

# AMERICAN EXPRESS COMMUNITY STADIUM TEST EVENT



Case Study



rise with *sodexo*<sup>\*</sup>



## INTRODUCTION

On Saturday 29th August the Amex Stadium in Brighton played host to its first match since the start of lockdown inviting 2,500 fans into the ground to watch Brighton & Hove Albion v Chelsea in a friendly game as part of the government trial for the return of fans to stadiums for matches.

This case study outlines the Sodexo processes that took place to plan, prepare and serve fans safely and effectively in both the stands and hospitality areas on the day.

## KEY STEPS

### 1 PLANNING

The Sodexo team worked closely with the club to create a detailed document outlining exactly how the club proposed the event to run including all catering operations. The plan was formed using the 'Rise with Sodexo' programme, a systematic and comprehensive approach to helping venue clients prepare for and implement changes to operations in line with government safety guidelines around Covid-19. Details of the programme and how it operates are included in the [Covid-19 Secure Events brochure](#)



### 2 PRE-MATCH ACTIVITY

The lead time from confirmation of the event to kick-off was only three days so the team on site worked very closely with the club to deliver a new safe experience for fans using this very short window to place orders, set up the catering operations and train 100 staff.

All supporters were contacted prior to the event via the club to explain the new code of conduct which had to be acknowledged by each attendee prior to arrival at the ground. This included details around the wearing of face coverings, symptom advice, social distancing and behaviour in and around the stadium.

The communication also included information and menus about the various catering outlets available on the match day so that supporters could plan ahead.

## KEY POINTS



100+ Staff

Trained with the new Covid-19 secure measures



3 Days

Lead time to deliver a new safe experience for fans

## THE MATCH DAY



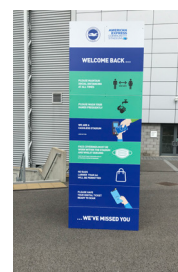
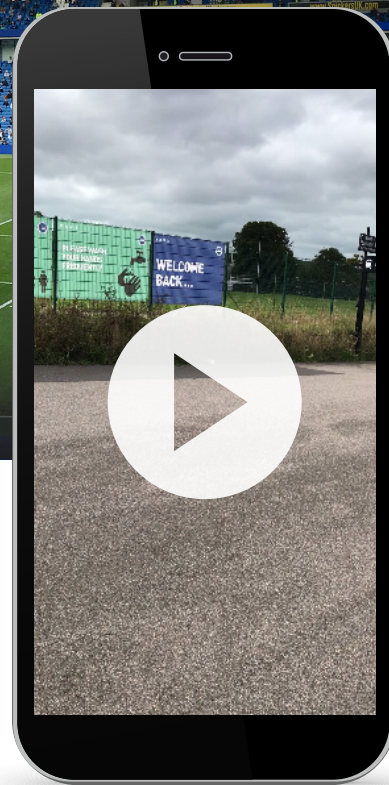
The event was a great success for both organisers and attendees with positive feedback from all.

## THE FAN EXPERIENCE

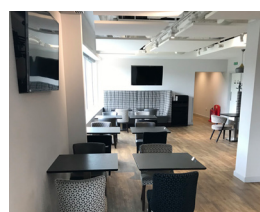
On arrival supporters either scanned QR codes or showed 'print at home' tickets to enter the turnstiles alongside photographic ID to gain entry to the ground. Once inside the club carried out random temperature checks at turnstiles and then followed directions signage to get to their seats or hospitality areas. All supporters onsite were either season ticket holders or corporate guests which covered the track and trace obligation.

COVID-19 specific signage was organised by the club from the train station all through the stadium reminding visitors to social distance, handwash and to welcome them all back.

'Here to Help' chaperones were also on hand to help, guide and answer any questions from supporters throughout the day.



For both hospitality and retail the seating was pre-determined with everyone sitting at least 3 seats apart. Hand sanitising stations were installed by the club at all entrances, in hospitality suites, on concourse areas and toilets whilst Sodexo were responsible for bar and kitchen areas and at till points in retail outlets.





## RETAIL PUBLIC CATERING

The menu for public catering was significantly scaled back for this event to assist with service.

### FOOD RETAIL ITEMS

All pre-wrapped

**Pie • Hot Dog • Burger**

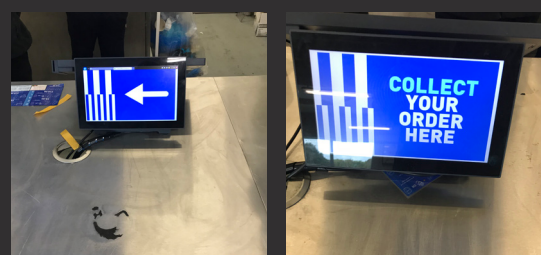


### ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

All on draught

**Fosters • Strongbow Cider • Harvey's Ale**

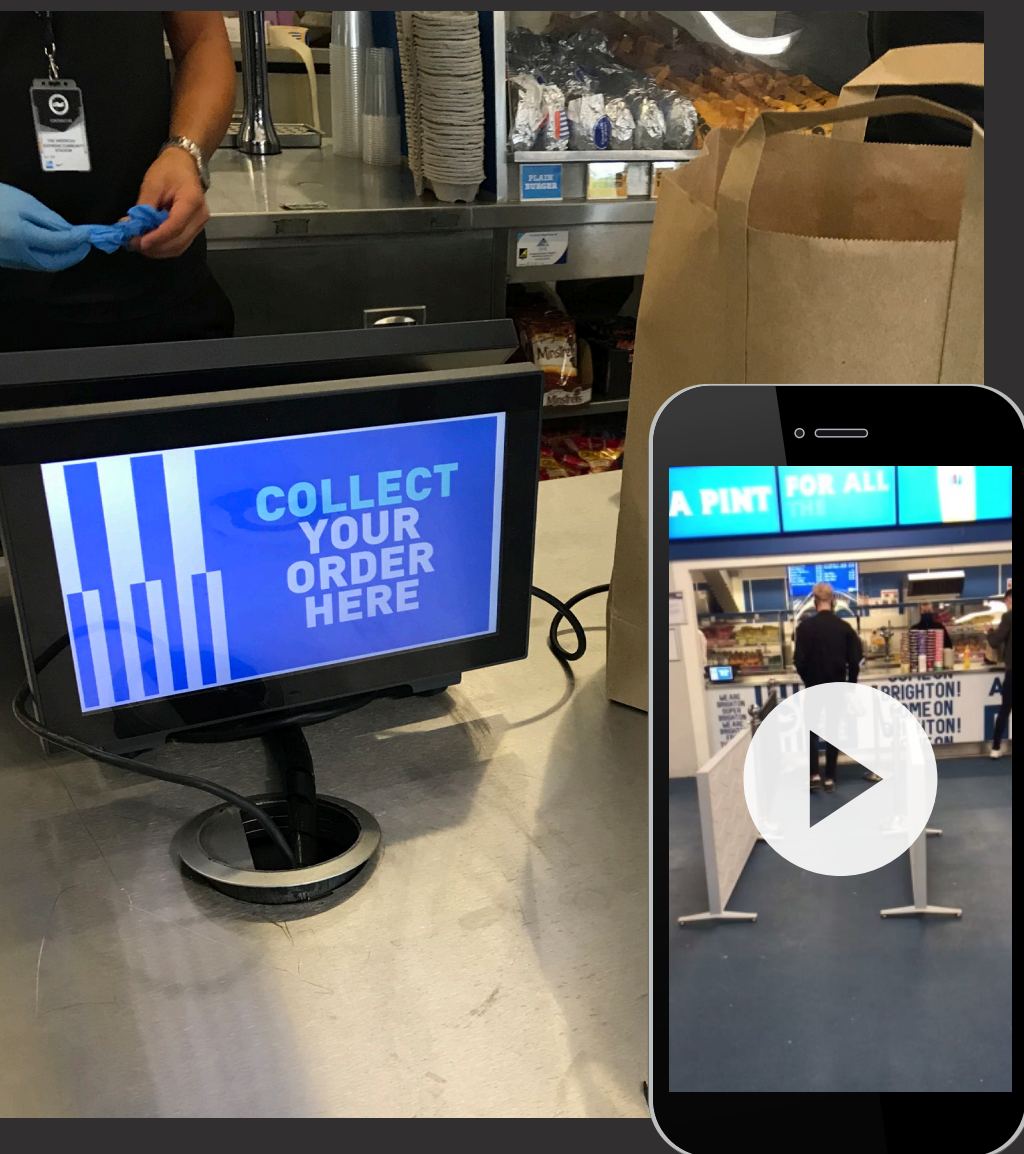
The team developed an effective flow at each kiosk where the customer would queue, socially distanced, using tensa barriers provided by the club until they were served by one of our members of staff from behind a Perspex screen. Once the order was taken and paid for, using contactless payment only for the first time in the stadium, the customer was then asked to move to the side to collect their order from a pick-up point. The orders were served in brown paper bags with a napkin, condiments and stirrers. The system was very effective even during peak periods.



*The team developed an effective flow at each kiosk which worked very well during the events peak periods*

The digital signage at the retail points was of great benefit to the operation making the messaging around contactless payment, reduced menu and lane flows really easy to read and highly impactful. The team also used the Kappture tills screen signs to direct customers to their collection point after their order was placed. Contactless payment worked very well too with no issues. The overall spend per head in the retail areas increased by 27% compared to a normal match day and the guests enjoyed a great match day experience.

To try and support an eased egress at end of the game, the local authority, Safety Advisory group SAG, allowed the fans to purchase alcohol and then return back to sit in the seating deck to enjoy some post-match commentary live from the pitch shown on big screens. This was the first time this has been allowed and will be developed going forward as a means of easing crowds on departure.







## HOSPITALITY GUEST EXPERIENCE

Hospitality guests were greeted on arrival by club hosts who briefly inducted them with the house rules around seated service and use of the facilities. The club set up all the hospitality suites in advance using their own calculations on table spacing to the 1m plus rule.



Service in all hospitality areas was plated restaurant style with all cutlery, crockery and glassware issued once the guest was seated and condiments served to individuals on request. All drinks were delivered to the table including arrival drinks so as to maintain social distancing and avoid bottle necks. Guests were advised not to bring cloakroom items if possible, those that did were assisted individually by staff on arrival.

All menus were disposable, either laminated so they could be sprayed with disinfected and

cleaned or paper menus that were then disposed of at the end of service.

All food and drink items were served to the tables which allowed for upselling opportunities.



### Menus were largely the same in the 3 hospitality areas:

#### Goldstone Restaurant

USUAL CAPACITY

120

TEST EVENT

60

All-inclusive hospitality as per normal match days

#### Sun Harvest Lounge

USUAL CAPACITY

390

TEST EVENT

55

2 tier package with one course inclusive of half time drink and post match snack

#### Heineken Lounge

USUAL CAPACITY

330

TEST EVENT

88

Lowest tier package with half time drink included usual Premium GA food menu



## STAFFING

100 Staff were employed for the test event and all were trained using the **COVID induction training programme** on the day of the match in their specific work areas and signed to certify they had completed the training using an individually assigned pen.

A **staff check in zone** was installed with each member receiving a box of uniform, clear bag for belongings, name badge, necktie for hospitality staff, face covering and individual pen.

### SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES IN RETAIL AREAS

The club installed signage around the venue to highlight social distancing procedures and marked footprints on walkways to show direction of flow. Within the Sodexo area there was a plan of how each space could accommodate staff safely with social distancing where possible with till points in retail areas reducing from 8 to 4 or 6 or 3 staff.

All staff were required to wear face coverings from point of entry at the stadium and disposable



gloves which were changed regularly. Customers were required to wear face coverings at all times other than when eating or drinking or when they were in the seating deck externally.

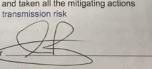
The toilet facilities were managed by the club but as the visitor numbers were so low in each area there were no issues there.

All areas and tables were cleaned down at every opportunity by club staff, as customers went out at kick off a team were deployed across all hospitality areas.


**Staying COVID-19 Secure in 2020**  
We confirm we have complied with the government's guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19




**FIVE STEPS TO SAFER WORKING TOGETHER**

- ✓ We have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment and shared the results with the people who work here
- ✓ We have cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures in line with guidance
- ✓ We have taken all reasonable steps to help people work safely from a COVID-19 Secure workplace or work from home
- ✓ We have taken all reasonable steps to maintain a 2m distance in the workplace
- ✓ Where people cannot keep 2m apart we have ensured at least a 1m distance and taken all the mitigating actions possible to manage transmission risk

Signed on behalf of employer: 

Employer: Sodexo Ltd Date: 23/08/20

Who to contact: 

Sodexo HSEQ  Health and Safety Executive  HSENI 

0800 550 555 0800 550 555 0800 550 555



## POST-MATCH



We ensured all staff felt reassured and safe during training so they went into the event prepared and confident to do the job.

## POST-MATCH CLEANUP

After the match all the uniform was bagged up by each staff member in their individual laundry sacks and left for 72 hours before being opened and sorted for laundering.

Club staff in hospitality areas where responsible for cleaning

down all the lounges around touchpoints and Sodexo staff were responsible for cleaning down the catering areas, kitchen and bar. All retail areas were cleaned down on the day by Sodexo staff and a deep clean completed during the week after the match.

