

Problem Gambling in Leeds

For Leeds City Council

By Dr Alexandra Kenyon, Dr Neil Ormerod,
Professor David Parsons and Dr Heather Wardle

© Leeds Beckett University (August, 2016)



Public Health
England



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL



LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

The brief

Aim

To establish the prevalence of problem gambling and assess how it impacts on the lives of the people in Leeds, in order to set a baseline from which we can continue to monitor and evaluate the social and health impacts of the large casino, which was set to open in late 2016

Outcome: To guide future funding of projects to mitigate the harmful effects of problem gambling

*GGV and Leeds City Council Social Inclusion Fund



Public Health
England



Our approach

1. Establish number and demographical representation of problem and at risk gamblers in Leeds

- Use of existing data to explore extent national patterns apply to Leeds
- Identification of vulnerable groups

2. Profile of problem gamblers in Leeds; how and where they gamble

- Qualitative interviews with problem gamblers etc to generate insight into determinants and impacts of gambling
- Stakeholder consultation to facilitate and generate insight about interventions

3. Identification of factors that make people vulnerable

- Update of recent research (RER) on vulnerable group determinants
- Examination of specific contextual issues for Leeds

4. Consider wider impacts of problem gambling: personal finance, health and wellbeing

- Draws on insight from interviews conducted for 2 and the impacts that problem gamblers themselves report?
- Assess how this Leeds specific insight compares with national information?
- Draw together insight from key stakeholder interviews and national evidence

5. Identify current treatment services, access, and capacity

- Use stakeholder interviews to map services and appraise working relationships
- Collect and review service provider data on problem/at risk gambler use
- Assess awareness of support amongst stakeholders/problem gamblers (re 2)



Problem gambling

“Problem gambling is gambling to a degree that compromises, disrupts or damages family, personal or recreational pursuits.”

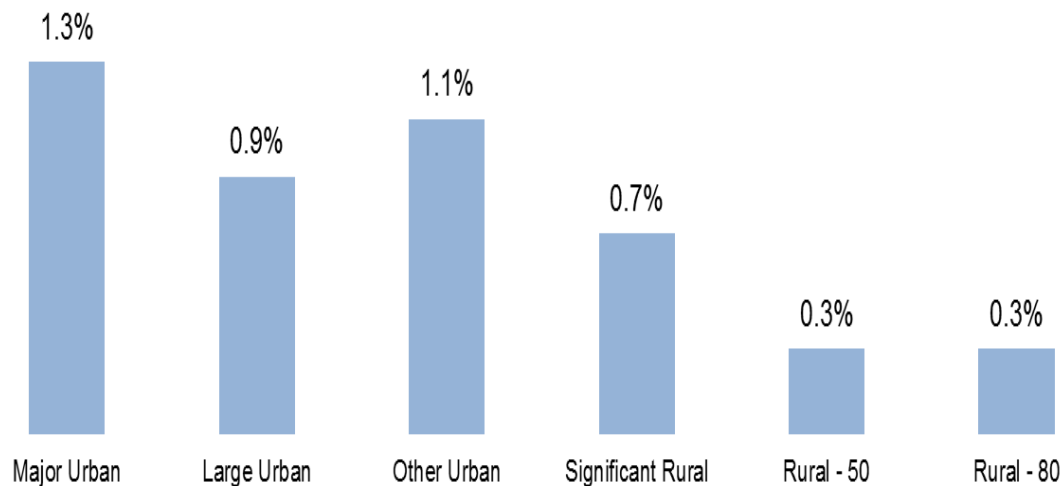


At risk of problem gambling

“At risk generally refers to people who are experiencing some difficulties with their gambling behaviour but are not considered to be problem gamblers”

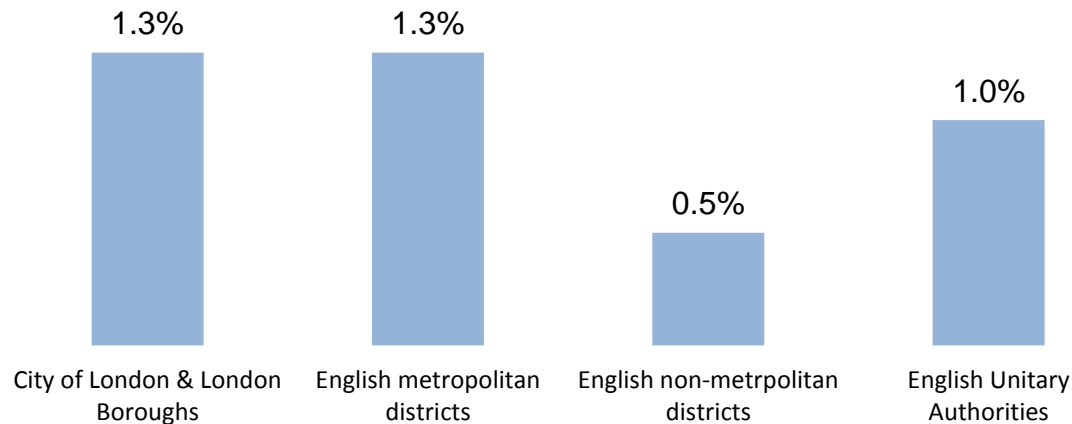


Regional variation in problem gambling



- Problem gambling rates higher in urban areas than rural areas
- Problem gambling rates higher in more densely populated areas

- Problem gambling rates higher in London and English Metropolitan LAs
- Problem gambling rates higher in prospering metropolitan, built up areas, industrial/manufacturing areas



Best estimates for problem gambling rates in Leeds and comparative areas

0.7%	vs	1.4%	According to the DSM-IV – broadly double the national average
0.5%	vs	1.4%	According to the PGSI - over double the national average
0.9%	vs	1.8%	According to either the DSM-IV or the PGSI – broadly double the national average



The factors that make people vulnerable

Demographics	Socio-economic	Poor judgement/ impairment	Other
Youth	Unemployed	Low IQ	Poor mental health
Ethnic groups	Deprived areas	Under influence alcohol/drugs	Substance abuse/misuse
Students	Financial difficulties/debt	Personality traits	Problem gamblers
	Homeless	Learning disabilities	
	Immigrants/asylum seekers		
	Prisoners/ probation		



Gambling operations

Leeds land-based gambling provision is:

- Mature + highly competitive mix of social, leisure + mainstream activities
- Spare capacity + saturation in most parts of the market; 'licensed' contraction since 2013 (earlier AGC + bingo)
- Casino numbers (pre-GGV) more stable ... but operators concerned re increased competition (but greater concern re impact of on-line)
- Some consolidation across previously segmented land-based offer (as UK trends)
- Operator reported market/gambling trends in Leeds similar to other large metropolitan areas ... very few distinctive features in Leeds – to date
- Machines (+multiply-accessed on-line) are main focus for stakeholder concerns in Leeds (as elsewhere) of potential for harm to at risk gamblers



Support services in Leeds

Leeds has a diverse range of support services which can offer some support to problem gamblers:

- Includes generic advisory services (e.g. Leeds CAB) + targeted support groups (e.g. Touchstone) + specialist addictions and recovery services (e.g. Forward Leeds) & diverse funding
- Plethora of (at least) 13 out of 21 contacted relevant Leeds services able to provide some advice and guidance
- Only one supplier of specialist Leeds-based gambling support services (NECA working as the Gamcare support)
- Services mostly dealing with clients presenting with 'co-morbid' or other challenges (e.g. alcohol or drug addiction) and recovery support (treating associated problems not cause)

BUT: Generic support for problem and at risk gamblers in Leeds is under-developed and fragmented:

- Uncertain use/demand - universally lack any screening or assessment tools for gambling-related harm unless (uncommonly) – not self-declared by clients (Screening picking up: Family breakdown / Financial problems etc.)
- Lack of join-up on 'gambling related support' contrasts with strong integration of support/referrals networks across other vulnerable group needs in Leeds for issues such as drugs, alcohol and poverty



Support services in Leeds cont...

Emerging community impacts:

“One worrying trend we have noticed; Take Harehills and Lincoln Green, ...if you take a three mile radius you have many bookies, and you find people who are young and from emerging communities in the betting shops, but most of them can't find a job, they are on low income or no income, they could be an asylum seeker living on £35 a week but they hope they could multiply that money and it's becoming a sort of lifestyle for these people”.

Student impacts:

“For some...there is that pressure to maintain that lifestyle which would mean we would meet them at desperation point really. But...they wouldn't be willing to admit it was much of a problem, the problem was that they didn't have any money not the way they were spending it...excuses such as 'it's because student funding is so bad' that sort of thing. Also, it's sort of that never, never, approach, this will come right at some point, that type of mentality I guess”.

Homeless and very low income impacts:

“It's feeding issues of low-self-esteem and increased levels of anxiety, if you're anxious for pay-day, but also don't want it to happen as you're stuck in a cycle. So it's tied up with mental health, given that it leads to the complete mismanagement of money, you're then looking at adults with severe hygiene issues, everything from personal hygiene to looking after the state of the flat, nutritional poverty and relational poverty as well. Because if you've got no money you tend to be hanging out with those who also have no money”.



NECA support provision - I

NECA has been sole focus for assessment and specialist support to identified problem gamblers in Leeds since 2008:

- Single counsellor in Leeds (1 room facility) + some cover support
- Aimed at coping strategies + self-understanding of risk behaviours + help address redress harms
- Client-led and integrative approach to counselling – clients (mostly) self-referred problem gamblers + some co-lateral ‘significant others’
- Comprehensive assessment after first point – some outward ‘co-morbid’ referrals (alcohol) and I&A for other problems
- Service is client centred - brief interventions + F2F or telephone counselling (x12 weekly sessions) + (some) group work (but acute sustainability problems)
- Significant drop out – but no monitoring evidence to scale/profile



The gambling experience



The darker side

Winning

“I’ll see young lads of 17 and 18 coming in [betting shop], with the excitement of putting on a bet; that I had.”

Thrill

“Most gamblers do it for the money, the thrill of winning... It’s a very addictive thrill.”

Interaction with staff

“Because I was unhappy where I were living.”

Boredom

“I’m quite erratic, I don’t like doing nothing. So yeah, probably...”



Impacts

Personal finance

- £10,000
- £13,000
- £15,000

Relationships

- Breakdown/rifts
- Lying
- Friends

Gambling spend is relative
Gambling and groceries



Health and well-being

Makes you ill

“The reality of what you’ve done sort of over-rides everything else, so you kind of feel that ill, you feel that bad... it makes you realise.”

Depression

“I lost me mum... She left me some money and I used to just blow it on t’machines.”

Anxiety

“In the dream my wife hasn’t got a – you can’t see her face, it’s blurred – it’s clear that it’s my wife, and my little kids... and I’m risking our mortgage. And that breaks my ***** heart, the thought of it.”

Shame

“I just sat in the car park on the corner... I remember being on my phone, trying to find [someone]... I didn’t want to call my mum or something, because it’s like I’d feel ashamed.”



Awareness of help

- Gamble responsibly
- GAMCARE/helpline
- Chat-line
- Self exclusion (land-based)
- Self exclusion (online)
- Treatment



Conclusions and proposals

Evidence across the five work packages suggests scope for the Council and partners to underpin harm minimisation in Leeds by:

- Better information to help with targeting of actions
- Raising awareness both among professionals and at risk gamblers
- Increasing support capacity(s) within a more integrated system
- Actions to increase co-operation and partnership working



Any Questions

Next Steps

