

LA BULLETIN DECEMBER 2020

News

Licensing authority returns portal remains open

Many thanks to the LAs that have already submitted their 2019/20 annual return. The deadline for submission has now passed. However the portal remains open so if you have not already submitted please endeavour to do so. We appreciate that Local Authorities are still heavily impacted by the fight against Covid-19 and many of you may still be working from home, however we would be grateful for as much data as you are able to provide.

Please remember that the passcode will only work with a registered user email address. The passcode is specific to your LA not to an individual so multiple email addresses can be registered per LA, but we would encourage you to register your licensing@ email address, if you have not already done so.

Please contact lareturns@gamblingcommisison.gov.uk if you have not received any correspondence about the annual returns.

Gambling Commission publishes National Strategic Assessment

The Gambling Commission has published its first ever [National Strategic Assessment](#).

The document uses the latest available evidence, from a wide range of sources and case studies, to assess the issues and the risks gambling presents to consumers and the public. It sets out the Commission's priority actions to address those risks and issues, as well as highlighting a number of areas where significant progress is already made to make gambling safer.

As a part of the report the Commission states, in relation to premises based underage gambling, 'We will continue to support those licensing authorities, local police or trading standards who undertake test purchasing in response to heightened risk or as part of their general legal and regulatory oversight.'

Alongside this it has published the latest [Compliance and Enforcement Report](#) – some headline data being:

- Commencing reviews on 49 people who hold personal licences to operate gambling businesses
- Suspending five operating licences
- Revoking 11 operating licences
- Issuing 12 financial penalty packages of regulatory settlements – totalling over £30 million.
- Carrying out 234 security audits and 33 website reviews
- Conducting 350 compliance assessments of land-based and online operators

Wigan Council's work to reduce gambling harm

Although Wigan are not the only LA to introduce a webpage for their citizens about gambling harm it provides a useful model that others can follow. It includes lots of helpful advice as well as links to other sources of information. Read [Wigan Council's information on harmful gambling](#).

As well as the commitment to protecting residents from the risks of harmful gambling, Wigan Council pledged to care for the wellbeing of its primary asset – its workforce. Therefore, another key delivery strand was to ensure staff were also made aware of the dangers of harmful gambling and the resources and help available, should they need them. This was achieved through the delivery of an internal communication plan, which included

- Staff intranet and weekly round-up articles, promotional intranet banners, screensavers about harmful gambling and the support available were produced. These messages were amplified further, via posts to the Council's internal BeWigan staff Facebook group.
- Problem gambling awareness article with call to action was included within the corporate Team Time briefing, which is distributed to all managers, who cascade information to all members of their team.
- Embedding the harmful gambling support offer into the existing mental health wellbeing offer for staff. Further to this, both the Council's staff Mental Health Wellbeing Champions and the Health and Wellbeing Champions were briefed to highlight all the support available, so they can provide the support and guidance to colleagues in their supportive roles.

New research and the mapping of gambling harm

There are several new pieces of research which will be of interest to both Public Health and Licensing teams from Gamble Aware.

- [The impact of COVID on gambling behaviour](#)

This report looks at the changes in gambling behaviour during the first lockdown in comparison to the same sample pre lockdown. The study shows an overall pattern of a reduction in gambling between October 2019 and May 2020. Participation in virtually all activities was significantly lower in the May 2020 survey. However there are variations within this overall picture and some obvious reasons for the changes such as the reduction in sports betting opportunities and premises closures.

- **What does gambling harm look like in your LA?**

Using data collected as part of the [Treatment Needs and Gap Analysis](#) programme of research. GambleAware has worked with UCL to [produce maps of Great Britain which show the prevalence of problem gambling severity](#) in each Local Authority area, as identified using the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI), as well as maps showing Consumer Indicator Data including accessibility to gambling outlets and the Index of Multiple Deprivation. The PGSI data was collected in 2019, and the survey will be repeated, and the maps updated, on an annual basis.

Gamcare launches new toolkit to support debt advice agencies and others

GamCare is launching a [comprehensive toolkit for financial institutions, gambling businesses and debt advice agencies](#) across the UK to help them recognise, support and refer customers experiencing gambling-related financial harms, and provide consistent communications across all points of the customer journey.

Industry Stats

[Gambling industry statistics](#) are published twice a year (in May and November) and provide the latest information on each sector regulated by the Gambling Commission.

The latest statistics cover the period between April 2019 – March 2020. Industry Statistics report on the size and shape of the gambling industry in Great Britain.

Sign up to e-bulletin

[Subscribe to our e-bulletin](#) to get a fortnightly update on the news and updates from the Gambling Commission.

Consultations

Consultation: Remote customer interaction - consultation and call for evidence

We are consulting on stronger requirements that will help ensure remote gambling operators do more to identify consumers who may be harmed by gambling and to interact and take action sufficiently early and effectively to prevent harm. [Take part in the consultation.](#)

Advice and guidance updates

Compliance enquiries

We have revised the communication process for LAs requesting help and support for gambling related issues.

The current practice of contacting your designated Compliance Managers directly will cease. As from 1 October 2020, all gambling related requests for help and support must be emailed to the Gambling Commission Compliance Mailbox: complianceteamCB@gamblingcommission.gov.uk.

Your requests will be forwarded to designated compliance staff who will respond and deal with your enquiry in a timely manner.

Small Society Lotteries

The Commission has had a significant number of enquiries recently regarding Small Society Lotteries. Understandably a number of them are now looking to raise funds online rather than face to face. The main question we have received is as to whether they still need to register with the LA if it is being conducted online. Although other questions also arise. The advice we offer is as follows:

To run any lottery online/via social media or any other remote means (including telephone) must have a LA registration or a licence from the Commission. This includes any 'incidental' lotteries run at virtual events.

Read the [advice on running a lottery](#).

An abridged version of the relevant Conditions and Codes is as follows:

Social responsibility code provision 4.2.3

Display of rules

Societies should make a player's guide to each gambling opportunity available to customers. Ordinary Code 4.2.4 states that this should ideally be in the same channel as the gamble/lottery is offered, and if not then by post, fax or email.

Social responsibility code provision 4.3.1

Publication of percentage of lottery proceeds returned to the purposes of the society or local authority

Each year, the society should publish details on the percentage of the total proceeds of lotteries promoted in the previous calendar year, that are applied to purposes for which the society is conducted. This should be through either their annual report, lottery page of their society website or any other means appropriate to the size and scale of the organisation.

Social responsibility code provision 4.3.2

Marketing of all lotteries conducted under a single brand (branded lotteries)

Where a number of society lotteries are promoted under one brand (also known as a branded lottery), whether with an ELM or not, they should ensure that it is clear to consumers which society lotteries are being promoted. This applies to any marketing communications, advertisements, promotions or any information surrounding the draw, winners and beneficiaries; and through any ticket documentation.

Social responsibility code provision 4.3.3

Lotteries – Information to consumers

Societies should ensure that clear, transparent, and easily accessible information is made available to consumers to enable them to make an informed choice before entering a lottery. This must include at the least details of how proceeds are used, the likelihood of winning a prize and how prizes are allocated. The Commission has guidance on information to players that societies should take account of.

Reference materials

E-learning modules - Pubs and the Gambling Act 2005

The Commission has worked with the Institute of Licensing to produce a new e-learning module about Pubs and the Gambling Act 2005 to add to the existing suite of gambling modules.

The new module is designed to help LAs and police improve their understanding of what to consider when undertaking compliance checks on the various forms of gambling permitted in pubs such as gaming machines, exempt gaming (bingo and poker) and lotteries.

Other gambling e-learning modules are already available:

- three gaming machines modules which cover the various types of gaming machines, the physical components and signage requirements and how to deal with non-compliant machines.
- powers to enter inspect gambling premises.
- introduction to inspecting a betting premises.

All modules can be accessed via the [IOL website](#), and they are CPD accredited. Log in to the e-learning tab if you have an existing account, or request a log in via membership@instituteoflicensing.org to get started, if you are not an IOL member.

Information for operators reopening land based gambling premises

We continue to update [our FAQs](#) aimed at helping operators manage compliance with Government Covid-19 guidance on reopening with continued compliance with the licence conditions and codes of practice (LCCP).

LLEP assessment templates

To help you meet LA regulatory obligations under the Gambling Act 2005 we worked with Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Licensing Forum and LLEP to produce a [range of resources](#) including a suite of assessment templates, information for premises and assessment outcome letters. Please share the findings of your visits to the Commission via complianceteamCB@gamblingcommission.gov.uk so that we can continue to build a broad picture of premises' compliance.

Quick guides and template letters

Some quick guides are designed to give to operators when undertaking visits, others provide an accessible 'how to' for licensing staff:

- [Public Health and Gambling](#)
- [Sharing information and intelligence](#)
- [Statement of Principles \(for councillors\)](#)
- [Money laundering](#)
- [Gaming machines in pubs](#)
- [Race night, casino night or poker night](#)
- [Members' club or commercial club](#)
- [Poker in clubs](#)
- [Poker in pubs](#)
- [Facilitating betting in pubs and clubs is illegal](#)
- [Skills with prizes](#)
- [Illegal gaming machines](#)
- [Comparing lottery ticket dispensers and B3A machines](#)
- [Illegal siting of gaming machines](#)
- [Fairs and fairgrounds](#)
- [Running a lottery](#)
- [Running prize competitions and free draws](#)
- [Multi activity sites](#)
- [Police statutory powers under the Gambling Act](#)
- [LA statutory powers of inspection under the Gambling Act](#)
- [Examples of non-complex category D gaming machines](#)
- [Templates for notification of automatic entitlement and application for licensed premises gaming machine permit](#)

Gambling Act statutory notices and forms

It is a statutory requirement that applicants use the correct forms to give proper notice of applications, variations etc to all responsible authorities, including the Gambling Commission. We host all the [statutory notices and application forms](#) as they are no longer available on the DCMS website.

Find operating licence holders

We [publish](#) the names of all companies and individuals who hold, or have applied for, operating licences in Great Britain along with the names of companies or individuals whose licences have lapsed, been revoked, forfeited, expired, suspended or surrendered in the last 6 months.

LAs must check the operator licence quoted on premises applications with the register before granting a premises licence. An application for premises licence may only be made by persons who have an operating licence which allows them to carry out the proposed activity for example a bingo operating licence for a bingo premises or have applied for an operating licence (although the premises licence cannot be determined until an operating licence has been issued).

Premises licence register

The information on our publicly available [premises register](#) is based on the statutory notifications received from LAs regarding grants, variations, revocations, lapses etc, and is updated monthly. LAs are encouraged to send **all** necessary correspondence to info@gamblingcommission.gov.uk. Where email notification has been made it is not necessary to follow up by post.

In relation to gaming machines, we only require notification of grant/rejection of Club Machines Permits and Gaming Machine Permits. There is no requirement to advise us when an alcohol licence holder submits their notification for an automatic entitlement to two gaming machines. However, LAs must keep a record of how many automatic entitlement notifications it receives each year, as that information is requested in the annual LA returns.