

ND/MS

25 November 2020



The Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP
First Minister of Scotland
The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

[by email only via david.hamilton@gov.scot](mailto:david.hamilton@gov.scot)

Dear First Minister

From your enthusiastic reaction to the magnificent achievement of the men's Scottish national team earlier this month, it's clear you share a passion for our game.

I am sure you are equally keen to safeguard the very future of Scotland's national sport, which has been hit far harder by the lock-out than south of the border because it depends much more heavily on gate receipts.

For almost nine months, and despite the enormous financial consequences, our clubs have fastidiously followed every directive and every instruction from your Government. Clubs, supporters and players have been hugely patient as we have played our full part in the national effort to combat coronavirus.

However, with the very welcome news that clubs in England are being allowed to bring back fans in limited numbers, we are seeking urgent talks with you to ensure that Scottish clubs, and Scottish fans are permitted to do the same in very short order.

As you will know, every major club in Scotland has very detailed, well-founded plans in place for safely returning fans back to stadiums. Thousands upon thousands of Scottish fans are simply desperate to get back to watching their teams in the safety of a carefully-managed, open-air environment. Apart from supporter safety, there is no higher priority for our game. It's now time to get the fans back.

Scottish football is on its knees and clubs big and small the length and breadth of the country are in the most dire straits, with income projected to drop by £100 million this season alone. Failure to get fans back in the very near future will sound the death knell for some of our best-loved clubs, which would be a tragedy on many levels, given the enormous contribution they make to the economic, cultural and community life of our nation. No-one wants that to happen.

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You alone have the chance to put a much-needed smile on the faces of millions of Scottish football fans, giving them an early Christmas present by quickly approving the carefully-managed return of fans across the country.

The response amongst Scottish supporters to the news about English football fans returning has been resounding and, having taken extensive soundings at all levels of our game, I have been asked to request an emergency meeting with you, because time is really against us.

Together with senior representatives from our clubs, we are entirely at your disposal. We will meet with you under any circumstances, remotely or in person, day or night, to fit in with your busy schedule and we eagerly await your response.

Yours sincerely



Neil Doncaster
Chief Executive