralise a confrontation as quickly as possible. 3pm was definitely too late to deploy for the magnitude of the occasion." - Football supporters representative

However, it is important to note that these reflections had the benefit of hindsight. None of those actually involved in the planning of Euro Sunday questioned the decision by the police to deploy at 3pm ahead of the game.

"Before the final, it seemed like the right call for the Met to deploy from 3pm-3am...We had seen some disorder at previous games, people climbing on things etc, but it was all pre-match and post-match - not 6 to 8 hours before the match." - Local government official

“The police position was always that the overnight was going to be the issue. They’re on the ground day by day and they know people’s behaviour...We never raised the question and said ‘from 10am you should be there’.” - FA/Wembley official

“In general terms, there was very little to worry about. That’s why I got there at 3 - it was assumed it would be like the semi-finals.” - Safety official

“There was no intelligence to suggest this. You know strategic calls, tactical calls in the run up, no one said ‘we’re expecting a really early shift’, because then you can plan to it. But actually, we were just planning to the last game.” - Greater London Authority official

The decision to deploy later in the day had a number of consequences, which are examined in depth below.

The MPS did, however, foresee that they would need substantially more officers on the ground and prepared for that in advance. On the day, they had plans to deploy over 350 officers on the ground at Wembley with a further 650 across the rest of London on a 12 hour shift. In comparison, a high stakes Premier League match between two clubs with a history of fierce rivalry between fans would typically be policed by around 250 officers deployed for 3 or 4 hours to maintain a strong presence before, during and after the game. This was a significant level of resources but the decision to deploy at 3pm rather than earlier that day made the situation challenging for them.

The MPS told the Review:

“It is accepted and recognised that, whilst the conduct of fans was clearly anticipated, the very early arrival was not and with hindsight additional resources from earlier in the day would have been desirable.”

2.1.1 Inability to set the tone

Football supporter representatives stressed to the Review the importance of the police setting the tone early with England fans. Many talked about the importance of ‘taking the ground early’. As the deployment of the main police resource wasn’t due to begin until 3pm, it meant they were unable to set that tone when supporters began arriving earlier than anticipated in the day.

“What you usually need when England are playing is high visibility but low friction. If you stand off and let a few things slip early, like drinking in

the street and standing in the road, it quickly escalates to the point where you are no longer in control of the situation." - Football supporters representative

Some stakeholders compared the actions of the crowd on Olympic Way to the way some travelling England fans have historically behaved in European towns and cities. They suggested the advice UK policing has frequently given to foreign forces would have applied to this crowd.

"The best way to do it is to take the ground early. And then you make an early arrest to set the tone. We continually say this when we go abroad with England. Because our criticism is that sometimes the foreign police will do nothing. We'll say 'just nick that one now while there's not a big crowd', because, if you set the tone, then people will, you know, respond." - Football policing official

2.1.2 Inability to gain control

The MPS deployed significant numbers to Wembley for 3pm. Over 350 officers were on site and there was an agreement that a specific PSU would be deployed to the turnstiles to back up the stewarding.

As it turned out, the MPS ended up moving some of their resources across to Wembley as a response to the disorder from midday onwards. By 5.33pm there were over 550 officers on the ground in Wembley and within the stadium.

Many interviewed were clear that by mid-afternoon, there was no opportunity to disperse the crowd due to the levels of force which would have been required. There was also nowhere for the police to disperse them. As detailed in chapter three, there were no significant fans zones either in Wembley or London.

"By that time [3pm] I'm not sure the police could do anything. It was gone because the crowd was so dense. So to disperse that crowd you would have required a considerable number of mounted officers, dogs, and people in full riot kit with shields and batons. That would never have been proportionate because you run the risk of having decent people caught up in the middle of it." - Football policing official

This view is supported by Professor Geoff Pearson, who provided the Review with an expert opinion on what, if any, measures could have prevented disorder outside the stadium. Pearson based his opinion on his knowledge and experience of football policing tactics and material the Review shared with him. This included CCTV images of Olympic Way, information about the police deployments, planned and actual, and the pre-match threat assessment. In his view there were sufficient resources to police

Euro Sunday. However, they were deployed too late and did not communicate sufficiently with the crowd.

“The total number of officers around Wembley should have been sufficient to manage the crowd... It is clear that the deployment of the bulk of the resources was far too late. Problems were being reported by mid-morning and yet the main deployments were not planned until 15.00.”

Professor Pearson’s views on the importance of communication were reinforced by other stakeholders spoken to as part of this Review.

“If they had a core of uniformed officers wandering up and down Olympic Way, communicating with the fans, then perhaps some of the disorder could have been avoided. In general we don’t communicate with fans often enough. I’m a great believer in communication. I do believe that if liaison officers were walking around and calming people it would have had a big impact.” - FA/Wembley official

Professor Pearson states that by 6pm there was no opportunity to disperse the crowd at the foot of Olympic Steps, even using a combination of officers, dogs and horses, due to the risk of causing even greater disorder or crushing.

“At this point, an intervention by officers into the crowd would have required both the use of riot gear (due to the missiles being thrown) and the use of coercive force to enter the crowd (due to the congestion)...Such an intervention would have almost certainly exacerbated disorder and violence and MPS took the right decision not to intervene once this situation had arisen.”

According to Professor Pearson, it is difficult to say with certainty whether more effective communication with the crowd, from earlier on, would have made a significant difference to the level of disorder that occurred. Nonetheless, the fact that it wasn’t attempted represented a missed opportunity. This Review concurs with his conclusion.

2.2 BTP deployment

The BTP has a significant role in the policing of football crowds given its responsibilities for the rail network and movement of people. At Wembley, it is responsible for providing a police presence at Underground and train stations near the stadium.

BTP also did not plan to have officers on the Wembley footprint before 3pm due to the prevailing assumption that fans would not arrive near the stadium until mid-afternoon. Overall, 18 officers were to be deployed at Wembley Park Underground station, Wembley Stadium railway and Wembley Central railway station. This figure was marginally higher than for other football matches at Wembley.

A further 42 officers would be deployed at nearby train stations and on trains running along the 'Wembley corridor'. These officers would work a 12 hour shift from 3pm to 3am, mirroring the MPS.

On the day, BTP brought forward its deployments to Wembley due to the early movement of fans to Wembley and fans letting off flares on Wembley Park Underground station steps. An extra serial of 7 officers was re-deployed from central London to Wembley to provide support. Another serial of 7 officers was deployed at 2pm one hour ahead of schedule.

BTP officers were open in telling the Review that in hindsight they considered the 3pm deployment too late.

"I remember coming in the morning [to see] CCTV footage of Liverpool street at 9am where fans had started to gather. We were completely caught out - we had no intelligence to say be prepared from 9:30, as people will come out...In hindsight, we should have put people out on Baker Street and Marylebone [routes into Wembley]." - BTP officer

BTP's internal debrief of Euro 2020 advises that earlier start times are required in future for higher risk fixtures. In addition, there was an "underestimation" of the likelihood of England reaching the latter stages of the tournament and, as a result, planning for this eventuality did not begin early enough.

3 Wider factors influencing deployment

The decision not to deploy significant resources before 3pm reflects a number of longer-term factors, including the importance of balancing resources across London as well as wider resourcing issues. These are explored below.

3.1 Pan-London responsibilities

Firstly, it is important to recognise that the MPS and the BTP were managing significant disorder in central London even as Wembley was engulfed in antisocial behaviour and lawlessness.

The MPS categorised the final as a “C” match meaning that the risk of spontaneous serious disorder was “very high”. This allowed them to deploy more resources than for the semi-final, a move which was welcomed by the stadium, council and other partners. Indeed, the MPS planned to deploy substantially more officers for Euro Sunday than would attend a “C” match between two Premier League clubs with a fierce rivalry.

However, there was no specific intelligence warning of problems at Wembley and, in his plan, the MPS Match Commander expressed a belief that “risk supporters” were likely to take in disorder and would gather in central London and away from Wembley.

Events on Euro Sunday justify these concerns about central London, which were shared by other stakeholders ahead of the match. Crowds gathered at Leicester Square Cinema from 10am onwards. Later in the afternoon, the windows of a Burger King were smashed while staff sat inside. In Soho, police were sent in to deal with disorderly scenes similar to the scenes witnessed at Wembley.

The MPS has told the Review that the disorder in Leicester Square and Soho was at times worse than at Wembley. It required more than 16 public order trained PSUs, totalling more than 400 officers in full protective equipment.

“There were continued violent scenes including crowds running over the tops of vehicles and forcibly entering premises such as the National Gallery. Mounted police officers were deployed to the area but the density of the crowd meant that their use was limited.” - MPS senior officer

Other agencies agreed that crowds in central London, particularly near the Trafalgar Square fan zone for 1,000 people, were among the most disorderly seen in recent years. Crimes included a car-jacking on Whitehall at 6pm

“I work across a plethora of events, and never have I seen the consistent poor behaviour for that volume of time. It was criminal, it’s the best way of describing it - there was violence, there was disorder.” - Greater London Authority official

Away from central London, the MPS had a further 8 PSUs of 200 officers to deploy across boroughs in the event of spontaneous disorder in streets and other public places across the capital. In all, the policing plan for London that day involved more than 1,000 officers.

The MPS told the Review that there was a dilemma when making decisions about redeploying resources to Wembley, especially since the deployment plan was based

on having officers prepared for disorder after the game across several London boroughs.

Like the MPS, throughout the day BTP was required to balance its resources between Wembley and central London. At around noon BTP officers were evacuating Kings Cross station after a flare was set off. During the afternoon, it had to move officers from Wembley to Leicester Square to assist the MPS with the closure of the tube station there.

3.2 Zone Ex

While there is clarity on the division of responsibilities between the stadium and the police inside a ground, this is not as clear cut in respect of the public spaces outside used by spectators.

The Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA), which regulates grounds and stadiums in England and Wales, calls this Zone Ex. They define it as the main pedestrian and vehicle routes leading to the car parks, train stations and bus stops used by fans. The SGSA states:

“While this area may not be the direct responsibility of the stadium owner, it’s important that all parties – stadium owners, local authorities, police, etc – are involved in the effective management of this zone to ensure that spectators are safe during ingress and egress.”

At Wembley, Zone Ex is principally Olympic Way because the vast majority of spectators who attend football matches or concerts travel to the stadium by London Underground or walk up from a car park situated halfway along this route. Olympic Way is an unusually complicated Zone Ex due to the multitude of organisations which own sections of the land it crosses.

The FA and Wembley produced a plan for Olympic Way on Euro Sunday in collaboration with all of the key partners, including the MPS, the London Underground Station Manager, BTP, Brent Council and Quintain Ltd. However, this focused primarily on egress: the departure of spectators following the match, rather than the management of crowds in the hours prior to kick-off.

Zone Ex was the subject of a court case Ipswich Town FC v Suffolk Police in 2017. Although this in part did deal with the finances of who pays for policing it does not sufficiently deal with who is responsible for Zone Ex and how it is planned for, managed and coordinated on the day. The backdrop for this is the court case and a continuing ‘rub’ on who pays for what. The police cover the costs of all policing relating to football outside stadia and the football clubs pay for policing costs within the stadium.

While these are all national issues, it was a subject of much discussion by many interviewed by the Review and as this report shows very clearly, the problems on Euro Sunday were due to Zone Ex being an unmanaged and unregulated area for many hours ahead of kick-off.

3.3 Resourcing issues

It is beyond the scope of this Review to examine longer term questions around how public order policing - both in a football context and more widely - is resourced. However, the Review has noted that a range of stakeholders commented on the fact that public order policing, like much of the service, has seen a significant reduction in its capacity since 2010. Though the government plans to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers by March 2023, it will take time to replicate the numbers and experience in public order policing previously available.

Many interviewees referenced a reliance on specific intelligence to justify resources amidst budgetary pressures.

“If I said to the Head of Public Order, that I want 12 PSUs on this ‘just in case’, he would say ‘what on earth? Come back to me when intelligence says this - not just because you don’t want to get caught out.’” - MPS senior officer

While resourcing issues are clearly an important contextual factor, it is important to state that the Review has seen no evidence that the policing of Euro Sunday was under-resourced.

3.4 Joint working and communications

A number of interviewees suggested that there was room to improve joint working between the MPS and Wembley’s security team on match days. The Review team has not analysed operational structures in depth so cannot verify whether such claims have merit. However, during the Review team’s visit to Wembley to observe preparations for England’s World Cup Qualifying match against Hungary on 12 October, it was noticeable that only the Wembley Stadium Safety Officer attended the MPS Match Commander’s briefing with his officers and the police did not take part in the stadium debriefing with stewards. The significance of this, in isolation, is difficult to judge. Nonetheless, it would be sensible if both parties agreed to review their operational approach with a view to strengthening joint working and communication.

4 Conclusion

With the benefit of hindsight, the police planned for the wrong risks: disorder after the match, rather than first thing in the morning. As a result, officers were deployed too late in the day to provide a visible uniformed presence and set the tone as fans started arriving and gathering in large numbers in the morning. By the time officers were on the ground, the area around Olympic Way was already effectively 'lost', with significant levels of anti-social behaviour occurring, fueled by alcohol and drug-consumption.

While there are clearly lessons to be learned about the police's deployment, it is important to note some of the wider constraints in which the force were operating. As outlined in some detail in Chapters 3 and 4, all partners went into Euro Sunday at a significant disadvantage due to Covid-19.

The lack of large fan zones at capacity and also the vast reduction in opportunities for fans to eat and drink near Wembley played a huge role in what happened that day. There is an ongoing question around who is responsible for public safety in Zone Ex, as well as the loss of experienced public order teams since 2010, are also significant. These urgently need to be resolved.

The Review also wishes to put on record that the police took action around the stadium with considerable skill and courage, stabilising the situation shortly after kick-off, and ensuring the match was able to progress.

Chapter 7: Enforcement

The disorder on Euro Sunday had a number of disturbing features besides the levels of violence and antisocial behaviour. In particular, these events highlight how the use of illegal drugs and alcohol can drive reckless and dangerous behaviours within the crowded and sometimes confined spaces of a stadium, and how the use of pyrotechnics such as flares and smoke bombs can cause significant disruption and potentially evacuation of transport hubs.

1 Use of force

The recklessness of the behaviour was shocking. The extraordinary use of force to destroy stadium infrastructure and attack stewards and the police was appalling. Some of the criminal behaviour was life-threatening. This needs to be dealt with firmly.

Furthermore, the scale of attempts to enter Wembley through subterfuge and tailgating suggests some fans have a far greater sense of entitlement than of responsibility, and believe there will be no consequences to their actions.

Anyone found tailgating was simply ejected from the stadium via a pass gate with no prospect of arrest since there is no specific criminal offence relating to tailgating. They were left simply to try again and again. Interviewees were also clear that the legislative framework needed to be improved to deal with the offending witnessed on Euro Sunday.

2 Use of drugs

Several interviewees were clear that use of illegal drugs by fans was a serious problem and needed greater enforcement by the police, with additional powers to drive drug use out of football stadiums.

Currently, Football Banning Orders (FBOs) can be given to supporters in relation to alcohol misuse. Offences include 'possession of alcohol or being drunk while entering/trying to enter a ground'. But there is no equivalent provision for drugs. While police officials have raised this gap in the orders with the Home Office, they have been told that there is not yet enough evidence of the impact of drugs on football crowds to change the legislation.

“Drugs need to be addressed...specifically the amount of young people turning up with drugs. On other grounds, the police have stopped arresting people and you have drug disposal bins. It has become normal for some people.” - Sports Ground Safety Authority inspector

“Entering the ground drunk runs the risk of a ban. But being high or in possession of drugs is not on the list.” - Football policing official

More broadly, drug use in football stadiums is a growing concern for football and policing officials. The Review team was informed of a recent study into the presence of cocaine traces on the toilet cisterns of a major football club ground. The study found traces on almost all those tested.

3 Use of pyrotechnics

During the Review, BTP expressed concerns about the increasing use of pyrotechnics such as flares and smoke bombs by football fans, due to their potential to cause major disruption at London Underground and railway stations.

Automatic fire detection systems will react to smoke being detected, including smoke which has drifted in from outside, for example, from the steps of Wembley Park Underground station. As a precaution, these systems can automatically close a station, creating delays on the rail and tube networks.

During the final, numerous smoke bombs and flares were ignited at Wembley Park station.

“The use of smoke devices was at a level I have never seen before. These could lead to a station lockdown.” - BTP officer

Currently, possession or use of a flare or smoke bomb is prohibited by railway bylaws. These are summary offences triable only by a magistrate and punishable by a maximum fine of £1,000, irrespective of the disruption, delay or dangerous situation they create.

In addition to the imposition of a penalty, authorities have powers to remove the person from the railway immediately and, if they resist, they may be removed using reasonable force.

BTP told the Review they felt there was a legislative gap. While there are other strict legislative provisions that could be considered, they are highly unlikely to obtain a successful prosecution.

BTP said

“a bespoke piece of legislation prohibiting the carriage / use of the pyrotechnics and/or smoke bombs within a railway environment with an associated search power would close the legislative gap. This would enable a strategy of education and enforcement until such time as the behaviour naturally stops.”

4 Current legislation

The Review team commissioned a barrister specialising in legislation, Daniel Greenberg CB, to assess the adequacy of existing legislation relating to football-related disorder, with a particular focus on three areas:

- Football Banning Orders (FBOs)
- tailgating at football grounds
- recklessly endangering lives

His advice, which is published in full as an addendum to this report, suggests that the legal framework surrounding football disorder “lacks policy coherence and strategy” (particularly when compared to other similar areas of law, such as rail and aviation safety and security).

4.1 Legislation on drugs

Greenberg confirms that while the scope of FBOs is wide, including ‘threatening or abusive behaviour’ and a number of offences directly involving alcohol, it does not include specific offences relating to drugs. He notes that it is “surprising” that alcohol-related offences in Schedule 1 to the Football Spectators Act 1989 are not replicated in respect of drugs, particularly given “the policy aim is presumably to target people who are not in control of their actions” as a result of self-induced states, which “presumably applies to drugs as much as to alcohol.” He concludes:

‘It is difficult to see any policy rationale for the very limited extent to which drugs-related disorderly behaviour is addressed by the existing FBO regime...given such disorder is as likely to be fuelled by drugs as by alcohol.’

4.2 Legislation on tailgating

There is at present no football-specific legal consequence for tailgating. While a person who enters a stadium without a ticket for the match would be trespassing, ‘trespass’ is not a criminal offence outside residential premises and thus “does not attract any enforcement mechanisms that are likely to be particularly effective in the context of football disorder.” In essence, therefore:

“Unauthorised entry to football grounds does not attract specific enforcement measures and is unlikely to have long-term consequences sufficient to deter repetition or emulation.”

Greenberg suggests various options for strengthening the legal framework with respect to tailgating within football grounds, including an expansion of the FBO regime, and reconsidering the application of Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) to football-related disorder. The Review cannot understand why these should not be used in a football context.

4.3 Legislation on recklessly endangering lives

Disorderly activity by spectators at football grounds often involves recklessly endangering lives, such as surging through barriers or confined spaces and attempting to interfere with, or deliberately open or damage, emergency fire doors.

If such behaviour involves destruction or damage to property, it will already constitute an offence under section 1 of the Criminal Damage Act 1971, which carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Moreover, section 14C of the Football Spectators Act 1989 defines 'violence' as including violence against persons or property (and thus potentially triggering an FBO).

Again, however, Greenberg notes "there is no specific mechanism in the legislation for dealing with recklessly dangerous behaviour, where it does not specifically involve violence to people or property."

As such, Greenberg concludes and the Review agrees that there is a strong case for strengthening the legal framework with respect to recklessly dangerous behaviour in a football context, whether through the expansion of FBOs, PNDs or other legislative tool.

The apparent weaknesses in the current enforcement regime come as concerns among senior policing officials about football disorder relating to England increase.

Some stakeholders observed that disorder at games abroad has declined sharply since the early 2000s, while violence in towns and cities at home when England are in tournaments has increased. Partly, this is a function of the success of the England team in reaching a semi-final and final of the previous two tournaments.

"Increasingly, with each successive tournament, now Russia was the worst before this one, we have seen significant levels of disorder and antisocial behaviour associated with England fixtures. And typically the further we get into the tournament, and particularly to the knockout stages, you see incremental rises in the levels of disorder." - Football policing official

One seasoned observer of England fans abroad suggested the decline in trouble at away games was due to lack of opportunity rather than the motivation from antisocial

fans, with the last three World Cups held in South Africa (2010), Brazil (2014) and Russia (2018).

Another told the Review that the FA's England Supporters Travel Club has had a positive impact on travelling support. Membership is needed in order to buy a ticket for an England away game but only granted to people who pass criminal records checks carried out by the UK Football Policing Unit. No such checks are required in order to purchase a ticket for an England home game.

"This is why the problems overseas have diminished. We don't have the same level of control of fans in Wembley." - FA/Wembley official

"The FA may well be a victim of their own success in bringing in the ticket scheme for away games which has reduced disorder abroad." - Former FA official

5. A new approach required

A key lesson from Euro Sunday is that we should introduce new tools and powers to deal with the behaviours and offending witnessed that day. The police and enforcement agencies should be able to have the full range of tools and powers needed to deal with the disorder that took place that Sunday.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and recommendations

One of the reasons for establishing this Review was to ‘identify any lessons to be learned and to make recommendations to ensure there is no repeat’ in the future. Inevitably, with a report of this nature, the conclusions are nuanced. While some of what occurred might have been foreseeable, the ferocity of some of the behaviours on display shocked even the most hardened stadium security and policing personnel. Moreover, there were a number of mitigating factors, for example, relating to Covid-19, which made planning and preparation more challenging.

The report provides a detailed timeline of what occurred both in the build-up to, and during the day of the final. In so doing, it has shone a light on the roles and responsibilities of different agencies in preparing for, and responding to events and the decisions that were taken. One of the things that has come through strongest is that no single agency was to blame for what occurred. There was a collective failure to foresee risk.

This was not just a football match, but an event or occasion of great national significance. A mood of euphoria was sweeping the country. Sadly, a minority of England supporters turned what should have been a day of national pride into a day of shame. The blame for what happened lies squarely with them.

While there are undoubtedly things that could have been done differently by the various organisations involved in planning the delivery of Euro Sunday, no steward or police officer should expect to be confronted with the kind of violence and aggression that occurred on Euro Sunday. We must not fall into the trap of normalising such extreme, reckless and criminal behaviour because of its association with football.

Summary of key findings

The key findings of the Review are as follows:

- The behaviour of a large minority of England supporters was not just disgraceful, it recklessly endangered lives
- There were a series of crowd ‘near misses’ which could have led to significant injuries or even death
- Planning and preparation for Euro Sunday was hampered by a set of unique conditions, including the ongoing need to manage the Covid-19 pandemic, which combined to create a ‘perfect storm’
- Many of the events that unfolded were foreseeable, and, while there were many mitigating factors, there was a collective failure to plan for the worst case scenario

- A loss of experienced stewards as a result of the pandemic left Wembley's stewarding operation vulnerable when confronted with the most aggressive and disorderly crowd Wembley had ever seen
- The absence of a fan zone or fan zones denied the police and other agencies a key crowd management tool and was potentially a very significant factor.
- There was insufficient enforcement of the ban on consuming alcohol on public transport in London
- The policing of the final did not sufficiently mitigate the risk of ticketless fans with officers deployed too late in the day
- There are a lack of enforcement mechanisms available to respond to and deter the kind of behaviour witnessed at Euro Sunday
- Planning of the final did not match the 'occasion' that was Euro Sunday

Recommendations

This Review makes 5 recommendations for national consideration and 3 specifically for the FA and Wembley and its partners. This Review has been conducted on behalf of the FA to look at their own responsibilities with regard to Euro Sunday.

We have considered the wider partnerships and the national context within which the event took place and taken the liberty of making some recommendations with that in mind. It should also be noted that while this Review is concerned with football there are many lessons that could be applied to the wider stadium and event industry.

1. I recommend that the Government considers a new category for football matches of national significance

The majority of partners treated the Euro final as another match albeit a significant one, rather than an event of national significance. As a result, the security arrangements surrounding the final were underpowered and public safety was not given the prominence it deserved.

In the future, there should be a new category for football matches of national significance, with the SGSA, police, and other key partners setting out what steps should be taken for such matches. This could include:

- A maximalist police (and other agencies with enforcement powers) resourcing and deployment plan
- The establishment of a sterile area within Zone Ex which is restricted to ticket-holders
- More robust governance arrangements including an independent checkpoint as part of the process

- Enhanced enforcement of bans on alcohol consumption on public transport and in other designated public spaces

The prospect of new legislation is welcome and timely as it gives the Government the opportunity to update the legal framework that governs spectator safety which has not been significantly reviewed since the Hillsborough tragedy.

2. I recommend that the Government consider tasking the SGSA to work with the FA and the event industry to undertake a review of stewarding SGSA should undertake review and research the current challenges faced by live sporting events in securing sufficient numbers of trained stewards and provide guidance to the sector on how public safety can be assured.

A range of wider factors, including the pandemic (which prompted many experienced stewards to find new vocations) and global supply chain challenges, have created significant workforce challenges for the stewarding sector. It is important that the implications of these shortages are understood for the wider events sector.

The SGSA should work with key partners (including the FA and United Kingdom Crowd Management Association (UKCMA) to understand the particular factors in play here and their implications for the longer-term sustainability of the stewarding role at major sports events. That, in turn, should inform wider considerations within the Government and the sector itself.

3. The SGSA, the events industry, the police and local government agree on a way forward on who is accountable for Zone Ex.

There should be clear accountability for public safety in Zone Ex. The question of who was responsible for public safety on Olympic Way was a contributing factor to the inability to deal with the disorder seen in the build-up to kick-off. The police and stadium operators have for many years contested the issue of who is responsible for safety and security in Zone Ex (the area of public space outside the stadium used by supporters) and the financing of it remains a contested issue. This should be resolved.

The SGSA should review the provisions of the 1975 Safety of Sports Grounds Act, together with its oversight powers and any associated guidance for local authorities, to determine if they are still fit for purpose, particularly in relation to the control and management of Zone Ex.

4. I ask that The FA - as the governing body that oversees football - lead a national campaign to bring about a sea-change in attitudes towards supporter behaviours

The appalling behaviour of supporters on Euro Sunday should be a wake-up call for us all. For too long, the actions of a minority of England fans have been tolerated as

a part of our national culture (albeit an embarrassing one), rather than confronted head-on.

The FA and Wembley, working with others, should step up action on eradicating such behaviours from football, including:

- refusing to allow entry to fans who arrive chanting foul abuse and/ or are clearly under the influence of alcohol and/ or drugs
- stricter enforcement (with police support) against those behaving badly inside the stadium, with consideration given to ejections also leading to an automatic exclusion and ban from all football grounds (not just Wembley)
- more proactive engagement with the Football Safety Officers Association around intelligence-sharing, particularly with regards to fan behaviours
- a considerable step-up action again to stamp out racism by the FA, Premier League and English Football League
- Appoint the Football Supporters Association (supported by the FA) to a leading role in working with fans and others to eradicate these behaviours

5. I recommend that the Government consider strengthening the penalties for football-related disorder, particularly behaviours which recklessly endanger lives and these penalties should be well understood and robustly enforced

The existing enforcement mechanisms available to the police and other enforcement officers do not offer enough deterrent against those determined to use the cover of football matches to commit criminal offences. Tailgating, for example, should become a criminal offence. Sanctions for those breaking into football stadiums and/ or recklessly endangering lives is weak.

It is welcomed by the Review that the Prime Minister has committed to making it possible to obtain a football banning order against a person convicted of online racist offences.

In light of expert advice provided to this Review by Daniel Greenberg CB, we recommend that the Home Office considers options for strengthening the legal framework surrounding football-related disorder, with a particular focus on addressing the weaknesses and gaps identified in this Review. Specifically, the Home Office should consider:

- ensuring that the FBO regime to ensure drugs-related disorderly behaviour is treated in the same way as alcohol-related disorder
- identifying a suitable legislative mechanism for deterring the practice of tailgating, such as through an expanded FBO regime or through the application of PNDs

- identifying a suitable legislative mechanism for a new offence of endangering public safety in a stadium through reckless behaviour, such as interfering with emergency doors, triggering fire alarms or damaging barriers and other safety infrastructure, with penalties comparable to those for endangering the safety of an aircraft
- Greater urgency to introduce the Online Safety Bill should be given as it is a real opportunity to stiffen penalties for racism and hate speech online

6. Recommendations specifically for the FA/Wembley and key partners.

6.a The FA and Wembley should strengthen plans for safety both physical and human, ahead of any matches or events of significant risk. This should include but not be limited to:

- The physical fences and means of separating and filtering unticketed fans from those with legitimate access.
- Particular attention should be made to ensuring those entering through gates provided for wheelchair users and other more vulnerable members of society are not endangered by the reckless actions of others.
- A staff survey of all those involved with security, stewarding and safety on Euro Sunday so the FA can be doubly sure their views are taken into any future changes
- Security plans should be regularly peer reviewed by experienced safety and security professionals to ensure rigour
- The incoming Chair of the FA should take steps to be sure that she and the Board have suitable oversight of safety and security at Wembley Stadium

6.b. A more joined up approach between Wembley and the MPS is required to managing public safety on match-days, including joint tasking and debriefing of operational teams

6.c The key partners represented on the Wembley SAG, most notably the MPS, the FA and Brent Council, need to make a concerted effort to proactively solicit and listen to each other's concerns and avoid any single agency from becoming too dominant

Glossary of terms

BTP	British Transport Police
DCMS	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
ERP	Events Research Programme
FA	Football Association
FBOs	Football Banning Orders
FPN	Fixed Penalty Notices
GLA	Greater London Authority
LAS	London Ambulance Service
LOS	Local Organising Structure
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
OSP	Outer Security Perimeter
PNDs	Penalty Notices for Disorder
PSU	Police Support Units
SAG	Safety Advisory Groups
SGSA	Sports Grounds Safety Authority
SIA	Security Industry Authority
TSG	Territorial Support Groups
UKCMA	UK Crowd Management Association

UEFA Union of European Football Associations

WSAG Wembley Safety Advisory Group

Addendums

Daniel Greenberg CB on the legislative context

Eric Stuart QPM Report

Jason Moseley report on illegal entry numbers

Professor Geoff Pearson expert opinion

SignifyAI report on social media

UEFA survey of registered ticket holders