

**Blaby District Council  
Statement of Licensing Policy  
Gambling**

**Public Health  
November 2024**

Gambling Harms

Gambling and the harms associated are increasingly considered a public health issue (1), not least due to the negative impact harmful gambling products can have on the individual's health, relationships, and their financial and social circumstances (2). Gambling at a harmful level is defined by the adverse consequences on the individual, families and communities (3) and is considered a comorbidity with substance dependencies, such as alcohol and drug misuse (4). The [National Suicide Prevention Strategy](#) acknowledges harmful gambling as a risk factor for suicide, and includes an ambition to improve data and evidence on people experiencing harmful gambling (5).

Impact across Leicestershire

Anyone exposed to gambling products is at risk of experiencing harms (6), however data suggests that there are communities more vulnerable, and the harms not distributed equally. There is a strong correlation to communities already experiencing health inequalities, including deprivation and poor mental health (7), and across Leicestershire the most gambling premises are in the most deprived areas.

Nationally, evidence suggests that males, 16-24 year olds, individuals from ethnic minority groups, those unemployed and those with poor mental health are more likely to experience gambling harms. Research has found that veterans are 10 times more likely to experience harms from gambling than non-veterans (8), and the homeless population are identified as a vulnerable group who are also at risk of co-morbid health issues such as mental health and substance addictions (9,10).

[2023 Gambling Commission survey data](#) suggests nationally that 0.3% of adults experience harmful gambling and when applied to the census 2021 population estimates, equates to 1,762 people in Leicestershire. It is estimated that six to ten other people are directly impacted amounting to between 10,572 to 17,620 residents. Research from the [Office for Health Improvement and Disparities \(2023\)](#) estimates in Leicestershire that over 18,000 residents might benefit from gambling treatment and support and over 9,500 children live in these households.

Children are also considered vulnerable due to their age. The [Gambling Commission's children survey \(2023\)](#) highlights nationally, 0.7% of children are 'problem gamblers', equating to 395 children in Leicestershire. Gambling harms have a broad impact on families when considering housing, finances, family breakdowns and the impact of suicide, with further local research required into the links with gaming/gambling and young people.

There is a national issue with local data for a number of reasons including lack of services available to record, and secretive nature and stigma attached to the behaviour preventing access to services. As a result, often national data is aligned with our census populations and is considered an underestimate.

## Public Health

Although not a responsible authority, Leicestershire Public Health is a consultee, to assist the District Council in addressing gambling related harms across Blaby. The Local Government Association and Public Health England in 2018 produced [Tackling gambling related harm: A whole council approach](#), recommending that Public Health contribute to licensing statements of policy along with a wider approach to understanding the scale of harmful gambling locally. Accessing data at District level is a challenge, recognised in the Leicestershire Gambling Related Harms Health Needs Assessment, with the intention to increase screening and data collection and build our understanding of local prevalence.

Leicestershire Public health also work closely with District Licensing teams regarding other licensed establishments, local plan and planning colleagues, to promote variety in the high street offer and consider the impact of a concentration of licensed premises. This is particularly relevant with vulnerable populations or in areas of high levels of deprivation. The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) recommend promoting a variety in the High Street offer, to create vibrant, diverse and sustainable town centres through encouraging a diverse mix of uses.

## **References**

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# Understanding Gambling Harms in your area: **Blaby**

This profile explores the estimated levels of gambling harm, and the use of treatment, support and advice in Blaby. These projections are based on the Annual GB Treatment and Support Survey 2022.

The PGSI measures levels of gambling behaviour which may cause harm to an individual, ranging from low-risk gambling (score of 1-2), moderate-risk gambling (3-7), and 'problem gambling' (8+).



## **PGSI 1+**



We estimate that **1 in 8** people in Blaby have a PGSI score of 1 or more (12.7%), this compares to 13.4% across Great Britain (GB). **1 in 20** (5.0%) have a PGSI score of 3+, compared to 5.9% across GB. **1 in 44** (2.2%) have a score of PGSI 8+, compared to 2.9% across GB.\*

**£1.6 million** is the estimated fiscal cost of 'problem gambling' in Blaby\*\*

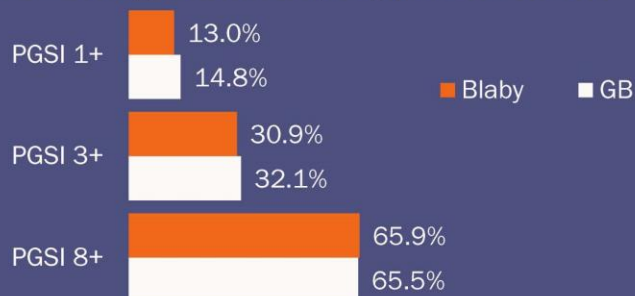


**12.6%** of those who have a score of PGSI 1+ would like treatment, support or advice to deal with their gambling

This rises to 65.2% among PGSI 8+ in Blaby.



## % of people PGSI 1+ accessing treatment, support or advice



### Notes

\*The PGSI is a standardised measure of at-risk behaviour in gambling. Estimates of PGSI and of access to services in your area have been modelled on a nationally representative survey of 18,000 adults in GB. Estimates vary due to various methodological and technical differences. Figures from our annual Treatment and Support survey are likely to be in the upper bound.

\*\*This is based on the annual fiscal cost of 'problem gambling' (PGSI 8+) estimated by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) in 2023.

If you're worried about your own or someone else's gambling, you can call The National Gambling Helpline on [0808 8020 133](tel:08088020133). This service is totally free to access, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**GambleAware**