



Lincolnshire Co-Op Women & Girls' Football League

Return to play player feedback

The Lincolnshire Co-op Women & Girls' Football League is committed to providing the most positive, developmental and enjoyable football environment for females of all ages in Lincolnshire & North Lincolnshire. Therefore, we felt it incredibly important prior to returning to football to collect the voice of our players to enable us to do exactly that.

Our commitment included assessing:

- Whether players were looking forward to returning to play
- When & how they would like to return to play
- When & how parents or carers (U18 players) would like to return to play
- How the league can make players and supporters feel safe upon return

As part of this commitment we collected data on the above questions and the responses will form the basis of committee decisions when discussing next steps.

The audit was conducted electronically, with a Microsoft Forms link sent to all clubs, teams, management and Whole Game System contacts in January 2021. Responses were collated in early February, converted into raw data and every single comment or suggestion noted and considered by the league committee ahead of future committee decision making meetings. The form was anonymous in nature giving those completing it confidence to answer as truthfully as possible. The questionnaire was completed by 23% of players across all age groups, reflective of the number of players registered at each age. The league was pleased with this return, given the technology associated with completing the form and potential barriers for players, management and team distributing.

Headline findings

Below (*Appendix 1*) you can access the raw data that the responses produced. The main findings highlighted that the majority of players (93%) are looking forward to returning to play. 46% of players would like to return to playing straight away with 37% after a 'pre-season' style return. This is replicated similarly across parent/carer data. Finally, 56% of players would like to see the league season completed.



League Statement

The whole league committee is dedicated to doing the right and safe thing by it's players, clubs and volunteers. Our main aims are to make decisions, if guidelines allow us to do so, based on the majority outcome from feedback, ensure we are flexible and understanding of the challenges some may face with that and ensure that ultimately we set out to complete the league season that we started.

We would like to highlight that we received many suggestions to enable us to make you feel as safe as possible and felt that it was appropriate to address and provide our thoughts on some of those. Players suggested that;

- **The league conducts random and unannounced sport checks at both training and matches to ensure that clubs are complying with the FA and Government guidelines** – *we like this idea and will be taking it on moving forwards once we can return*
- **The league doesn't allow spectators, schedules local games only and all non-players or officials to be wearing masks** – *we will be highlighting and complying with all local and national FA and Government guidance, whatever that may be when it changes. Whilst unable to enforce further restrictions we will be giving recommendations to keep all participants safe*
- **The league conducts weekly testing** – *the league doesn't have the capacity or authority to do this. Given recent Government announcements it is expected that U18's will be regularly tested within education settings and adults given the option to test, as normal, should they have symptoms or have come into contact with somebody that has tested positive*
- **The league refunds clubs that have entered to ensure that they are sustainable moving forwards** – *there was NO CHARGE this season for league entry and therefore subsidising clubs is neither necessary nor viable*
- **We provide a 'pre-season' style return** – *this is only possible if we return to playing friendly fixtures only. If we are able to return with an aim to completing the league season it is unlikely that time will enable us to do this*

We recognise how difficult an immediate return to play will be for some teams and clubs, this presents it's own difficulties as participants (inclusive of club personnel, management and parents/carers) continue to be tested, to isolate and have concerns regarding the safety of grassroots sports. Once the Football Association and the Government relax current restrictions and provide guidelines to which we need to adhere we will produce a plan of action that will provide several options for all entrants to suit the circumstance at each individual club and team.

We would like to thank you for your ongoing patience and understanding throughout this difficult time. Thank you to those that took the time to complete the survey. We will continue to provide updates when appropriate and as we receive them and if we can anything else to support you or your club please get in touch.

[Lincolnshire Women & Girls' Football League]

[11/02/2021]



Appendix 1 – Raw data

Age Group	Number	%
U8	11	6%
U9	15	8%
U10	9	5%
U11	15	8%
U13	28	16%
U14	16	9%
U15	20	11%
U16	18	10%
Open Age	48	27%
Total	180	100%

Are you excited to return to play?	Number	%
Yes	167	93%
No	3	2%
Don't know	9	5%
Prefer not to say	1	1%
Total	180	100%

When allowed, when would you like to return to playing matches?	Number	%
Straight Away	82	46%
After a short time back training with my team (this season)	66	37%
The summer time	8	4%
Next season (August/September)	18	10%
Don't know	6	3%
Prefer not to say	0	0%
Total	180	100%



When allowed, when would your parent/carer like you to return to playing matches? (U18 players only)	Number	%
Straight Away	69	38%
After a short time back training with my team (this season)	48	27%
The summer time	7	4%
Next season (August/September)	12	7%
I am over 18 and playing open age football	35	19%
Don't know	8	4%
Prefer not to say	1	1%
Total	180	100%

How would you prefer to finish the season?	Number	%
Finish league games	100	56%
Friendly Fixtures	47	26%
Prefer not to finish and start again next season	22	12%
Don't know	11	6%
Prefer not to say	0	0%
Total	180	100%