GambleAware's Community Resilience Fund

Evaluation and learning partner
Year one report

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Report produced for GambleAware by Ipsos and NPC.

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Key definitions and abbreviations used in this report

Definition	Definition applied to this programme
Affected other	Family members, friends and other loved ones of people experiencing gambling harms
Brief intervention	An intervention carried out by people who are not specialist professionals in gambling treatment
Gambling harm	Preventing harm before it occurs by targeting activities towards people at risk of harm, and supporting them to develop resilience and positive behaviours. Anything that negatively impacts the life of the person gambling, or the life of those around them
Project	Project relates specifically to the activity/activities delivered as a result of the CRF grant.
Primary prevention	Preventing harm before it occurs by targeting activities towards people at risk of harm
Secondary prevention	Reduce the impact of harms that have already occurred, through early intervention support
Tertiary prevention	Softening impact of ongoing harms that has lasting effects

Abbreviation	Definition applied to this programme
CRF	Community Resilience Fund
MS Teams	Microsoft Teams (video conferencing and online calling software)
NGSN	National Gambling Support Service
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning

About this report

This report has been prepared by Ipsos and New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) who are the evaluation and learning support partners for GambleAware's Community Resilience Fund (CRF).

It collates insights and learning from year one of the CRF programme to share with the funded teams and GambleAware internal stakeholders.

It is structured around the four overarching evaluation questions:

1. How did GambleAware approach the development / commissioning of this funding programme?
2. To what extent have projects engaged with their local systems and communities?
3. To what extent and for whom have funded projects contributed to the planned outcomes?
4. What support has GambleAware provided that has worked well in supporting grantee organisations to execute their projects and become more 'grant ready' for the future?

The year one report builds on the learning shared in the mid-year report in September 2023. It is based on:

- Analysis of the application and 'start-up' forms, mid-year update reports and end of year reports submitted by funded projects to GambleAware.
- A mid-year 'what works?' event in July 2023 with 14 projects, and end of year 'looking back' learning event in January with 11 projects.
- Insights from monitoring, evaluation and learning support sessions delivered to funded projects.
- Learning sessions with the GambleAware programme team, sharing emerging insights and changing strategic context.
- Depth interviews with all 21 project leads in May and June 2023, held remotely over MS Teams.
- Case studies of eight funded projects, developed from (the aforementioned) depth interviews with project leads, and 18 additional interviews and one focus group with staff and local partners involved in the projects (conducted between October 2023 and March 2024).

The report uses illustrative quotes and case examples throughout. Anchor links are embedded where these relate to a case study.

Executive summary [1]

About the programme

- Developed in response to the cost-of-living crisis, the CRF has provided grants of between **£18,000 to £100,000 to 21 community-based organisations** in England, Wales and Scotland for 12 months to develop and deliver gambling harms support and awareness. Eleven of those organisations will receive continued funding for a further one or two years.

- GambleAware sought new organisations to work with that have existing links to, and expertise in working with, a diverse range of communities who are **at risk of experiencing gambling harm but are currently underrepresented in gambling support services.** This includes people from ethnic minority and marginalised groups, people experiencing poverty and living in areas of high deprivation.

- Monitoring and evaluation capability building support was provided on top of the grant, provided by the externally-commissioned evaluation and learning support partner. A range of activities have been delivered including shared learning events and bespoke capability-building sessions.

Focus of the projects

- The majority (19) had not previously delivered any services specifically on gambling harms. The funding provided these organisations with an opportunity to consider, often for the first time, the intersection of gambling harms with other issues affecting their service users and local communities. It has enabled them to **test and develop new awareness and support approaches** within their existing services.

- The projects have both **a primary and secondary prevention focus** to increase awareness of gambling harms and resilience to prevent harms, and to provide early intervention support for those experiencing harms. The projects have done this through a range of awareness raising activities, by training staff to embed gambling harms information and support within existing services, established new partnerships with local gambling harms support providers, delivering education workshops and providing one-to-one or group counselling and coaching.

Executive summary [2]

Successfully engaging local communities [1]

- The project reporting suggests that **around 100,000 people** were reached with awareness messages, **around 5,200 people** received light-touch interventions (such as information and screening) and **720** more in-depth interventions through one-to-one or group support for gambling harms or related health, wellbeing and social support needs.

- Most projects **have not reached the number of service users they expected.** This highlights the complexities in engaging people about gambling harms. It was assumed that the organisations – with their existing engagement and locations within local communities – would be in a good position to reach people experiencing gambling harms not currently accessing mainstream services. Yet they still encountered challenges. Many have had to focus more on **general awareness raising about gambling harms and support available** rather than delivering gambling harms-specific treatment and support interventions.

- Projects report that the persistent issues of **stigma and shame**, and gambling being a **hidden and misunderstood harm,** stops people from coming forward for support. The projects observed how their service users engage on the topic of gambling differently to other health and wellbeing issues, such as drug and alcohol misuse. They have not been able to **'lift and shift'** approaches from other heath interventions directly: their experience indicates how **adaptations are needed** to existing provision to better support people with the specific underlying issues and experiences of gambling harms. For example, engagement is reported as working well when the organisation **integrates gambling harms awareness and support holistically and discretely into other interventions** by not promoting it as a 'gambling harms' support intervention, or incorporating gambling harms support messages into other financial, health and wellbeing support.

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Executive summary [3]

Successfully engaging local communities [2]

- **Training staff** and providing **additional toolkits and resources,** and working with staff with **complementary skills,** enables them to confidently embed gambling harms support and awareness into other services, such as welfare support or counselling. Projects based in organisations that provide a range of offers to their local communities have had success engaging with target audiences through **frequent and sometimes incidental in-person outreach activities**.

- **Trust** is a key theme of successful engagement. It is an **enabler of engagement** and may take time to establish even if the organisation is well-known and trusted in the local community. Learning from the projects suggest this is because of the stigma associated specifically with gambling, or the financial consequences resulting for example in food bank use. The process of building trust with individuals may also **prevent services from knowing how to confidently refer** on to other specialist gambling services, or **to end more intensive support** once they have established an individuals' trust.

- Working with **community and/or lived experience ambassadors** has enabled projects to provide culturally-sensitive and multilingual services, which encourages people to talk openly.

Executive summary [4]

Outcomes

Given the limited time in which projects have been operating, reporting of outcomes is short-term focused and largely anecdotal. Based on insights from the projects' reports and evaluation interviews, the outcomes observed include:

- **Improved awareness** within local communities, leading to **better understanding about gambling harms** and shifting attitudes about gambling. This is the most common outcome reported in the projects' reports, but they are unable to evidence it with increased referrals or uptake of specialist services because they are not able to collect this data as it is held by third party organisations. Awareness is generally measured by before and after questionnaires at awareness events.

- Increased **provision of early intervention support** for people experiencing harms, and **holistic information and support** to **improve resilience** to harms. This is evidenced by the number of people engaging in gambling harms-specific interventions delivered by the funded projects.

- Staff have **increased confidence and knowledge** to support people effectively. This is reported by the majority of projects, as reflected on in interviews and the end of year project reports. However, it is not an outcome that projects generally are measuring more formally (using staff questionnaires for example).

- About half of projects report that their organisation has improved **credibility and awareness** among their local community and other local providers. They have been able to share reciprocal learning with other local organisations, improving the **holistic support and culturally aware approaches** to reduce harms within local communities.

- Sustaining the changes prompted as a result of this short-term funding is more likely with the organisations that have **strategically aligned** this project with other activities internally, and sought external relationships to develop their local system capability and networks.

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Executive summary [5]

Recommendations for future programmes

- The implications of the learning from the first year of the CRF suggests that future programmes that are commissioned with more of a **strategic, local system perspective** will better facilitate local collaborations. Providing funding to a wide range of organisations to increase staff and volunteer awareness, and start to embed gambling harms messages into existing services, may improve general awareness about gambling harms. However, to further develop early intervention support and routes into more formal support, the learning from this project suggests that GambleAware should:
  - provide organisations with opportunities for **co-designing services** with other local services and service users**;**
  - provide **longer-term funding** to allow for project scoping and development to test assumptions;
  - develop services based on **grounded insight** on prevalence, impact and local system need.

- To develop the capability of community-based organisations delivering gambling harms support, future grant funding programmes should build in time to project budgets and resourcing plans to **engage with evaluation and capacity-building activities**. Funding to develop monitoring and evaluation infrastructure and working alongside other funders to improve the availability of funding for gambling harms support alongside holistic health, wellbeing and social support is needed for long-term change. Improving the evidence base about what works to reduce gambling harms will require **exploring with other funders how to monitor uptake and outcomes** on gambling harms when it is part of a holistic service.

- Future evaluation activity using a qualitative case study design should explore **quality and effectiveness of interventions**, exploring different perspectives of local delivery and support partners and service users, and when referral/support provided by a specialist gambling harms organisation is needed.

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Programme overview

01

The programme

Overview of year one of the Community Resilience Fund

The Community Resilience Fund (CRF) was initially launched as a £1.2 million fund from GambleAware that began in summer 2022 in response to the cost-of-living crisis. The rationale for the programme recognised that the cost-of-living crisis was likely to exacerbate the risk of gambling harms. It provided 12-months of funding from January 2023 to 21 organisations located across Great Britain that support communities experiencing inequalities and disadvantage who are at risk of gambling harms. Funding ranged from just under £18,000 to £100,000 per organisation.

GambleAware subsequently extended the programme for a further two years. An additional £1.66m funding has been awarded to 11* of the projects that evidenced promising outcomes and addressed a gap in existing provision, to expand and sustainably embed their interventions.

* Three projects are funded for a further year, eight will be funded for two years

The theory of change summarises this rationale, linking it to the steps the programme is taking to achieve change

For GambleAware, the programme was a new way of commissioning gambling harms awareness and support services. It was designed to provide funding to organisations GambleAware had not previously funded and identify learning from them about what works for different target groups. It sought out community-based organisations that had existing links to, and expertise in working with, a diverse range of populations currently underrepresented in gambling support services. Only two were organisations already focused specifically on gambling harms. The majority of organisations provide geographically-specific activities for a range of health, wellbeing, welfare and social support needs to a defined local population (referred to as local communities in this report).

As a result, the programme has led to improved awareness of gambling harms within organisations that did not previously have an opportunity to consider the intersection of gambling harms with other issues affecting their service users and local communities.

Overview of funded projects [1]

A detailed overview of the 21 projects funded is provided in Appendix A, and some examples illustrated on the right and on the next page. In summary:

- Intended beneficiaries of the projects include people experiencing homelessness (3 projects), people from ethnic minority and marginalised communities (9), people experiencing poverty (16), affected others* (7).
- Most projects focused on expanding the existing provision of the organisation to include a gambling harms-related component recognising an unmet need among service users, on a topic that does not usually resonate with other funders. This includes:
  - training staff about gambling harms;
  - developing local referral partnerships;
  - delivering gambling harms awareness-raising activities;
  - adding gambling related content to mental wellbeing and education workshops or one-to-one counselling.
- About a third of the projects also intended to develop new activities for the organisations with the funding – such as new research with service users, gambling harms group support programmes, and gambling harms awareness events.

Project examples

Age UK Westminster (£46,504 awarded) to expand its existing welfare services by upskilling staff with the knowledge and confidence to identify gambling harms.

Mind Suffolk (£99,587 awarded) to work in partnership with GamFam to train staff in gambling harms and deliver counselling and online courses to people experiencing gambling harms.

Wigan Warriors (£17,770 awarded) to extend an existing men's mental wellbeing support programme to include gambling support and advice.

Azad Kashmir Welfare Association (£28,748 awarded) to appoint a gambling advisor to undertake awareness raising activities and training of staff volunteers and local partners, and provide holistic information and support for people experiencing gambling harms.

* The term ‘affected others’ is used throughout the report and refers to family members, friends and other loved ones of people experiencing gambling harms

Overview of funded projects [2]

- Most projects had both a **primary prevention*** focus (16) and **secondary prevention**** focus (19). Primary prevention activities included:
  - education workshops with young people about different types of gambling and harmful gambling;
  - life skills workshops including budgeting and employment advice;
  - general gambling harms awareness talks to different community groups.
- Secondary prevention activities to provide early intervention include:
  - training staff to have conversations with service users about gambling when providing welfare support;
  - gambling-specific focus to mental health group support;
  - supporting people to access onward referrals to gambling treatment and support services.

* Primary prevention in this context is defined as **preventing harm before it occurs** by targeting activities towards people at risk of harm, and supporting them to develop resilience and positive behaviours.

** Secondary prevention aims to **reduce the impact of harms that have already occurred**, through early intervention support. It is worth noting that some projects may be reaching people with **tertiary prevention** interventions (softening impact of **ongoing harms that has lasting effects**). Projects were not asked to report at a level of detail that allows a meaningful distinction between activities that have a secondary or tertiary prevention focus, and the extent to which gambling harm is the prevailing harm being addressed.

Definitions from Local Government Association [website] Prevention. Accessed 18/4/24

Project examples

Coram's Field (£84,971 awarded) were focusing on primary prevention by expanding its youth programme to deliver targeted support to young people about gambling harms. Their activities included delivering financial advice workshops and one-to-one sessions with young people to provide employability support.

EPIC Restart Foundation (£100,000 awarded) were focusing on secondary prevention activities to improve financial resilience and to enable people to manage the legacy impact of gambling harm. They delivered online and in-person learning events, personal development workshops and coaching and mentoring support.

Yellow Scarf (£30,000 awarded) provided both primary and secondary prevention activities through its targeted mental health and social support for people from Eastern European communities. Early intervention is provided through group and one-to-one counselling delivered in the different Eastern European languages, and prevention activities focus on life skills workshops, such as budgeting, employment and training advice.

NPC Ipsos

Overview of the evaluation and learning activities

02

Overview of the evaluation and learning support objectives

Ipsos and NPC were commissioned by GambleAware as evaluation and learning partners to meet the following objectives:

1. Identify and learn from projects and local partnerships with potential for effectiveness with a focus on what works, for whom, and in what circumstances.

2. Provide learning to the programme team about how to work with new and emerging organisations and contribute to the sharing of learning between grantees.

3. Build capability of organisations to undertake monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of their work to reduce gambling harms.

Concurrent evaluation and capability-building activities were delivered between January 2023 and March 2024 and they are reported on separately in this report.

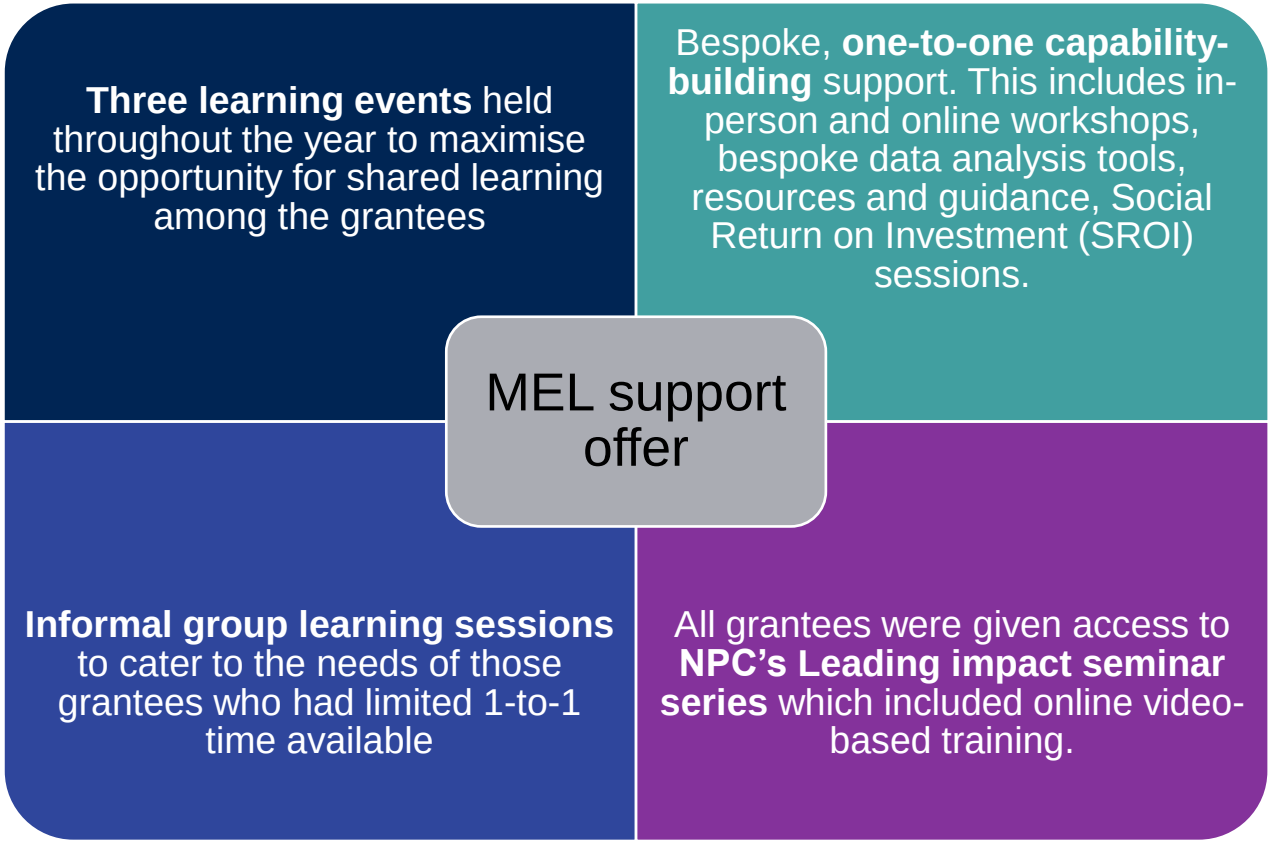
Regular meetings with the GambleAware programme team and a mid-year report allowed emerging insights to be shared.

Four overarching evaluation questions were explored:

1. How did GambleAware approach the development / commissioning of this funding programme?
2. To what extent have projects engaged with their local systems and communities?
3. To what extent and for whom have funded projects contributed to the planned outcomes?
4. What support has GambleAware provided that has worked well in supporting grantee organisations to execute their projects and become more 'grant ready' for the future?

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) capability-building and support

Optional capability-building and learning support was offered for all funded projects to receive tailored support on area(s) that were most useful to them.



Overall, **all 21** funded organisations engaged in at least one offer. However, many reported that capacity challenges limited their time to engage. To account for the **low uptake** of bespoke capability building activities, the support offer was adjusted mid-way through the programme, and a portion of one-to-one support time was redirected to offer additional learning events on the topics that staff in the funded organisations had indicated interest in. Appendix C provides detail of the MEL activities provided.

In addition to the core MEL support offer, a '**sounding board'** was created to enable a more equitable evaluation approach. This consisted of representatives from three of the funded organisations. They were convened throughout the project to provide feedback on programme design, learning activities and the learning events plans.

Evaluation methods and limitations

The following activities have informed this report

- Depth interviews with all 21 project leads in May and June 2023, held remotely over MS Teams. These interviews were designed to capture early learning from the process of designing and setting up their projects.
- Development of eight evaluation case studies informed by 18 depth interviews and one focus group with project staff and local partners.
- Analysis of grant applications, six-month, and end-of year reports provided to GambleAware by all 21 projects.
- Regular discussions with the GambleAware programme team sharing emerging learning.
- A 'What Works?' event with projects and the GambleAware programme team in July 2023 and a 'Looking Back' event held in January 2024, presenting emerging findings and facilitating small group discussions to explore and expand on the learning.
- Insights from bespoke one-to-one and group monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) capability building activities delivered to funded projects.

Limitations

- Some of the case studies were developed from relatively partial data. Only a selected number of staff and partners were identified by project leads to be interviewed to contextualise and build on the learning shared in the end of year reports. No service users were interviewed due to lack of response to email requests, or concerns by project leads about the appropriateness of an evaluation interview at this stage. Considerations of how to address these issues for years 2 and 3 of the evaluation are explored in section 5.
- The data is self-reported (via interviews or monitoring forms) rather than including observation or secondary analysis. The latter were both out of scope of the evaluation. Evaluative assessments on the quality of delivery are therefore not made. Recommendations for developing the case studies in years 2 and 3 of the programme will seek to address this.
- Reporting on activities, outputs and outcomes by projects in the end of year reports is inconsistent across the programme. Aggregating this data at a programme level is therefore not possible.

Evaluation findings

03

This section synthesises the learning from the different activities, structured around four key questions:

1. How did GambleAware approach the development / commissioning of this funding programme?

2. To what extent have projects engaged with their local systems and communities?

3. To what extent and for whom have funded projects contributed to the planned outcomes?

4. What support has GambleAware provided in supporting organisations to deliver their projects and become more 'grant ready' for the future?

Developing and commissioning the programme

The development and commissioning of this funding programme [1]

- As reported in the scoping and mid-year reports, what worked well with the development of this funding programme was how GambleAware **responded to the external context** by developing and allocating funding for 'front-line' programmes within a financial year. Projects welcomed the **open and supportive grant management** approach. This is characterised by a pre-application information webinar, networking and learning sessions during the funding period, responsive Grant Managers, and no stringent requirements on what should be delivered and how. This facilitated connections being made between projects and enabled organisations new to gambling harms to **test and develop new awareness and support approaches** within their existing services. The funding has enabled some organisations to **consider for the first time** whether and how gambling harms is having an impact on their local communities.
- The evaluation was designed to enable the external evaluation team **to share emerging learning** with the GambleAware programme team. The GambleAware programme team have then **acted on and applied this learning to other programmes**, such as how to improve projects' engagement with the external evaluation and MEL support offer.

"It has been great having a named and responsive grant manager and it has felt easy to ask for support." End of year project report

"We were focusing on drugs and alcohol and homelessness. Gambling wasn't thought too much about." Referral partner, case study interview

The development and commissioning of this funding programme [2]

- A key challenge for projects, which could potentially have been avoided by using a different commissioning approach, related to the **lack of existing relationships** between CRF projects and existing providers in the National Gambling Support Network (NGSN). This affected how well the CRF projects aligned with gambling support providers in their local system in terms of referral pathways between them and building on existing knowledge and expertise. While these relationships developed over the course of the year, and were aided by GambleAware programme staff, this took the organisations time that was not planned for.
- The short timeframes for applying and time-limited funding did not allow for projects to scope their offer and develop more innovative ways of working locally. Despite the assumption of a ready-made local audience, many projects reported **difficulties in reaching anticipated service user numbers**. While the programme design provided GambleAware and the funded projects an opportunity to learn quickly what new approaches to engaging different target audiences did and did not work, **short-term funding fuels uncertainty for staff and under-investment in long-term organisational infrastructure**. Observations from interviewees suggests this favours organisations with the resources to apply for and deliver short-term projects, and encourages 'project-itus' rather than strategic programme development.

"This whole project was a little bit outside of my remit, because […] we weren't getting any [funding] from it but it was going to be a big job over the year." NGSN stakeholder, case study interview

"The third sector in general really struggle to provide their staff with job security and it really doesn't help when there's certain funding for staff for such short-term roles." Referral partner, case study interview

The development and commissioning of this funding programme [3]

- The **time needed to fully engage in the additional MEL** offer was not provided for in project timetables and budgets, presenting a missed opportunity for the projects to benefit from this offer. The end of year project reporting indicates that more guidance and support is needed to improve the **quality and consistency of monitoring and reporting of activities and outcomes.** The planned MEL support offer would not have improved this without other changes. For example, this is hampered by **lack of infrastructure** for collecting and analysing data, the requirements from other funders, and ways of working between organisations affecting data sharing. Monitoring outcomes from awareness raising activities and gambling harms reduction is not easy and could benefit from more national guidance from GambleAware (or others).
- Awareness raising activities have been a **bigger focus for projects than initially intended** and take-up for more intensive gambling harms-specific support less than initially anticipated. While this was permissible for a 12-month programme that was designed to explore learning about working with new organisations, and what works for engaging different audiences, GambleAware may need to provide clearer criteria of success for future programmes. The 12-month funding timeframe, while challenging for organisations, does **build in a mechanism** for GambleAware to work more experimentally to different approaches then stop funding projects that don't work as well.

> "If we refer people on to [the funded organisation] and then they don't come back to us, we wouldn't chase [the organisation] for an update or anything like that, because we have no right to ask anything. So unless they come back to us, it's quite difficult to measure". Referral partner, case study interview

Engaging with local systems and communities

Activities delivered

The funded projects have delivered a wide range of activities to engage their local communities. This includes:

- **Awareness-raising** (a part of 20 of the 21 projects) through attendance and presentations at community centres/hubs; health and wellbeing events; stalls at social and sporting events; promotional campaigns on social media, and posters and leaflets circulated to places of worship, GP practices, betting shops and food banks. In some cases, this awareness raising was structured as more formal **education activities** delivered through group wellbeing workshops, a quiz, workbooks for self-guided learning.
- Providing **information and advice** (part of 19 of the 21 projects). This included **creating safe spaces for discussing gambling harms** in a more holistic way and can be quite informal and opportunistic. For example, by promoting leaflets or raising the topic within existing one-to-one welfare and support activities, drop-in clinics, walking groups, conversation cafes, integrating screening tools and questions on referral forms. Projects found that integrating this with **practical support and advice**, through life skills workshops and financial advice was an effective mechanism for engaging people.
- **Counselling** (part of five of the 21 projects), based on adapting existing counselling services attached to community-based drug and alcohol misuse and other mental health services.

IMO Charity provided tailored **awareness-raising** messages about gambling harms through local advertising and events in schools, colleges, community centres, job centres, housing associations and faith groups. They provided **information and advice** through a multilingual telephone advice line. As the case study illustrates, while the project aligns with the charity's existing health and wellbeing and education programmes, they struggled to address stigma around gambling among their local community.

A detailed overview of the activities delivered, and reach reported in the end of year reports is provided in Appendix A.

Reported reach of activities

The overview in Appendix A provides a summary of the information reported by projects about the reach of their activities. Based on this data, the following information summarises reach to people at risk of or experiencing gambling harm.*

100,000

Approximately 100,000 people were reached with awareness-raising activities by the 10 projects that collected this data (excluding people engaged via social media).

5,200

Around 5,200 people were reached with light-touch interventions, for example through brief interventions,** information provision and screening tools, by 15 projects that collected and reported on this.

720

11 projects reported engaging approximately 720 people with more intensive interventions, for example through one-to-one or weekly group interventions

470

Of those receiving interventions (either light-touch or more intensive), nine projects report that approximately 470 individuals specifically identified as experiencing gambling harms.

* Please note that this only includes data where the projects reported it. The projects were not required to submit this data or provided set definitions. The evaluation team have not validated the data through secondary analysis.

** The term brief intervention refers to an intervention carried out by people who are not specialist professionals in gambling treatment as defined by the Royal Society for Public Health, Understanding and responding to gambling harms: A brief guide for professionals.

Assessing effectiveness of activities delivered

- It is **hard to assess the effectiveness** of the reported activities based on the monitoring and evaluation data currently available. As the overview presented in Appendix A highlights, some projects report impressive scale of reach for some activities. However, this does not provide an indication of the **quality, depth of engagement** or relevance for groups affected by or at risk of gambling harms. Nor does it give a sense of how many people were reached through the project **would not have been reached anyway by the work of the organisation**, or have engaged with them in a different way because of the project. For the projects that have provided a 'deeper' level of engagement with people experiencing gambling harms, this is a fraction of the number of people reached with broad awareness messages.
- A challenge for organisations providing holistic support is that they may be reporting activity that did not focus explicitly on gambling harms. This might lead **to 'double counting'** of activities funded by others, or **misleading representation of the populations engaged specifically in gambling harms awareness and support**. While the intersectional nature of gambling harms with other social, financial and health issues justifies this approach, it may require a change in expectations of how organisations report activities, and how GambleAware works alongside other funders to commission this type of activity sustainably in the future.

"A lot of potential prevention and awareness raising work can stop people falling into those extreme ends of that harm. […] I know we're about a year in now, but I think by the nature of this project, it is still hard to really gauge success." Project staff, case study interview

"In general for the last year I have worked with over 600 individuals […] I've made around maybe 30 to 40 referrals [to the funded organisation]. With gambling addictions or something connected to it, it was around 10 people." Referral partner, case study interview

Engaging local communities: what has worked well? [1]

The analysis identifies the following features of projects where local engagement has gone well. This includes projects that:

- **Train staff** to increase awareness of gambling harms. This benefits from being more than a 'one-off' to embed learning and to sustainably integrate this awareness and knowledge with new staff. Projects have reinforced learning by developing tools and resources to give staff confidence to screen for gambling harms and discretely raise the topic with service users.
- Increase staff and service user **awareness of the range of different types of activities that constitute gambling**. By understanding that this includes everything from scratch cards to gaming accessed in betting shops and online, organisations can better provide targeted support and enable self-education and awareness among people at risk of harms from different types of gambling activities.
- Work with **community ambassadors** who are aware of cultural sensitivities and able to deliver multi-lingual services. These ambassadors may include people with lived experience or with good networks and connections to key target audiences, such as outreach workers and religious leaders.

As the case study of Simon Community Scotland illustrates, the funding has enabled them to hire a dedicated project lead to develop and roll-out a comprehensive training package for staff, including in-person training and e-learning, a leadership training day, resource kits, lived experience videos.

"Every single member of staff in the organisation's been able to access really good training to understand the intersections of gambling and homelessness […] It's just a really robust programme to really allow us to step into understanding gambling". Project staff, case study interview

Engaging local communities: what has worked well? [2]

The analysis identifies the following features of projects where local engagement has gone well. This includes projects that:

- Complement a broader agenda by being **strategically aligned and prioritised internally** so the gambling harm intervention is embedded in other services rather than being a standalone project, and taken up by staff at all levels in the organisation**.** This ensures that the gambling-focused activities are not a one-off 'add-on' but run through the work of the wider organisation.
- Are **externally focused to align with others locally.** A **'whole system' approach** can be achieved by establishing local partnerships, sharing learning and upskilling local organisations to integrate gambling harms awareness among other public health interventions including mental and physical health, housing and suicide prevention. This relies on other local organisations to have the capacity to collaborate and engage on a shared agenda.
- Include a **range of touch-points to reach service users both proactively and opportunistically**, and not just relying on people to come to you. This includes providing drop-in support and social activities to bring people to community hubs; engaging people through one-to-one welfare and information support; working through holistically trained community engagement/outreach practitioners to incorporate gambling harms support alongside other interventions (such as harm reduction interventions, trauma-informed counselling, substance misuse support, mental health resilience workshops). Projects observed how this takes time: it might be the second or third time someone interacts with the service before the service user raises the topic of gambling.

Al Hurraya, working in Nottingham is well-established as a provider of drug, alcohol, and domestic violence support. Building on its local networks, the project included various activities to actively engage professionals in statutory services as well as community and religious leaders to build awareness across the local system. As the case study illustrates, they developed a positive collaboration with gambling harms providers locally to deliver awareness activities.

"We supported one another through the raising of awareness around gambling harms, the introduction of screening into local services, the utilising the gambling harms clinic […] So, we just worked really closely in supporting one another in presentations [drawing on our mutual expertise]." Local partner, case study interview

NPC Ipsos

Learning about specific target groups [1]

By funding a diverse range of projects, from organisations that have an existing presence with populations generally underrepresented in gambling harms support services, the programme aimed to identify learning about what approaches work with different populations in different contexts. Projects commonly report barriers to engagement, such as **stigma, shame, it being a hidden harm, and not recognising gambling as a problem**. Observations made in interviews and project reports identify learning about what works to overcome these barriers for different demographic groups.

A shared feature across these approaches is **trust**: the organisations that reported the most success were those that were able to build trust and work with people who engender trust. This can be easily lost: for example one project reported how it had to make a **disclosure** to social services and they lost the trust of the individual for whom they wanted support for their gambling. This can also make it hard for services to **confidently refer on to other services** or know how to **end more intensive support,** once they have established that trust.

Specific insights about what works for different target groups and in different contexts are considered on the next two pages. An overview of the specific target groups for each project is reported in Appendix A.

"There is a huge stigma around it […] they are, like, 'Who else will be there? Then all the community will know". Referral partner, case study interview

"Anyone who accesses the hub will have access to information sheets and brief interventions about gambling. [We] let them know that we're here every month. Because for some people, they aren't quite ready to have the consistent support, but knowing that we're there every single month gives them that [reassurance] 'if I know they're going to be there, I can come in and speak to them.'" Project staff, case study interview

Learning about specific target groups [2]

Minoritised or marginalised communities

For projects working with **minoritised or marginalised communities**, working with community ambassadors who reflect the demographic of the local community, delivering **multi-lingual services, and co-designing resources** ensures their services have cultural resonance. (See the case studies of Al Hurraya, IMO Charity and Yellow Scarf)

People living in 'close-knit' communities

For people who live in '**close-knit' communities**, such as those centred around mosques or community centres on a housing estate, a barrier to engagement often relates to the stigma about gambling. As a result, people do not want to be seen engaging with a gambling awareness programme. Projects working in these contexts have focused on activities to normalise conversations about gambling through **engaging religious leaders and community ambassadors** to talk openly about gambling. They have incorporated gambling harms awareness into regular social events, and used social media and leaflets to reinforce cultural and communal resonance. By ensuring that gambling awareness messages and support opportunities are embedded in other activities rather than as a standalone, it provides more **discrete and holistic support**.(See the case studies of Cedarwood Trust and IMO)

People experiencing homelessness

For **people experiencing homelessness,** the projects report that chaotic and unpredictable lives can make **structured group interactions difficult** to commit to. These projects have focused on building trust over time with a range of different outreach and engagement activities, creating safe spaces to 'drip feed' awareness messages and support opportunities, working with others for a whole system public health support offer and developing a local trusted referral pathway. (See the case studies of Big Issue and Simon Community Scotland)

Affected others

The projects that report successful engagement with people harmed by someone else's gambling (referred to as '**affected others**') reflect that a more overt gambling harms session can be appropriate, as can support offers that provide practical support. This can include financial advice, as well as creating safe spaces for supportive conversations and wellbeing support. (See the case study of Shama Women's Centre)

Learning about specific target groups [2]

People living in poverty

For people whose experiences of gambling harms are compounded by intersecting issues associated with **poverty**, projects have recognised the importance of helping to address their **most pressing needs** first. For some, this will be about securing food for them and their family. For others, it will be about taking **control of their own finances**. For others it will be about access to professional support to **explore past traumas**. (See the case studies of Cedarwood Trust, Hull FC Community Foundation and Yellow Scarf)

Women

Projects reflect that creating **women only spaces** have been useful for enabling women to have conversations they have never had before. As one interviewee reflected, gambling is often perceived as a 'men's issue', so providing an opportunity for women to explore their own experiences has been important for breaking taboos. (See the case studies of Simon Community Scotland and Shama Women's Centre)

Children and young people

For projects engaging children and young people, spending time to raise staff awareness and understanding of the different types of gambling activities that are accessible and appeal to younger people (such as **gaming and cryptocurrency**) has helped them to develop information and education materials that resonate. Working **through schools and sports clubs** have helped to reach younger audiences as part of existing community outreach and engagement activities. (See the case study with Hull FC Community Foundation).

Older adults

For projects supporting older adults, one challenge reported is how gambling can be part of their **social activities**, such as bingo evenings. For people who experience **social isolation and loneliness**, self-exclusion from these activities might not be desirable. Projects reflected that **making community-focused events appealing for other reasons** – by providing food, hot drinks, talks on topics of interest, creating quizzes – can create holistic opportunities for support. (See the case study of Cedarwood Trust)

Outcomes

This section explores the outcomes reported by the projects. These include outcomes for service users, members of the wider community, staff, and for the funded organisations more widely.

This data should be interpreted with caution. The evidence is largely anecdotal and based on short-term observed or self-reported changes.

A detailed overview of the outcomes reported by each project in the end of year reports is provided in Appendix A.

Outcomes for individuals from awareness-raising

Increasing awareness of gambling harms among at-risk demographics is identified as a key target outcome for the programme. For awareness-raising activities, projects use before-and-after questionnaires or use subsequent engagement with service users to assess success.

The majority of projects report improved outcomes resulting from awareness raising activities such as:

- Increased understanding about risky gambling behaviours and gambling harms, and the types of support available for themselves or others, such as self-exclusion or support groups.
- Shifting attitudes towards gambling. This has reduced stigma attached to seeking help, normalised conversations resulting in increased one-to-one engagements about gambling-related harms as people feel more comfortable asking for support and sharing their own experiences.

This outcome is explored in more detail in the case studies of Cedarwood Trust, Shama Women's Centre and IMO Charity.

A detailed overview of the outcomes reported by projects in Appendix A.

"It's all about raising awareness and highlighting that [gambling harm] exists and […] it's something] that people need to think about it." Local stakeholder, case study interview

"I have seen a shift in attitude and it's been good to see the people support the idea that [gambling] is something people can speak about and get support for." Project staff, case study interview

Outcomes for individuals experiencing gambling harms

For people experiencing gambling harms, the expected outcomes from the information and support activities were that they would have improved knowledge of where and how to access further support and information, leading to increased uptake of gambling harms support and ultimately change in gambling behaviour. For group and one-to-one support, a small number of projects report using holistic outcome measurement tools (such as WEMWBS*). Projects also use case studies to illustrate individuals' experiences and outcomes. About half of the projects report how:

- Using gambling harms screening tools with service users to understand prevalence has helped organisations to identify potentially vulnerable service users, providing early intervention support.
- Financial workshops boosted participants' confidence in controlling spending and budgeting.
- Counselling, mentoring and mental health group support has improved wellbeing, increased understanding of how to better manage stress, reduced anxiety, improved resilience, and improved family relationships.
- Various programmes reported improved knowledge, confidence and awareness of the issues relating to gambling harms and reducing barriers to seek support.
- Service users report that they stopped gambling after programme engagement.

"79% of people surveyed [in a Prison wing survey] said Hold or Fold [a 20-episode programme focusing on people experiencing gambling harm and the criminal justice system] had improved their knowledge of services available." End of project report, Prison Radio Association

"56% of [the 151 people provided mentoring / coaching support] that responded to an end programme survey said their finance and debt had improved, using our 'Wheel of Life' measure." End of project report, EPIC Restart Foundation

*WEMWBS refers to the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale.

This outcome is explored in more detail in the case studies of Big Issue, Shama Women's Centre and Yellow Scarf. A detailed overview of the outcomes reported by projects in Appendix A.

Outcomes for staff

The programme theory of change identifies increased knowledge and skills of staff and volunteers about gambling harms and support available as important for leading to the outcomes for service users. This is an outcome identified in most projects, based on the evaluation interviews. For the end of year reporting, only a minority report that this is based on before-and-after questionnaires embedded into training. Outcomes for staff reported include:

- Increasing knowledge and awareness of where to signpost people to for gambling harms support.
- Improved referral processes between services (both within their organisation and to other local organisations) to ensure people get access to the right support for their needs.
- Increased confidence to provide support and information directly. Staff report feeling equipped to recognise signs of harmful gambling, escalating issues, and how to have open conversations about gambling.
- Increasing knowledge and awareness about gambling harms among staff in other local partner organisations.

A limitation of the current reporting is that it does not give an indication of how many staff use their increased awareness and understanding of gambling harms in practice; what training 'dosage' is needed to give them confidence and what is the quality of the interactions staff go on to have with their service users. This will be considered in future evaluation activities.

"We feel confident to fully support clients through the support process especially with more complex cases where a person is facing many financial shocks alongside gambling related harms". End of project report, Age UK Westminster

"We understand [gambling harms] now and we realise who we can signpost to or services we can work with to make sure people get that support." Project staff, case study interview

This outcome is explored more in the case study of Simon Community Scotland. A detailed overview of the outcomes reported by projects in Appendix A.

Outcomes for the funded organisations

The programme theory of change identifies the outcomes for the organisations as their increased interest and capability to offer support for gambling harms, and established relationships between them and others in the local system. About half of the organisations report organisational outcomes including:

- Improved credibility and awareness of their work among their local community, decision makers and other local providers.
- Reciprocal exchange of learning between the funded organisations and NGSN providers.
- Improved communications and local system working around referral processes and service development.
- Improved local system awareness and understanding of gambling harms and its impact on the local community. This has led to increased activity on gambling harms by schools and other local charities.
- Higher quality and more relevant support for their service users. This includes consideration of unintended consequences.

The sustainability of these outcomes is dependent on other funders being responsive to the focus on gambling harms, to allow organisations to embed and build on the activities started with the CRF project.

> "Gambling harm is going to be integrated in [a new service] as part of a holistic approach, being a one-stop-shop for [our service users] to go and talk about whatever it is that they need to talk about. All this stuff really wouldn't have happened if it hadn't been for the project." Project staff, case study interview

> "Depending on funding, it's what we prioritize on our area. It's all funding based, but basically going to be mental health and wellbeing focused and going forward rather than gambling harms". Project staff, case study interview

This outcome is explored more in the case studies of Al Hurraya and Simon Community Scotland. A detailed overview of the outcomes reported by projects in Appendix A.

Supporting organisations to be more ‘grant ready’ in the future

Developing MEL capability building and support

The MEL support offer was put in place with the intention of building the organisations' evaluation and monitoring capabilities. This recognised that, as the programme was funding organisations new to the gambling harms sector, future funding may reply on organisations having the skills and tools in monitoring and evaluation to be used in this project and beyond. Key learning from delivering this offer highlights that:

Grantees had limited capacity to engage in bespoke, one-to-one capability-building activities. As the programme progressed, it became increasingly evident that grantee organisations had limited time and resources to participate in tailored MEL capability-building activities, often needing to prioritise service delivery instead. This demonstrates that the decision to make the offering grantee-led was appropriate, given the lack of dedicated time for MEL engagement.

Grantees valued opportunities to network with each other and share their perspectives. Group learning events and informal learning sessions were valuable in facilitating dialogue among grantee organisations, enabling capability building support on different topics.

Overall, capability-support was flexible and responsive to the needs of the funded organisations. Those organisations that engaged in bespoke support reported improvement in their MEL capabilities and found this a positive experience (as explored in Appendix C).

Recommendations for future MEL support offers

1. Ensure that learning support offer is built into the contracts and budgets for projects and communicated at the stage of commissioning
2. Hold in-person meetings at both the start and end of programme for grantees to network and build connections (and ensure there is provision for grantees to engage in these activities).
3. Hold monthly MEL capability-building drop-in sessions for grantees to receive flexible support ad-hoc throughout the programme
4. Consider use of a shared communication channel for grantees to connect easily with each other

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Future monitoring and evaluation needs

The extension of the programme provides an opportunity for the projects and GambleAware to improve the quality of evidence about the effectiveness of these types of interventions. Based on the learning presented in this report, specific monitoring and evaluation challenges that will need to be considered include:

- **Effectiveness of awareness raising.** The interventions can be light-touch. Projects are reporting impressive reach figures via social media or event attendances, but these do not provide insight into the depth or quality of engagement, and whether it prompted action from someone specifically experiencing harm. Staff want to understand how to monitor effectiveness without creating a barrier to engagement. The project organisations could consider different indicators for success, such as increases in service users to their services more generally e.g. more people attending drop-in sessions, increased footfall.

- **Outcomes from onward referral.** While onward referrals to specialist support providers can indicate success of awareness-raising and support, projects might not know whether someone has followed through on a referral, and what resulted.

- **Measuring reduction in gambling harms**. The current screening tools are not evaluation tools and may not be appropriate to administer for the type of interventions the projects are delivering.

- **Needs of other funders.** For services to be commissioned in the future, they may need to evidence how they are reducing pressures on NHS services.

- **Changing organisational landscape**. Many of the organisations are growing or changing their services and operating models to respond to the changing social and political context and needs of their local communities. Future monitoring and evaluation requirements may need to change to remain meaningful for the organisations.

The next steps for the national programme evaluation are detailed in section 5.

Case Studies

04

Case study selection

Eight case studies were selected to explore the experiences and outcomes resulting from the projects in more detail

The sampling criteria sought to ensure a spread of projects, prioritising those with the following characteristics:

- **Type of activity being delivered:** priority to include projects that involve counselling, awareness raising, training.
- **Partnership working:** focus of project to engage local organisations, building on existing or establish new partnerships.
- **Location**: ensure representation from England, Wales and Scotland.
- **Beneficiary group:** specifically military veterans, people experiencing homelessness, affected others, children and young people.
- **Grant amount:** spread of grant award size.

It was expected that the sample would include both projects selected for onward funding and those ending after 12-months.

Case study fieldwork took place between November 2023 – March 2024. Each case study involved liaising with the project lead to discuss a suitable design for their project.

The project leads identified a spread of delivery staff and/or volunteers, project stakeholders and potential beneficiaries and facilitated an invitation to take part in a depth interview or focus group with a member of the evaluation team. The data from these activities (18 interviews with 19 people and one focus group with 6 people) was triangulated with insights from the project reports and start of programme interviews with the project leads.

Not all interviewees responded to interview requests. Two of the projects were unable to facilitate contact for any wider interviews due to limited capacity.

The number of individuals engaged in each site is provided in the table below. All interviewees were offered an in-person or remote interview. All opted for a remote interview, conducted over MS Teams.

	Number of individuals			
	TOTAL	Staff	Partners	Project lead
Al Hurraya	5	1	2	2
Big Issue	9	7		2
Cedarwood Trust	2	1		1
Hull Community FC	1			1
IMO	1			1
Shama Women's Centre	4	3		1
Simon Community Scotland	11	4	5	2
Yellow Scarf	3	1	1	1
TOTAL	*36*	*17*	*8*	*11*

Al Hurraya

Al Hurraya (which means freedom in Arabic) is a charity working in Nottingham providing culturally-tailored, peer-led support and information to Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and refugee communities. The organisation provides one-to-one counselling, mentoring, education workshops, advocacy and information to provide support on a range of issues including bereavement, substance misuse, trauma, domestic abuse and increasingly, gambling harms.

What is the project?

The project provided both a dedicated gambling harms service for Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and refugee communities and an opportunity to integrate gambling harms support into the existing work of the organisation. The project has predominately engaged men from the Muslim community. They provided one-to-one counselling, mutual aid meetings, and education resources and workshops. The project has also delivered workshops to local organisations to enhance their understanding of gambling harms.

> ***"Sometimes [an individual will] need the mutual aid before they're ready for counselling, or sometimes they go into the mutual aid [after counselling]. So they complement each other, and it's important that both provisions are there."***

Key learning:

- The project has developed a diverse range of activities, providing holistic support to address gambling harms alongside support for addressing trauma, social networks and relationships, drug and alcohol use, physical health, and financial advice. The different formats, from 6-12-week counselling, brief interventions, and mutual aid groups for peer support can meet different people's needs. While the focus on gambling was promoted openly, this was addressed alongside other social, health and wellbeing needs that people are seeking support with. A range of community-based awareness and outreach activities (drawing on community leaders and people with lived experience) has raised awareness of gambling harms to address cultural taboos.
- The project has adapted delivery and resources based on learning more about how gambling harms specifically affects individuals from ethnic minority communities. An Islamic 12-step programme has been designed in response to this learning, and building relationships with community leaders has been important for successfully engaging people on this topic.
- The organisation is well-established as a provider of drug, alcohol, and domestic violence support. Through further developing local partnerships and collaborations, the organisation has enabled others in the local system to improve their understanding of gambling harms, and embedded their project alongside others including the regional NGSN and Aftercare support providers. Collaboration with the NGSN providers is based on sharing reciprocal expertise.

Quick facts:

£61,984 funding received
47 people receiving one-to-one counselling and 30 people receiving a brief intervention
15 workshops reaching 349 professionals
36 people attending mutual aid groups

Key messages:

① A range of culturally adapted activities, delivered by a trusted organisation, meets different people's needs.

② Local system collaboration and engagement, building on reciprocal expertise, can embed a gambling harms focus into other services and enhance awareness and engagement.

> ***"[The project lead] is always my go-to person because of what they're doing […] there aren't many services that are gambling-specific for minority communities."***

Al Hurraya

What difference did the project make?

Service users

The project uses case notes and health and wellbeing charts to assess outcomes for clients related to finances, motivation, social networks, drug and alcohol use and physical health. This outcome measurement is integrated as part of the intervention and captures a broad range of measures relevant to the individual.

Staff involved with the organisation bring their lived experience to the role. This approach is considered to be important for helping people to engage with their services and have a positive experience.

> ***"The counselling, the mentoring, the one-to-ones, it's all working well because we're from the same community, and we've been brought up in the same area […] that makes things easier from the start. And part of lived experience gives us that believable factor for the service user."***

Organisation and staff

The organisation has always provided support around addiction. While they recognise their clients experienced gambling harms, there wasn't previously funding available to address it. This project has enabled them to strengthen their holistic addiction and health and wellbeing support offer to embed gambling harms-specific support and awareness.

> ***"[We have always had] poly-drug users coming through, people who are saying "Yes I gamble as well". Or you will get [people coming to us] who just gamble and nothing else. So, we've always provided that support"***

Local system

The project included various activities to actively engage professionals in statutory services as well as community and religious leaders to build awareness across the local system.

The project leads reported that generating referrals from local engagement has taken time to establish and was a barrier early in the project. The organisation has sought to align with statutory services for a local system public health approach to gambling harms. The referral form for the Drug and Alcohol Substance Misuse Service includes gambling as part of the assessment.

> ***"[The professional workshops have] been very received by a lot of the services across the board both in Nottingham and Derby, […] We're bridging gaps with the mosque in Derby, to break down some of the barriers experienced within that community."***

Big Issue

The Big Issue is a social enterprise, working with individuals experiencing homelessness, poverty, and/or marginalisation to provide them with opportunities to gain economic self-sufficiency. Operating on a national level, the Big Issue has offices in London, the Midlands, South-East, Scotland, Wales. It establishes its presence through fixed locations as well as mobile units. They offer a range of services and activities to address the complex needs of their beneficiaries, including the distribution of the Big Issue magazine, which serves as a source of income for vendors, and comprehensive support programmes aimed at other health and social needs. These services are delivered by dedicated frontline staff who engage with vendors during magazine sales activities and through targeted outreach efforts, ultimately seeking to foster a sense of community, empowerment, and support for vulnerable communities.

What is the project?

The project focused on addressing gambling-related harms among vendors of the Big Issue and aimed to prevent individuals from turning to gambling to manage their financial hardship. Big Issue Vendor Outreach Workers were trained to understand the risk factors and indicators of gambling harm behaviour and to provide appropriate support. Activities included distributing leaflets, providing information and advice on gambling risks, screening for gambling harms, supporting access to local and national gambling specialists and alternative financial support options, as well as access to mental health and addiction services.

> ***"Before we didn't know how to engage with people on gambling issues and didn't know what the signs were. This project has really opened our eyes to how much support there is in our local community and how we can talk to people about this issue."***

Key learning:

Interviewees reflect that the organisation made progress in raising awareness, establishing support networks, and addressing challenges inherent in tackling gambling harms among vulnerable populations. Their experiences highlight that:

- It is important to build trust and relationships with individuals to be able to have de-stigmatising discussions about gambling harms, and enable vendors to come forward about their experiences of gambling.
- The local support and referral services vary widely depending on location, requiring staff to develop their understanding of local resources, and establishing contacts with other support organisations in the local area. Their staff want awareness and communication of waitlist times in referrals to manage expectations and support a smooth onward transition for their vendors.
- Staff reflected the importance of being culturally sensitive when working with vulnerable and minoritised communities to ensure understanding of the person and tailor information and conversations sensitively.
- Exploring the longer-term needs for individuals, and any sustained changes from these interventions is needed.

Quick facts:

£96,673 funding received
500+ received financial support
400 approached about gambling harms
76 vendors screened
10 referred for further support

Key messages:

① GamCare training upskilled staff, giving them confidence to have conversations about gambling harms. Continuing to provide training for new staff and as refreshers will ensure staff are well equipped.

② Building trust and existing relationships facilitated discussions with vendors on gambling harms.

Big Issue

What difference did the project make?

Service users

In the short-term, staff report that the leaflets and harm reduction tips supplied to vendors were useful in helping people to protect themselves. Blocking software on phones was an effective way to help prevent people from turning to gambling.

During the project, approximately 10 vendors were referred for additional support. One example is from an ex-vendor who visited the Scotland office and saw a leaflet about gambling harms on the counter. This facilitated a conversation with a support worker about the gambling harms they were experiencing, and the support worker was able to supply information about local support services. The ex-vendor joined a local support group and returned regularly to the Big Issue office to discuss these sessions with the support worker, stating that he had been able to self-exclude from gambling shops and had put websites blockers on his devices.

> ***"This has gone really well but it's the start of a project. We have to allow people space for when things get worse for them or when they want to receive support then they can do. It's going to take years to see success."***

Organisation and staff

Training provided to staff by GamCare was considered to be crucial in equipping support workers with the knowledge, skills and tools to start conversations with vendors about gambling harms. Staff have learnt over time how to broach conversations with vendors, understanding the need for building relationships and trust with people they are serving. This is often about having informal conversations with people about their gambling, discussing this among other issues.

> ***"Without the training I wouldn't have felt confident about approaching the subject at all."***
>
> ***"It's been a learning process, when we first started speaking to people we weren't as aware of how to do this."***

Cedarwood Trust

The Cedarwood Trust is a charity working on the Meadow Well Estate of North Tyneside, an area within one of the most deprived 10% of communities in England. The organisation provide a community space, and a range of services and social activities for local residents. This includes welfare advice and information, a social supermarket (subsidised food store), free hot meals, wellbeing life coaching, family groups and support groups for people with drug and alcohol addiction. In response to the Covid pandemic, the organisation adapted its service to provide a 'door stop' service, which enabled it to reach people who had not previously come to the centre for their services. The cost-of-living crisis has had a profound effect on the local community.

What is the project? Strive to Thrive

The CRF project aimed to raise awareness and address unmet needs for people experiencing gambling harms within the local community. The project initially proposed to deliver a community awareness raising campaign and a new programme of five, 10-week behavioural change programmes delivered by fixed-term gambling harms support facilitator. The approach was intended to be gambling-specific and modelled from drug and alcohol treatment services.

While promoting this the organisation learnt that people in the community were not yet ready to engage in this type of intervention. Instead, the project increased the prevention focus and awareness-raising activities including self-education workbooks, information stands, leaflet and poster distribution, awareness presentations, and a gambling harms awareness raising quiz.

> ***"[Without the Community Connectors] there's nobody engaging with the community [in a holistic way]. It takes a long time for somebody to start talking about [gambling]. I think me just rocking up and thinking that people are just going to open up, it's not going to happen."***

Key learning:

Supporting people with behaviour change

- The organisation was unable to recruit people to a group, behaviour change programme. The project lead reflected that the people they were engaging with were not at the 'contemplation' stage of the behaviour change journey for this to be the right intervention. The project was not able to overcome the stigma about gambling. Interviewees suggest that issues with drug and alcohol are considered to be a bigger issue within the community than gambling.

Providing a holistic offer and building trust

- Learning from other projects indicates that raising awareness of gambling harms and providing support can be achieved when embedded within existing services, as part of an holistic offer. This project did not have this. At the start of the project, staff in 'Community Connector' roles initiated engagement with potential service users (as their roles enabled them to engage people over a period of time and build trust). However, when these roles changed along with the Local Authority funding focus, the gambling harms project no longer benefited from this community outreach. Someone new to the organisation, in a gambling harms-specific role, did not generate the same level of trust among the local community.

Quick facts:

£84,230 funding received

Awareness-raising activities including information stalls, self-education workbooks and quiz.

Key messages:

① The project had to refocus on informal awareness raising rather than a structured behaviour change intervention due to lack of uptake from the local community.

② Developing an holistic service to integrate a gambling harms support service to, is dependent on other funders supporting community outreach and engagement posts.

③ Recruiting a member of staff to a dedicated gambling harms-specific role may not work when it is primarily user-facing. Embedding this as part of a more holistic role, or using this dedicated staff capacity to build internal capability and external partnerships for focusing on gambling harms may be more appropriate.

Cedarwood Trust

What difference did the project make?

Service users

Awareness raising

The project reported that it distributed 1,000 leaflets/posters and engaged over 160 people using a self-education booklet and quiz. However, the organisation has no way of monitoring the effectiveness of these activities and they resulted in no further enquiries.

Barriers to raising awareness included the stigma: people not wanting to be seen talking to the gambling project officer. Raising awareness at a weekly bingo evening was not welcomed as people felt it would "ruin their social event."

> ***"I think even that stigma of people coming in here and even asking, because it's a community where people live and people know each other. […] for somebody to come and then start talking about gambling, or even to be looking as if they're talking to me about gambling [is difficult]."***

Loss of trust

A potentially negative outcome reported by a project stakeholder is that the organisation may have lost the trust of the local community. An example was given of one person who regularly used the organisation's services, and had been identified as gambling beyond their means, who then disengaged with the organisation after the organisation reported a child safeguarding concern to social services.

> ***"When I initially started engaging with [this person who comes into the centre], they didn't know I was doing the gambling. So she was very engaging. She talked a lot. But once she discovered my role and it was gambling awareness, she backed off."***

Organisation and staff

The project staff report that they are more aware of gambling harms and know where to refer people to. The project provided an opportunity for the organisation to test different approaches to engage their local community.

> ***"It's good that they're trying. They're testing out different ways. I think it's more, it's experimenting with different ideas, using the money to try different things, because as you see, we tried the programme – it didn't work - but the quiz thing did, kind of, worked a little bit."***

Hull FC Community Foundation

Hull FC Community Foundation is the independent charity of the professional rugby league side, Hull FC. They support vulnerable people in the local community through a range of community sports and outreach activities.

What is the project?

The project was aiming to introduce activities inspired by rugby to build gambling awareness among young people (aged 16-24) and military veterans (aged 24+). Designed as a prevention and early intervention programme, this project aimed to embed gambling harms awareness into education sessions and wellbeing workshops. It was building on existing health and wellbeing programmes and existing partnerships with local education and health and care organisations.

> ***"We have a fantastic relationship with a healthcare partnership, and we deliver a number of health initiatives ranging from rugby minis for 2-year roles, all the way up to dementia reminiscence and everything in-between."***

Key learning:

Informal peer support: The project reported that informal participant peer support groups built outside the programme have been beneficial.

Trusted brand: The project reported that using the Hull FC brand to promote activities, and delivering activities at the training ground, works well to engage participants that wouldn't necessarily engage with statutory services (NHS and local authority). The organisation has used existing partnerships with education and health organisations to promote the project.

Embedding messages within a holistic offer: The project reports that their levels of engagement were higher where gambling harms awareness was embedded holistically with other programmes.

Staff turnover has affected their ability to engage with the external evaluation.

Quick facts:

£19,760 funding received
Nearly **300** people engaged in the 'Talking Tactics' programme (activities and workshops)

Key messages:

① Embedding gambling harms awareness holistically into existing programmes engages people more effectively than if it was a standalone session.

② Established local partnerships and collaborations support recruitment and resource development.

Hull FC Community Foundation

What difference did the project make?

Service users

The project used a baseline questionnaire and the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales to monitor participant outcomes from group support sessions. They reported that the majority of participants report improved mental wellbeing as a result of their participation in the programme. They report improved knowledge of gambling harms and confidence to manage gambling behaviours.

> ***"They engage with us because there's a percentage of people that won't engage with NHS services, local authority services, but if you put a Hull FC brand on that, or it's delivered at a training ground, that's how we engage people."***

Organisation and staff

Prior to delivering the project, the organisation had limited experience of delivering gambling harms awareness programmes. The project reports that delivering a more social, education-based initiative has been a positive experience for staff.

The team have used participant feedback provided to gain a greater understanding of the wellbeing need for people in the local community and how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected them. As the project progressed, the organisation embedded a 'feedback' loop for participants to be able to share their thoughts and develop sessions.

The project helped to develop new partnerships and engaged new beneficiaries to develop pathways into the activities on offer. Work with the local health and care organisation to develop resources and provide training has reinforced the need to explore wider community based mental health support.

> ***"In terms of engaging with people, initially with the weekly session [saying] 'come to our gambling awareness session,' it didn't work. Which is why we've wrapped it around, 'Come to Match Fit' . Talking Tactics [the gambling harms project] is the second part of it."***

IMO Charity

Inspire Motivate Overcome (IMO) charity is a community-based organisation in Blackburn in Lancashire. The organisation delivers community development, health and wellbeing and education and employability programmes. The organisation supports people of all ages from ethnic minority and refugee communities and people living with multiple, intersecting disadvantages.

What is the project?

The aim of the project was to deliver gambling harms awareness raising activities and education, providing multilingual information and advice. The funding provided for a gambling awareness officer to be recruited to lead a range of activities including:

- Monthly group sessions and access to one-to-one support via pop-up clinics in community centres, job centres, housing associations and faith groups.
- Free telephone advice line (running 2 days per week).
- Recruiting Community Ambassadors to deliver peer support.

> ***"I can have an open-ish conversation with someone who is misusing drugs or alcohol. But the minute you speak about gambling, it's like, no no I don't do anything like that."***

Key learning:

It takes time to convert awareness-raising about gambling harms into support-seeking. The project focused on education and awareness raising activities through community outreach and existing partnerships. They reported a gradual increase in people accessing their gambling harms support only towards the end of the year-long project.

Tailored awareness-raising activities can help to reach marginalized communities. This includes multicultural ambassadors and advisors providing support in Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati and English and bespoke outreach to local community and faith settings.

Quick facts:

£89,762 funding received
42 weekly pop-up advice clinics held
412 calls to telephone advice
40,000 leaflets distributed
23 community education awareness days

Key messages:

① Interactions via local community settings can help to raise awareness but this takes time. The organisation reported a lag in uptake of its gambling helpline following education and awareness raising activities.

② Bespoke localised promotional efforts over a range of channels – including social media, digital and print advertising, community ambassadors and face to face sessions aligning with the organisation's existing activities and partnerships.

IMO Charity

What difference did the project make?

Service users

The project reports that, while uptake of their gambling harms support remained low, it started to increase towards the end of the year. This suggests that it takes time for people to identify the need for, open up and accept support for gambling. The project may have increased awareness about gambling harms among people at risk of gambling harms and among partner organisations in community, faith and education settings.

> ***"With drugs and alcohol, there's a physical aspect of someone's health deteriorating as well as the financial and mental health etc, but physically, you can possibly tell ….but unfortunately with gambling, because it's a hidden addiction, you can't really tell and people tend to think that they can hide that."***

Organisation and staff

The organisation reports that it has developed and strengthened local partnerships, including with public health teams, the local NGSN provider, foodbank and other community organisations.

> ***"Through non-judgemental dialogue across diverse channels, this awareness programme continues planting seeds to disrupt harmful social gambling patterns over time. Sustained community participation and demographically tailored messaging promise wider resonance."*** **End of year project report**

Volunteers

The project recruited and trained 24 volunteer community ambassadors to support the project. It is hoped that they will continue to engage local people in discussions about gambling harms and direct people to the organisation's counselling and support services as needed.

Shama Women's Centre

Shama Women's Centre is a charity based in Leicester dedicated to empowering and supporting women. The organisation focuses on supporting women from marginalised and immigrant communities. The centre offers a range of services and activities, including educational workshops, counselling, and vocational training, all aimed at enhancing the well-being and independence of the women they serve. Specifically, the centre supports women in the areas of mental health, childcare, domestic abuse and employment.

What is the project?

The project provided holistic support for ethnic minority communities whose mental health and financial circumstances were exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis and gambling harms. This included initiatives for both prevention of gambling harms and practical support, such as domestic abuse support, welfare rights support, befriender support, counselling, group peer support, confidence building activities and more.

> ***"We are able to make them aware that we are here for the community. We are here to help people who have been suffering from harms due to other members of their families who've been gambling or having impact on their financial issues and other abuse in the families happening due to gambling."***

Key learning:

- The organisation is building on a long history of being well-embedded in the community. Building clients' trust to confide their problems related to gambling is based on long-term support. The support delivered by Shama is characterised by confidentiality, care and compassion; not telling the clients what to do but giving them a perspective on their problems.
- The organisation reports that they found it difficult to keep clients engaged unless they've been seeking support for a while, due to internal shame and external pressure not to seek help. The project reports that they have found it harder to encourage women to come forward to discuss their own experiences of gambling: the support provided to date has been to affected others.
- Accessibility can be improved by increasing materials available in languages other than English, and adapting standard gambling harms training to be more culturally sensitive.
- The organisation reported that Muslim women were harder for them to engage: they reflect that this is due to the gambling taboo in their faith. National awareness campaigns (via community radio) are reported to be helping to shift perspectives.
- The project recognised that a more subtle and informal approach to raising awareness for gambling harms was more effective; by building it into other activities; which gave clients the confidence to open up and share their experiences at Shama as it was seen as a 'safe trusted women only' space.

Quick facts:

£61,069 funding awarded
1,200 women engaged
14 awareness events run

Key messages:

① A more subtle and informal approach to raising awareness and providing support was enabled by building it into other activities, and drip-feeding information over time.

② A culturally sensitive approach, in a 'safe trusted women only' space, gave BAME women the confidence to open up and share their experiences

Shama Women's Centre

What difference did the project make?

Service users

Project staff reflected that beneficiaries showed increased levels of confidence and feelings of being supported by a community, and reported improvements in their resilience and quality of life.

Overall staff reflect that there was a greater understanding of gambling harms among communities and an awareness of how to support not only themselves but also other family members who may have been experiencing gambling harms.

Through awareness-raising activities, there were signs that the stigma around gambling harms was reduced and increased connections and relationships helped to reduce social isolation in beneficiaries.

Overall the project reports that beneficiaries were able to build their skills and ability to help themselves, developing their confidence and self-esteem.

> ***"People are feeling more confident and like there are people who they can share their issues with because they know that these people are professionals."***

Organisation and staff

Staff report that they have developed a greater understanding and awareness of what gambling harms is and what this looks like, as well as the various forms that this can take.

The organisation has seen an increased uptake in clients for their center and an increase in the number of referrals it makes to domestic violence support services, which has seen clients impacted by gambling harms. Staff have learned and developed best practice for their provision of support for gambling harms, ensuring that support is tailored to the language and cultural needs of the community.

> ***"My knowledge has been practically used through this project with my clients."***

Simon Community Scotland

Simon Community Scotland is a homelessness charity operating across Scotland. Their services include support for people in hubs, through outreach, and supported accommodation. The CRF came at the right time for the organisation: they had just started to explore gambling harms after recognising it as a gap in the work of homelessness organisations, and had secured a small amount og funding from Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector to run an event on the topic.

What is the project?

The CRF funding provided an opportunity for the organisation to develop their understanding of the prevalence and impact of gambling harms among people affected by homelessness, while also building momentum with others in the homelessness sector.

The funding enabled a dedicated project manager to develop and roll-out a comprehensive training package for staff; build their organisational understanding of gambling harms and homelessness through a prevalence survey and co-design sessions; develop partnerships and awareness of the connection between gambling harms and homelessness among gambling harm providers and others in homelessness sector (including housing associations, local government, national government, academics), and deliver a range of activities to reach service users affected by gambling harms, including drop-in clinics, conversation cafes, and a drama group.

> ***"We were surprised that, for a lot of homelessness services, there wasn't recognition of gambling harms. Simon Community Scotland were so open and honest […] that they weren't doing enough to reach people and to tackle this issue."***

Key learning

Strategic alignment and leadership

- The strategic alignment of this project to a key priority for the organisation has supported progress. The leadership and priority given to this work is recognised by interviewees as being important for raising awareness of a topic that is not well understood.

Awareness raising and support for service users

- The project has involved a range of activities to build awareness of gambling harms among service users. The organisation was able to convert this awareness raising activity into support by providing a holistic range of offers, including drop-in clinics, conversation cafes and a drama group. Staff reflected on the importance of providing this level of choice and opportunistic engagement, recognising that many people experiencing homelessness live chaotic lives and would find it hard to be able to follow a set programme.

Building staff capability

- The organisation co-designed and delivered a range of activities and resources to change the culture and awareness among staff about gambling harms and homelessness. This included in-person training and e-learning, a leadership training day, resource kits, lived experience videos.

Quick facts:

£65,381 funding received
60% staff trained (150 people)
32 people attended conversation cafes and awareness-raising sessions
Sector-facing events including Public Health Scotland's Scottish Inclusion Health and Homelessness Conference

Key messages:

① The project was enabled by gambling harms being a clear strategic priority for the organisation.
② A comprehensive organisation-wide approach, led by a dedicated project officer, to increase staff awareness and confidence has embedded gambling harms support into their everyday work.
③ Aligning with the organisation's existing activities provides a range of access points for service users via harm reduction-trained support workers, hubs, supported accommodation.

Simon Community Scotland

What difference did the project make?

Service users

Interviewees reflected that the main outcome they observed for service users is raised awareness about gambling harms, and this awareness giving people more control over when and how they access support.

> ***"If they're aware of what's potentially happening, [they have] more control in terms of they know what's going on for them and how to seek support for that. We are able to signpost much more directly into support services as we've got strong partnership links now with other support services that previously weren't as strong."***

Staff

Interviewees report that the project has increased staff awareness of the different types of gambling, the signs of harmful gambling, how to raise the conversation and then support people in a "more person-centred and trauma informed" way.

> ***"[Some staff think of it only as casinos]. I think it's really helpful to be able to define what it is and what it looks like for our client group, in order to best give them support that they need, and tailor it towards them."***

Organisation

The organisation has improved their understanding of the links between gambling harms and homelessness and the types of support offers that are needed. They have raised awareness among national and local decision makers, increasing the organisation's profile.

Interviewees reflected the view that the organisation's work in gambling harms could have happened without the GambleAware funding, but this has allowed them to go further and faster.

> ***"If we noticed somebody we thought was gambling, I think now we would bring it up with them, and ask what was going on, and ask them how they felt about that, and ask them if they want some support. I hope it's just become another thing that is added on to the list of things that we're looking out for."***

Yellow Scarf

Yellow Scarf is a charity that provides mental health support to Eastern Europeans living in Worcester and Evesham. The charity was set up to address a gap in mental health support for people who don't speak English by providing one-to-one and group support for people recovering from addiction, delivered in eastern European languages. The charity has a long waiting list and generates referrals from the local authority as well as word of mouth.

What is the project?

The CRF project enabled the charity to expand their existing multi-lingual counselling and support programme to include specific provision for people experiencing gambling harms. The activities delivered through the project provide a holistic offer to cover prevention and recovery:

- Peer support and group therapy
- Individual 1:1 counselling.
- Life skills workshops including budgeting, benefits advice, employment, training advice).

> ***"There are no other places like us, where people can just come in and receive professional treatment in the language they speak and feel in, for free or with a heavily discounted rate. So for us, it's never a struggle of marketing, it's never a struggle of getting new customers. It's always a capacity struggle."***

Key learning:

Clear demand and meeting an unmet need. The project enabled the organisation to expand existing, over-stretched services (rather than designing something new).

Tailoring mental health support for gambling harms: Interviewees reflected the importance of tailoring their existing approach for supporting people with drug and alcohol addictions to gambling harms. Observations about the differences include the initial triggers for starting to gamble and that people are often 'deeper into gambling' when seeking support as it can be hidden. The organisation's learning about these needs suggests a range of prevention and early intervention offers (such as group support) can enable people to get support before their needs escalate.

A gap in statutory provision: The charity was founded on the basis of addressing a gap in statutory services for culturally appropriate and linguistically inclusive mental health support for Eastern European populations. The charity's presence within the community through fundraising events and group support, means they have established trust with people. Their reach into the local community is enhanced by working alongside churches and community centres, and a referral partnership with an immigration advisor and social worker working at the local council.

Quick facts:

£30,000 funding received

47 people received group therapy
72 people received group therapy (for family)
317 people attended 14 life skills workshops

Key messages:

① The project aligns with a growing unmet need for mental health support from Eastern European communities. The organisation had evidence of growing gambling-related enquiries.

② Nuanced adaptations needed to existing mental health provision to better support people experiencing gambling harms. A range of activities provides an holistic offer to cover prevention and recovery.

③ A trusted and well-known local organisation within the target audience makes them well-placed to reach people experiencing gambling harms. The organisation has an established referral network, based on existing partnerships with the local authority, local churches, Polish shops and community centres providing wider reach within the Eastern European community, raising awareness and increasing access.

Yellow Scarf

What difference did the project make?

Service users

The charity reports that service users report being gambling-free from 1-3 months following the intervention and families report better understanding of gambling harms and a rebuilding of family unit bonds. The charity monitors this via exit interviews and follow-up checkups.

People accessing counselling have accepted the need for support. The range of support the project delivered, with peer support group spaces and life skills workshops, enabled the organisation to provide holistic support to engage a wider range of people. As a result, the organisation reports that this has strengthened the community's resilience within the context of the cost-of-living crisis.

Organisation and staff

A key outcome from this project is the organisational understanding about gambling harms, and the specific types of support needed. The organisation has developed new, gambling-specific procedures and policies, and improved the range of services that embed gambling-harms support.

> ***"As soon as I do the referral, and if a person is willing to accept help or to participate, we are at that point that we're starting to see improvements. Obviously in many cases it takes, like, a long time to even convince them that it might help."***

> ***"The project's success was rooted in its multifaceted strategy that fostered community solidarity, provided personalised support, and equipped individuals with vital life skills."***

> ***"If you were to ask us to write the curriculum for gambling treatment now, it would be miles apart from the curriculum we wrote 6 months ago."***

Conclusion and next steps

05

Conclusion

In line with the programme aims, the Community Resilience Fund has enabled a diverse range of community-based organisations to develop and test **new gambling harms-specific awareness, information and support services**. Limitations with the project reporting and evaluation activities completed so far presents challenges for assessing the value and quality of these activities and outcomes achieved, and whether these met GambleAware's expectations. However, the learning presented in this report indicate that the learning gained by staff, and relationships established by the organisations, provide an opportunity for these organisation to continue to focus on gambling harms within their services beyond the CRF programme.

Most of the funded organisations report high reach of broad awareness raising activities delivered via social media, leaflet distribution and community events. A key learning from the 12 months of delivery is that, despite already being well established within their local communities and offering a range of existing health, wellbeing and social support services, **the projects have found it challenging to engage people specifically** about gambling and gambling-related harms.

To overcome some of this challenge, learning shared in the project reports and evaluation interviews suggests:

- Interventions and awareness-raising activities are more effective when **integrated holistically** with other offers. While it helps to have a dedicated project or member of staff to develop **internal gambling harms-specific awareness and capability**, to **establish local networks** and knowledge among other local organisations, service-user engagements should not single out the gambling harms focus through a specific gambling harms awareness/support role. Funded organisations have found that the gambling harms messages resonate best when working through community and lived experience ambassadors, and integrating this into existing community outreach, education and support activities.
- Organisations that have established relationships with other gambling support providers have benefited from **reciprocal expertise and sharing resources**. The organisations that have existing, or have developed new, relationships with other statutory and non-statutory providers of health, wellbeing and social support services, appear to be well placed to **sustain their focus** on gambling harms and embed their services as part of a wider public health approach. This is, however, highly dependent on the specific focus and requirements from other funders, and availability of funding for community-based organisations.

Implications

The implications of the learning for **community-based organisations** seeking to develop primary and secondary prevention interventions for gambling harms include:

- Aligning to organisations/projects that provide **a range of outreach and engagement 'touch-points**' with local communities, from incidental to more structured and formal support.
- Integrating gambling harms awareness and support as part of an **holistic offer**. Expand existing services to encompass gambling harms, rather than developing new gambling harms-specific initiatives. Provide a range of training and resources to staff and volunteers to develop understanding and awareness.
- Take time to **better understand prevalence and impact** of gambling harms on the local community and how gambling harms interventions will intersect with existing offers and organisational strategy. Involve **other local organisations** and people with lived experience to do this, and consider what the **onward referral/exit point** is for people supported.

The key implications for **GambleAware** relate to their role in funding community-based prevention and early intervention programmes in the future.

- The learning from this programme highlights how an holistic approach is essential for engaging local communities. As such, funding these activities would benefit from being a **shared endeavour with other funders** and providers of health, wellbeing and social support programmes. Continued attention should be given to addressing **the pervasive issue of stigma** to talk about gambling and lack of awareness of harms to support the success of these endeavours.
- GambleAware should consider processes for making funding decisions that enable organisations to **work in local system partnerships** to align to and leverage other funding to establish holistic prevention and early intervention support. This may involve moving away from 'top down' national funding decisions to more regional and local system-based commissioning, providing funding for local system collaborations and project scoping, to test assumptions and build on existing assets and expertise.
- Provide funding and guidance for organisations to improve the **infrastructure for data collection**, focusing on meaningful activity tracking and holistic outcome measurement that suits different funder/commissioner needs but provides insight into gambling harms-specific outcomes.

Future evaluation activities

Ipsos has been commissioned by GambleAware to deliver a qualitative process and outcomes evaluation for the years two and three of the programme. The two key objectives are to:

- Enable GambleAware to identify and learn from projects and local partnerships with potential for effectiveness, with a focus on what works for whom and in what circumstances.
- Provide learning to the programme team about how to work with new and emerging organisations and contribute to the sharing of learning between grantees.

Four case studies will be developed to elicit in-depth learning about the outcomes from a sample of projects targeting different community groups. It will be complemented by **collaborative sessions** with all current and past funded projects, to capture lighter-touch insights and learning from across the programme and test the whether case study findings apply more widely.

Based on the learning from the year one evaluation delivery, the future evaluation activities will need to:

- Include **face-to-face fieldwork** to make it easier for projects to engage with the evaluation team and provide an opportunity to observe the work in practice.
- Involve a **greater range of local stakeholders**, volunteers and service users involved with the projects to understand more about quality of experience, local context, referral processes and wider factors influencing outcomes.
- Explore different methods to facilitate service **user engagement**, such as Most Significant Change and peer researchers.
- Consider how best to **facilitate project involvement** in collaborative learning sessions alongside their delivery pressures.

Appendix A

Overview of funded projects

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Location and size of organisation

Organisation	Location	Amount awarded	Continued funding	Size of charity (based on NCVO classification)			
				Small	Medium	Large	Major
Age UK Westminster	London	£46,504			X		
Al Hurraya	Nottingham, East Midlands	£61,984	£200,000 to Feb 2026		X		
Alabare Christian Care & Support	South West England and Wales	£30,904					X
Azad Kashmir Welfare Association	Birmingham, West Midlands	£28,748		X			
Big Issue Foundation	UK-wide	£96,673	£200,000 to Feb 2026			X	
Blackburn Foodbank	Blackburn, Lancashire	£36,665	£95,796 to Feb 2025				
Coram's Field	London	£84,972	£85,000 to Feb 2025			X	
DAAS Derbyshire Alcohol Advice Service	Derbyshire	£78,054			X		
Epic Restart Foundation	UK-wide	100,000	£200,000 to Feb 2026		X		
Hull FC Community Foundation	Hull, East Riding and North Yorkshire	£19,760	£47,635 to Feb 2025		X		
IMO Charity	Blackburn, Lancashire	£89,762			X		
Just B (St Michael's Hospice)	North Yorkshire	£92,579				X	
Mind Suffolk	Suffolk	£99,578				X	
Prison Radio Association	UK-wide	£51,117	£126,777 to Feb 2026			X	
Reframe Coaching	Norfolk	£30,363	£195,794 to Feb 2026	X			
Shama Women's Centre	Leicester, East Midlands	£61,069	£193,760 to Feb 2026		X		
Simon Community Scotland	Scotland-wide	£65,381	£198,912 to Feb 2026			X	
Solihull Moors Foundation	Solihull, West Midlands	£30,690			X		
The Cedarwood Trust	North Tyneside	£84,230			X		
Wigan Warriors Community Foundation	Wigan, Greater Manchester	£17,770			X		
Yellow Scarf	Worcester and Evesham, West Midlands	£30,000	£120,000 to Feb 2026	X			
Total		*£1,236,805*	*£1,663,674*	*3*	*10*	*6*	*1*

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Project aims and actual reach [1]

Organisation	The project aims to:	Actual reach (reported in end of year report)
Age UK Westminster	Expand its existing welfare services by setting up additional drop-in surgeries for older people and areas with high deprivation, enhancing communication and promotional materials, strengthening local network connections, and promoting messages to reduce the stigma of seeking help. The organisation collaborates with a variety of organisations including the NHS Falls Prevention Service and Westminster Dementia Alliance.	2000+ social media/e-newsletters / 500 leaflet distribution 835 1:1 awareness raising with client base 17 more intensive support (2 of which were 'affected others'; 3 identified as particularly high risk of harm) 100+ staff/volunteers from over 40 local organisations awareness raising
Al Hurraya	Provide a dedicated gambling harms service for Black Asian, Minority Ethnic and refugee communities which includes one-to-one counselling, mutual aid meetings, and workshops for professionals. The project also plans to recruit community ambassadors and support local organisations to enhance their understanding of gambling harms.	47 individuals 1:1 counselling 30 individuals brief intervention 36 individuals attending mutual aid group 349 professionals trained (across 15 sessions) 400 leaflets distributed.
Alabare Christian Care & Support	Enhance staff skills to identify and support gambling-related harm, extend risk assessments to include gambling harms, provide staff training, and publish information material for veterans. It plans to run weekly sessions focused on gambling support, train staff to refer to external providers when necessary, and share learning with local partners.	24 staff trained 3 individuals identified as at risk of GH received brief intervention 130 individuals completed risk assessment which included GH
Azad Kashmir Welfare Association	Expand an existing project aimed at addressing inequalities, especially those worsened by the cost-of-living crisis and gambling harms, by providing a full-time advisor role. This advisor will offer advice and support, signpost beneficiaries to additional resources, collaborate with local organisations and share insights with the wider sector.	220 individuals at risk of harms reached with informal advice and information 57 individuals provided intensive support 10 organisations reached to increase awareness
Big Issue Foundation	Train Big Issue Vendor Outreach Workers to identify and support people experiencing gambling harm. It will provide prevention or support for people experiencing current harms through confidential, tailored advice to each of the 1,000 people they work with annually, and briefing vendor-facing staff on gambling risks, self-referral options, and the availability of additional support through Vendor Outreach Workers.	800-900 potential vendors reached via information material distributed 508 vendors had financial support, guidance and information. 475-485 vendors received support with mental health and wellbeing. 120 vendors offered a gambling screen 76 completed gambling screen and had further conversation about gambling behaviour 10 vendors referred into further support. 15 attended staff/volunteer/partner training

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Project aims and actual reach [2]

Organisation	The project aims to:	Actual reach (reported in end of year report)
Blackburn Foodbank	Gather and analyse data on gambling among clients of Blackburn Foodbank and the Oaks Money Advice Service, comparing this with national indicators of social deprivation. The collected data will be used to enhance understanding of gambling harms, raise awareness, inform future assessments and strategies, disseminate recommendations to stakeholders.	2,800 people completed PGSI and Liebet questionnaires 300 Safer Gambling information leaflets
Coram's Field	Expand its current youth programme to provide targeted support to young people most affected by the cost-of-living crisis as a result of gambling harms, through outreach and promotion, engagement in the youth centre community, and one-on-one mentoring or coaching. Outreach includes training youth workers, conducting street activities, and promoting the youth centre on social media. Engagement involves various social, educational, and recreational activities at the centre. One-on-one work involves casework, practical and emotional support, and referrals to other services if required.	15 young people reached in each of 3 locations via outreach 134 sessions providing general information support, with average of 30 young people per session 16 young people receiving 1:1 session 4 financial workshops, attended by 39 young people 18 attended gambling themed talk session 672 have been exposed to the information about gambling harms, informal conversations and group work in youth centre. 12 young people have come to youth centre from outreach 12,000 people reached through community newsletter and 3,000 on social media.
DAAS Derbyshire Alcohol Advice Service	Address gambling harms with a "three-pronged" approach: raising awareness and destigmatising gambling through training and social media; providing fast-track referral to a specialist counselling service for those affected by gambling and their families; and establishing links with recovery networks. The organisation plans to hire a qualified trainer to offer courses on addiction, promote motivational enhancement therapy and cognitive-behavioural interventions, and use specific strategies to engage family members.	no report
Epic Restart Foundation	Enhance financial management skills through workshops and financial resilience events. It also intends to offer financial capability training for mentors and conduct both mixed-sex and women-specific online education and coaching events, exploring the connection between financial and mental health and sharing effective money management strategies.	152 individuals 1:1 mentoring/coaching support 95 people received money management resource pack 209 people engaged with online live events (3,817 reached with recording) 9,689 people reached with online video 54 people attending in person workshops 3,800 viewed a live Woman Empowered talk 192 actively engaged in a financial harms ‘drop in’ session on Tik ToK and 56 messaged privately requesting further advice/support. 40 people referred to PayPal vulnerable customers team for specialist support 13 people referred to specific banking blocks

Project aims and actual reach [3]

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Organisation	The project aims to:	Actual reach (reported in end of year report)
Hull FC Community Foundation	Prevent and reduce gambling harm among vulnerable groups in Hull, offering rugby-inspired prevention and early intervention activities to equip them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and confidence. Additionally, the project plans to create a sports-based educational program for young people, deliver workshops to veterans, and oversee a marketing plan developed in partnership with Hull Health and Care Partnership and Hull and East Yorkshire Mind to raise awareness of gambling harm and available support.	299 participating in 'Talking Tactics' programme in total. 187 participants attended a minimum of six sessions 57 social media posts shared. 1 graphic displayed at Hull FC home fixtures during season.
IMO Charity	Support South Asian communities affected by gambling harms, offering access to Gambling Harm Advisors through pop-up services, telephone advice sessions, and community awareness sessions in various locations including schools, community centres, and faith centres.	880 approx. engaged via 42 weekly pop up advice clinics 42 calls to telephone advice 40,000 leaflet drop to doors 300,000 social impressions via digital screens. Over 3,450 people reached via 23 community education awareness days 40 mosques engaged 24 Community ambassadors
Just B (St Michael's Hospice)	Expand an existing bereavement, mental health, and emotional wellbeing service to address the emotional and psychological impact of gambling on families through counselling and talking therapies. The approach includes promoting the service to helpline teams and external referrers, offering telephone-based support through an established helpline, and creating tailored counselling support plans based on the assessed needs of those referred.	90,00 Facebook reach 4,286 reach via local newspapers 1,00 reached via social media posts 2 events with service literature
Mind Suffolk	Support and educate people directly and indirectly affected by gambling, using toolkits, workshops, counselling, and mindfulness sessions. The project includes various activities such as a half-day mental health toolkit course, a gambling workshop run by GamFam, a workshop on sleep, counselling sessions, and mindful breathing training sessions.	102 clients engaged with 998 counselling sessions 110 attended on line courses.
Prison Radio Association	Produce two series of audio content exploring issues relating to gambling harms, which will be available for download via the prison service's Digital Hub and converted into a podcast for public listening. The episodes will discuss various issues linked to gambling, such as debt management, relationship breakdown, mental health issues, and self-harm, and will include lived experiences and signposting to support services from production to broadcast.	20 x 51 minute radio episodes broadcast into prison cells of 80,000 people 13,000 views and listens Worked with 41 guests/ contributors
Reframe Coaching	Deliver Gambling Awareness Sessions and Support Coaching Sessions to existing community groups, including pre-support coaching for individuals to provide guidance on self-exclusion, blocking software, and direct referral to the National Gambling Treatment Service. Working in collaboration with Active Norfolk to organise sessions with existing community groups and support services.	36 Gambling Awareness sessions 50 1:1 Recovery Coaching sessions

Project aims and actual reach [4]

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Organisation	The project aims to:	Actual reach (reported in end of year report)
Shama Women's Centre	Support BAME women and their families in Leicester, addressing mental health and gambling harms through prevention activities and practical support. Prevention activities include culturally sensitive marketing and community engagement campaigns, awareness initiatives with local universities, recruitment of multilingual community ambassadors, and collaboration with various agencies. Practical support involves offering welfare rights and money management workshops, one-on-one mental health counselling, peer support, and group family counselling sessions.	2000+ women and their families through community and outreach engagement 1200 via outreach (11 outreach events) 502 women and their families at the Centre 14 awareness events 2 training sessions - total of 10 attendees 41 initial assessments to clients suffering from gambling harms. Referrals to befriender support: 5, counselling: 7, group peer support: 17, welfare advice: 22, confidence building: 5, Domestic abuse: 15 Social media campaign - 4023 Impressions, Reach of 902/909 and Engagement of 194 people.
Simon Community Scotland	Develop new learning, responses and partnerships to improve outcomes for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness who also experience gambling harms. This includes developing a training programme to upskill staff, providing digital resources for recognising gambling harm, creating opportunities for collaboration with existing networks in the gambling harms space, delivering quarterly awareness-raising events, and training staff.	Over 60% staff trained (150 staff members completed) 117 viewed Staff Referral Pathway Guide 274 viewed Know The Basics Guide 141 Housing Associations sent staff training e-learning and toolkit resources 32 people attended Conversation Cafes and awareness-raising sessions 8 people attended drama group 6 Drop in Clinics facilitated by RCA Trust 500 leaflets 47 service users completed survey 10 people filmed lived experience stories 91 listens to podcast 15 people attended Public Health Scotland's Scottish Inclusion Health and Homelessness Conference session 34 people attended Quiet Storm event 37 people attended event in partnership with Fast Forward (FF) 86 people attended (in person/on line) SCS presentation at FF annual conference.

Project aims and actual reach [5]

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Organisation	The project aims to:	Actual reach (reported in end of year report)
Solihull Moors Foundation	Raise awareness of gambling harms across community football sessions, reaching people through workshops delivered by a Project Lead and a qualified Mentor/Counsellor providing one-on-one support. These workshops will cover topics such as spotting harmful gambling activities, understanding the risks of gambling, exploring alternatives for financial support, and navigating the cost-of-living crisis through referral and support to other projects.	1,500 people engaged in outreach and awareness-raising events 37 staff and volunteers trained 39 young people reached via money awareness courses 15 people supported with weekly wellbeing programme, 24 people receiving one-off support (gambling-specific for 5 people)
The Cedarwood Trust	Recruit a gambling harms project lead to run five 10-week behavioural change programmes focusing on gambling and mental health wellbeing, using a blended approach of group activities and one-on-one support to complete personal development workbooks. The programme includes a variety of group sessions, such as goal setting, team building, music and change, role play, and a graduation ceremony, designed to create new learning experiences and promote positive recovery.	300 individuals reached with awareness raising 10 Information stalls
Wigan Warriors Community Foundation	Extend an existing men's mental wellbeing support programme to include gambling support and advice, leveraging the influence of professional sport role models. It plans to conduct weekly sessions for residents on recognising gambling harms and will initiate match-day awareness campaigns.	41 attending awareness groups 125 people attending information sessions Up to 1000 people engaged via Fan Village
Yellow Scarf	Expand its existing addiction support by organising one-to-one and group therapy for people experiencing gambling harm, and provide additional support sessions on topics such as employment and personal finance.	47 people supported via group therapy 72 people supported via group therapy for family members 14 workshops attended by 317 people

Summary of actual reach to people at risk of or experiencing GH

This table summarises the actual reach reported by projects in the end of year reports, as summarised on pages 63-67. This overview is to provide an **approximate total** of the number of individuals at risk of or experiencing GH reached through the funded projects with lighter-touch awareness raising or brief interventions and screening, or more intensive interventions. Where specified by the projects, it includes the number of people that received interventions who are **specifically experiencing GH** (as opposed to people in at risk groups or for more generic interventions).

Please note: It only includes data where the project reported it. The projects were not provided standard definitions or standard format for reporting activity totals, so it is based on the evaluation team's interpretation of the data provided end of year project reports. To be transparent in how the totals are derived, if the project has reported reach of different activities on pages 63-67 these are shown (rather than a total).

Organisation	Light touch awareness raising excludes social media	Light touch intervention (e.g. brief intervention, screening tool)	More intensive intervention e.g. group or one-to-one support	Of those receiving interventions, how many individuals are specifically experiencing GH?
Age UK Westminster		835	17	5
Al Hurraya		30	47+36	47+36
Alabare Christian Care & Support		130		3
Azad Kashmir Welfare Association		220	57	
Big Issue Foundation	900	76		10
Blackburn Foodbank		2800		
Coram's Field	672	39	16	
DAAS Derbyshire Alcohol Advice Service				
Epic Restart Foundation	209+3800+192	95+56	152+40+13	152+40+13
Hull FC Rugby Community Foundation		299		
IMO Charity	880+3450	42		
Just B (St Michael's Hospice)				
Mind Suffolk		110	102	
Prison Radio Association	80000			
Reframe Coaching			50	50
Shama Women's Centre	2000+1200+502	41		41
Simon Community Scotland	32	47	8+10	
Solihull Moors Foundation	1500	39	15	5
The Cedarwood Trust	300			
Wigan Warriors Community Foundation	1000+125		41	
Yellow Scarf		317	47+72	47+72
Total	*96,762*	*5,176*	*723*	*471*

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Type of activity

Organisation	Type of activity									
	Primary prevention	Secondary prevention	Counselling	Awareness raising	Information and advice	Group support	1:1 support	Training	Partnership working	Other
Age UK Westminster	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Al Hurraya	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Alabare Christian Care & Support	X	X		X	X			X		
Azad Kashmir Welfare Association	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Big Issue Foundation	X	X		X	X			X		
Blackburn Foodbank		X		X				X	X	X
Coram's Field	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	
DAAS Derbyshire Alcohol Advice Service	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	
Epic Restart Foundation		X		x	X	X	X			
Hull FC Community Foundation	X	X		X	X	X			X	
IMO Charity	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Just B (St Michael's Hospice)		X	X	X						
Mind Suffolk		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Prison Radio Association	X	X		X	X					
Reframe Coaching	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Shama Women's Centre	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Simon Community Scotland	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	
Solihull Moors Foundation	X	X		X	X	X	X			
The Cedarwood Trust	X	X		X	X	X	X			
Wigan Warriors Community Foundation	X			X	X	X	X			
Yellow Scarf		X	X		X	X	X			
Total	*16*	*19*	*5*	*20*	*18*	*16*	*13*	*9*	*12*	*1*

Beneficiary groups

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Organisation	Beneficiary group							
	Military veterans	People experiencing homelessness	People experiencing mental health problems	People with experience of substance misuse	People from ethnic minority / marginalised communities	People experiencing poverty	Affected others	Children and young people
Age UK Westminster					X	X	X	
Al Hurraya				X	X	x		
Alabare Christian Care & Support	X	X						
Azad Kashmir Welfare Association					X	X		
Big Issue Foundation		X			X	X		
Blackburn Foodbank					X	X		
Coram's Field						X		X
DAAS Derbyshire Alcohol Advice Service				X			X	
Epic Restart Foundation			X					
Hull FC Community Foundation	X		X			X		X
IMO Charity					X	X		
Just B (St Michael's Hospice)						x	X	x
Mind Suffolk			X				X	
Prison Radio Association					X			
Reframe Coaching						X		
Shama Women's Centre			X		X	X	X	X
Simon Community Scotland		X				X	X	
Solihull Moors Foundation						X		X
The Cedarwood Trust						X		
Wigan Warriors Community Foundation			X			x		
Yellow Scarf				X	X	X	X	
Total	*2*	*3*	*5*	*3*	*9*	*16*	*7*	*5*

Outcomes (as reported by projects in end of year report) [1]

Organisation	People experiencing harms	Staff/volunteers	Organisation
Age UK Westminster	• Increased confidence to seek advice and support	• Increased confidence in asking and knowledge about gambling harms	• Asking about gambling now embedded in assessment process • Reducing pressure on professionals including GPs and other NHS/WCC colleagues
Al Hurraya	• Enhanced self-worth, uplifted mood, improved / more use of effective budgeting skills Prevented relapse prevention/cycle. Improved their interpersonal connections.	• Gained useful knowledge	
Alabare Christian Care & Support	• Service users identified as having issues with gambling have increased knowledge of gambling harms and how to access support.	• Improved skills and knowledge among staff to support people	
Azad Kashmir Welfare Association	• Increased awareness of gambling harms		
Big Issue Foundation	• Improved knowledge about harms and risks • Improved access to specialist gambling support • Increased understanding of individual gambling risk • Reduction of risk factors for gambling • More open discussions	• Identifying individuals at risk New knowledge and confidence	
Blackburn Foodbank	• Raise awareness and understanding of gambling related harms	• Raised awareness Identified people at risk	
Coram's Field	• More young people have been identified as vulnerable and more internal referrals being made. • Young people attending youth centre as a result of outreach work • Young people know where to access support and information. • Confidence to better control spending	• New awareness and understanding.	• Improved internal communications More referrals to expert organisations Outreach locations identified
DAAS Derbyshire Alcohol Advice Service	• no report		
Epic Restart Foundation	• Increased confidence and self-belief that a strong, positive recovery sustained. • Finance and debt had improved. • Better understanding of resilience and new coping strategies • Better understanding how to manage stress & anxiety	• Improved skills re money management advice/support	

Outcomes (as reported by projects in end of year report) [2]

Organisation	People experiencing harms	Staff/volunteers	Organisation
Hull FC Rugby Community Sports and Education Foundation	• Better understanding of the signs of gambling harm. • Improved confidence and self esteem • Better mental health • New skills developed • Reduced gambling • New friendships • Improved confidence to manage gambling behaviours.		
IMO Charity	• Shifting attitudes • Improved awareness		• Built foundations to drive progress
Just B (St Michael's Hospice)	• Increased awareness	•	• Increased regional focus on harms
Mind Suffolk	• Improvement in wellbeing score. • Gained knowledge about mental health enabling them to better manage/ support themselves	• Increased knowledge of gambling harms	• Recognised the extent of need
Prison Radio Association	• Improved knowledge of the risks and impact of gambling • Improved knowledge of services available • Feel less alone		• New collaborations with others in the sector
Reframe Coaching	• More comfortable to seek support and referrals to NGSN	• Improved understanding of gambling and gambling harms Improve awareness of support services available More equipped to support someone with their gambling questions	• Improved relationships with other local organisations; new partnerships
Shama Women's Centre	• Increased awareness • Reducing stigma • Increased confidence to open up and share their experiences		• More referrals to other support services

Outcomes (as reported by projects in end of year report) [3]

Organisation	People experiencing harms	Staff/volunteers	Organisation
Simon Community Scotland	• Raised awareness of support services and harm reduction techniques. • Reduced stigma • More comfortable to ask for support and share experiences	• Clear referral process and can signpost Raised awareness of links between gambling harm & homelessness Staff have more awareness, feel confident in what gambling harms are, how to signpost to support services and what they provide.	• Created working relationships with and between professionals and shared learning between wider public sector organisations and Scottish Government.
Solihull Moors Foundation	• Improved knowledge about gambling harms among the local community • Improved wellbeing and access to targeted support	• Staff and volunteers that are able to identify signs of mental health problems and risks of gambling harm	
The Cedarwood Trust	• Changes in gambling behaviour, knowledge and skills		
Wigan Warriors Community Foundation	• New friendships	• Increased awareness of gambling harms and its impact Aware of support available to people	• Increased awareness of Gamble Aware and Beacon Counselling Trust
Yellow Scarf	• Reduced gambling and reduction in gambling harm • Reduction in “family unit crisis” • Better understanding of gambling harms • Rebuilding of family unit bonds		• Improved organisational procedures & policies Improved range of services for beneficiaries

Appendix B programme theory of change

A theory of change for the programme was developed by the evaluation team and GambleAware programme team at the start of the programme in January 2023. The current theory of change is included in this appendix, and will be collaboratively reviewed and updated to build on the insights collated in this report. An updated theory of change will be used to inform the evaluation in year two of the programme.

This review will consider:

- What assumptions underpin the theory and do these still stand?
- What mechanisms will enable the change?
- Where do projects and GambleAware need to focus on, to strengthen the opportunities for change?

Programme Theory of Change

Context

The current cost of living (COL) crisis put additional strain on some community organisations and their service users.

Harmful gambling increases when people are facing economic hardship and/or mental and physical health problems, which may be exacerbated during the COL crisis

GambleAware (GA) identified an opportunity to do more to support those worst affected by gambling harms (GH), who are also more likely to be the worst affected by the COL crisis.

The nature of GA's funding cycles meant that surplus funding became available and needed to be spent rapidly.

Existing providers struggle to support some marginalised or minoritised groups, therefore widening the provider market by funding community organisations that GA has not worked with yet, and that offer a range of information and support services may better reach underserved communities.

There is a lack of funding for community and voluntary organisations to develop and deliver gambling harm-specific prevention and support

Inputs

GambleAware

Financial: grant funding and funding for evaluation and learning capability building

Human resources: GambleAware staff (programme team, comms)

Grantee organisations

Human resources: Capacity among grantee organisations to apply for and deliver more innovative projects.

Human resources: delivery staff and volunteers with existing skills, capabilities and relationships who can mobilise to work on short-term, innovative projects.

Organisational capacity: strategic alignment to existing services; existing events and group support activities to 'piggy-back' onto; existing partnerships and relationships with other community providers.

Activities

Decision making

Community orgs identify issue and seek funding; GA agrees allocation of funding (A, B)

Commissioning/funding

GA runs procurement process and awards funding (C)

Programme management

GA delivers learning events, works with projects and helps forge strategic partnerships and opportunities

GA promotes the programme and portfolio of projects through communications

Project-level

Develop understanding of GH and how to integrate awareness, prevention and support activities within broader mental health, welfare, addiction and other community support offers (D)

Grantees deliver projects and develop local partnerships with existing NGSN services

Monitoring

Projects collect data and complete monitoring forms

Capability building

Learning partner and GA offer capability building

Projects participate in capability building offer

Outputs

Commissioning resources (e.g. application forms)

Evidence base on partnerships and innovative approaches, service and/or ways of working

Learning to inform how GA commissions and works with community organisations

N orgs offering support for GH

N service users accessing intervention for GH

N new partnerships and networks developed

N orgs able to be funded in future to deliver GH support

N orgs with improved evaluation capability

Project-level resources (e.g. training)

Outcomes

Shorter-term (F)

Increased diversification in the type of organisations funded by GambleAware

Increase in no. of community orgs that work with disadvantaged and marginalised communities working on addressing GH

Increased knowledge and skills of staff and volunteers in GH and support available

Increased interest and capability of funded orgs to offer support for GH

Increased awareness of GH (E)

Improved knowledge of organisations to access further support and information

Outcomes key:

For GambleAware

For funded organisations

For service users

Outcomes (cont.) and impacts

Medium-term

Increase in no of community orgs that work with disadvantaged & marginalised communities able to be funded to deliver GH services

Established relationships between funded organisations and local systems

Increased eval capability within funded orgs

Increased uptake of gambling harms support for service users of funded organisations

Impacts

Change in gambling behaviour: GH either decline or remain the same during the COL crisis for communities targeted by funded projects

Sustained and impactful relationships between funded orgs and local systems

Sustained reach within local communities as a provider of GH support

GA uses evidence to support future commissioning strategy

Key assumptions

A. Short-term funding and capability building can support community orgs to support individuals through the cost-of-living crisis

B. Community orgs are well-placed to reach people in marginalised or minority communities that current NGSN providers struggle to support

C. Funding 20(+) different projects maximises the potential for learning and does not spread funding too thinly

D. Community orgs are well-placed to design GH interventions that are suitable for their service users and apply for appropriate resources to deliver them

E. Awareness and knowledge leads to support seeking and behaviour change

F. Org deliver planned projects and overcome any challenges related to shorter term funding (e.g., staff turnover) so they do not impact service users' experiences

Appendix C

MEL support summary

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Facilitated learning sessions

Learning events were held throughout the year to maximise the opportunity for grantees to learn from others in this area. These included:

1. Start-up event

An in-person 'Start-up' event was held at the start of the programme on 9th February 2023 in Birmingham.

NPC facilitated sessions on:

- Introduction to the learning and evaluation support offer
- Theory of Change
- Setting learning goals and considering challenges

The aim of the session was to build rapport with funded organisations and facilitate relationship building among the grantees.

Feedback from grantees:

Post-event survey feedback indicated that the funded organisations had valued the time to connect and meet the other grantees and hear about the work they were planning.

Reflections*:

- Grantees valued the opportunity to **learn** more about the CRF programme and the work of the other funded projects
- The event was overall seen as a good **networking opportunity** for many of the grantees who were able to connect with each other in-person
- Grantees indicated that **more time** for discussion with the other funded organisations would have been beneficial
- It was felt there was too much of a focus on **monitoring,** and that more discussion of project delivery would be useful

**Reflections were gathered from grantees via a post-session survey*

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Facilitated learning sessions

Learning events were held throughout the year to maximise the opportunity for grantees to learn from others in this area. These included:

2. 'What works' event

A 'What works' online learning event was held approximately halfway through the programme, on 18th July 2023 (attended by 14 projects).

The aim of this session was to provide a space for grantees to share their reflections and learnings from delivering the work so far on their funded projects and to facilitate shared learning among the grantee organisations in terms of what was working on their funded projects, how they were approaching their activities and any challenges they had encountered.

Building on the feedback from the Start-up event, this session was designed with multiple opportunities for grantees to connect with each other in break-out groups to ensure there was time to build connections and share their learning in an informal, semi-structured context.

Reflections*:

- Break-out groups worked well to facilitate informal conversations
- However, grantees took a while to 'warm up' and discuss more challenging conversations of what was working on their projects
- There were potential benefits highlighted for grantees to have these discussions without a member of the Gamble Aware staff team present in conversations to foster a more equitable environment
- Pre-work would be useful for grantees to consider what key learning(s) they've identified that would be useful to share with the group

**Reflections were generated by facilitators in the session. There were no responses to the post-session survey*

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Facilitated learning sessions

Learning events were held throughout the year to maximise the opportunity for grantees to learn from others in this area. These included:

3. 'Looking back' event

A 'looking back' online learning event was held online via Teams at the end of the programme on 23rd January 2024 (attended by 11 projects). This session aimed to provide a space for the funded organisations to come back together again and reflect on their projects and their learning from this work.

Building on our observations and reflections from the 'What works' event, pre-work was offered to grantees. This consisted of a timeline for grantees to use to plot their activities over the past year. In the session, organisations were encouraged to:

- Consider what their achievements, challenges and learnings had been
- Consider what outcomes they have observed from their work, in terms of changes to their target groups, staff and organisation
- Feedback on the programme as a whole, in terms of their experience of being part of the CRF programme.

Reflections*:

- A good level of discussion was had among grantees in terms of what their challenges had been with engaging in this work and what they had learnt
- Grantees indicated (via final report forms) that a final in-person meet up at the end would have been beneficial to show collective results

**Reflections were generated by facilitators in the session & from grantees via their final report forms*

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Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Bespoke capability building

Bespoke, **one-to-one capability-building support** was offered to all grantee organisations.

In this appendix we highlight **four examples** of our work with the following organisations:

shama women's centre

Westminster age UK

Prison Radio Association

REFRAME COACHING

NPC Ipsos

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Bespoke capability building

Bespoke, **one-to-one capability-building** support was offered to all grantee organisations; the following provides an example of this work:

shama women's centre

NPC worked with Shama Women's centre to build their capability in writing case studies and measuring their impact.

An in-person workshop was held on 14th November 2023 with 13 staff members and volunteers from the centre to upskill on how to write an effective case study.

The interactive session involved presenting best practice and tips for writing a case study and time for reviewing previous examples to give staff an opportunity to implement this learning.

Further support was given to Shama following the session on how to measure their impact as an organisation.

Reflections*:

- Visiting the centre in-person allowed for a more personal, informal and semi-structured approach to the session
- This fostered a high level of engagement from staff and ensured plenty of time for questions and for additional support after the session

Grantee feedback

"Thank you so much for your session yesterday, we've had really positive feedback from staff in terms of how useful they found it"

"The support was very helpful, targeted to our organisational needs"

**Reflections of NPC facilitators who worked on this project*

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Bespoke capability building

Bespoke, **one-to-one capability-building** support was offered to all grantee organisations; the following provides an example of this work:

NPC worked with Age UK Westminster to support them in developing a theory of change.

An online theory of change workshop was held with 8 staff team members on 23rd August 2023. The session involved use of an interactive board to facilitate discussion and define the organisation's mission, target groups and desired outcomes and change mechanisms for the different groups they support.

NPC shared a write-up of the session and further resources with Age UK Westminster to guide their next steps in this process.

Reflections*:

- Conducting the session online, although more accessible for the grantee staff team, limited the interactivity and engagement of staff members in the theory of change process

Grantee feedback*

"The MEL support was very welcome. We enjoyed working with the team and they were very responsive to our needs as an organisation… Their workshops and support was straightforward and accessible"

"Thank you for your time running the session. The team found it very useful and interesting"

**Reflections of NPC facilitators who worked on this project*

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Bespoke capability building

Bespoke, **one-to-one capability-building** support was offered to all grantee organisations; the following provides an example of this work:

Reflections*:
Although the dashboard was technically more complex than we had initially thought, it proved to be a useful and practical tool that meant PRA could own and adapt this over time

Grantee feedback

"The dashboard will be very useful for us. It's helped us to see all the performance of our prisoner-producers gathered into one place and to be able to analyse the data quite easily. Thank you again for your help and expertise. It's been great working with you on this and a good learning experience"

*Reflections of NPC staff who worked on this project

Prison Radio Association

NPC worked with Prison Radio Association to support them in their data analysis process. This involved creating a data dashboard for their *'prisoner producer'* surveys (these are the prisoners who help produce the radio shows - learning valuable skills along the way). Prior to NPC's support:

- Surveys were in hard copy form, and it took time for staff to input the data electronically;
- It wasn't easy to track individual prisoner producers' progress over time
- It wasn't easy to generate up-to-date stats about progress/impact across the whole group of prisoner producers.

NPC re-created the surveys in Google Forms, and created a bespoke dashboard in Google Sheets to automatically analyse the data and present findings, both at the individual and group level. NPC upskilled PRA staff on using the dashboard so that they can update and edit this themselves going forwards.

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Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Bespoke capability building

Bespoke, **one-to-one capability-building** support was offered to all grantee organisations; the following provides an example of this work:

Reflections*:
There is a desire to evidence the 'USP' of their awareness-raising activities and coaching intervention, but with a small staff team and limited funding for core costs, it is difficult to develop their IT and data infrastructure and dedicate time for in-depth monitoring and evaluation.

The charity recognise that MEL activities need to be proportionate and not create a barrier to engagement. They also need to suit the requirements of different projects, funders and local partners.
The organisation is using light-touch qualitative methods of gathering feedback from awareness raising interventions, and using holistic wellbeing tools for measuring changes from the coaching interventions. They will need to continue to develop their measurement approaches based on their learning, and evolving needs of the organisation as it grows.

**Reflections of Ipsos staff involved in this project*

REFRAME COACHING

Ipsos worked with Reframe to explore qualitative and creative tools for monitoring and evaluation.

This involved facilitating a session with the Reframe project lead to explore their theory of change before considering the implications on their evaluation and measurement plan, and the different methods for generating the evidence needed.

NPC provided additional guidance on how charities can use qualitative research.

Grantee feedback

"The additional support around external evaluation was very welcomed and extremely beneficial. However, for a small organisation working on a project-to-project basis, with little infrastructure it was difficult to commit the time to it".

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Group capability building sessions overview

To accommodate for grantees' limited capacity to participate in bespoke, one-to-one capability building, group learning sessions* were held to upskill grantees. Sessions included:

Involving users in programme and evaluation design (22nd August 2023)
This session explored how grantees can meaningfully involve service users in programme design, delivery and evaluation and included tips for best practice, followed by open discussion for questions and shared learning.

Communicating findings with impact (29th August 2023)
This session covered the principles of good impact reporting - what data to include when reporting and how to turn data and evidence into learning as well as the benefits of being open and honest in reporting by sharing learning when things haven't gone to plan.

Building a learning culture (29th September 2023)
The session covered the ways that grantees can turn data into learning as well as tips for developing an impact first culture.

Impact measurement and 5 types of data (23rd November 2023)
This session explored the ways in which grantees can measure the outcomes and impact of their work. The session also covered the 5 types of data to bear in mind when designing and collecting evidence: user data, engagement data, feedback, outcome and impact data.

Theory of change (7th December 2023)
A 'drop-in' session was held for grantees to learn more about theory of change and to receive advice / feedback on developing their own theories of change for their projects / organisation.

**The full list of attendees for each session can be found in the appendix.*

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Group capability building sessions feedback

Pre- and post-programme data revealed that almost all the grantee organisations showed an uptick in their MEL capabilities overall

Grantees reported improvements in their ability to commission research and evaluation, analyse data and information they collect and communicate their findings effectively (with 11 of the 14 grantees who completed both surveys reporting some improvement).

The biggest increases in grantee capabilities were in commissioning research and evaluation and communicating findings effectively

This indicates that more could have been done to equip grantee organisations with the necessary skills to perform analysis of the data and information they collect.

89%*

gained a better understanding of theory of change

88%*

found the evaluation support useful

**Data is based on the 16 grantees who responded to the end of year survey*

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Other

We also engaged with grantees in the following ways:

- **Social Return on Investment sessions**

SROI sessions were held with those grantees who were interested in gaining knowledge of social return on investment strategies. These sessions involved presenting on the different types of economic analysis available for this approach and the relevant considerations involved, as well as critically evaluating when SROI analysis is a useful tool

- **Additional resources**

Additional resources were sent to grantees, and follow-up calls were scheduled to discuss these with those grantees who requested support on a range of topics, including:

  - Implementing and evaluating co-design
  - User involvement
  - Accessible Evaluation
  - How charities can use qualitative research
  - Trauma-informed design principles
  - Person-centred evaluation
  - Building a measurement framework

**Data is based on the 16 grantees who responded to the end of year survey*

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Blogs

During the evaluation and learning partnership, two blogs were published to facilitate the sharing of learning.

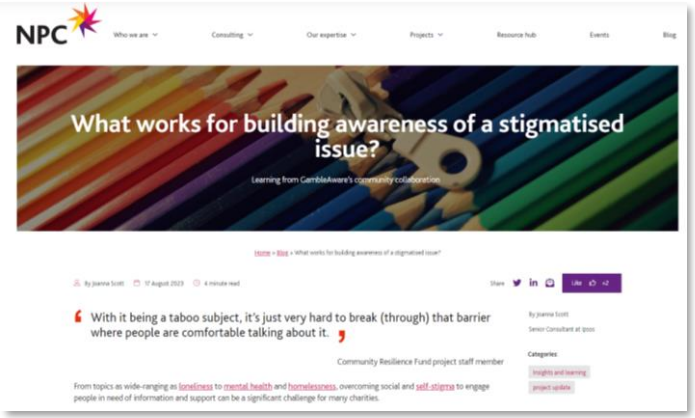
The first blog titled *'Learning from Gamble Aware's community collaboration'* introduced the CRF programme and focused on proportionate evaluation and what charities can do to minimise the evaluation burden whilst maximising their own learning. This blog received over 300 views.

The second blog *'What works for building awareness of a stigmatised issue?'* focused on what works for addressing stigma and increasing public awareness and understanding of gambling harms and received almost 150 views.

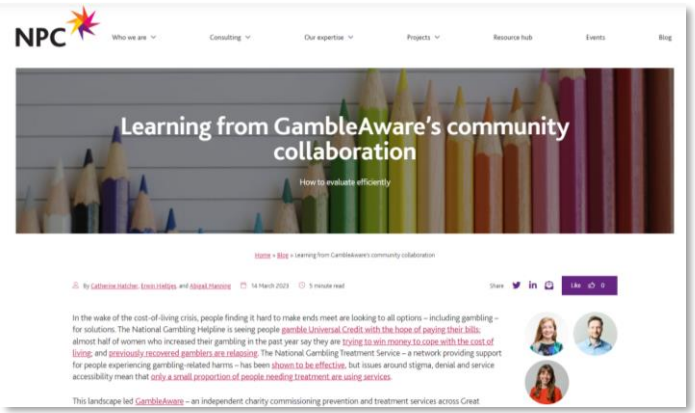
A further blog on **measurement tools** was created and next steps for this are being considered by Gamble Aware. This blog discussed how to measure outcomes / distance travelled as this was identified as a significant gap by grantees in this area.

A **final blog**, summarising the learnings from the evaluation and learning partnership will be published on NPC's website in April.

147 views* Link embedded.



305 views* Link embedded.



**Page views count taken on 11th March 2024*

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Grantee	Capability building learning support received					Bespoke support	1-to-1 support received
	Involving users in programme design	Communicating findings with impact	Building a learning culture	Impact measurement & 5 types of data	Theory of change	Social Return on Investment session	
Age UK Westminster	X	X					NPC ran a theory of change workshop with Age UK Westminster staff to begin developing their theory of change and define their mission. NPC shared guidance and resources with Age UK to guide their next stages in this process and Age UK will be taking this forwards to embed this into their strategic planning.
Alabare Christian Care & Support	X				X		NPC provided Alabare Christian Care with support and guidance on how to develop a theory of change for their work – and held a planning session for an all-staff theory of change session.
Al-Hurraya	X			X			No support requested.
Azad Kashmir Welfare Association							Received limited engagement from grantee.
Big Issue	X	X		X	X		Supplied Big Issue with resources to help them in developing an impact measurement framework and to inform mapping their data on to their theory of change.
Blackburn Foodbank	X	X			X		NPC worked with Blackburn Foodbank's 'Oak Money Advice centre' to support in their data analysis process. This involved liaising with their contact at Lancaster University to increase efficiencies and organise upskilling of staff in data analysis.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Grantee	Capability building learning support received					Bespoke support	1-to-1 support received
	Involving users in programme design	Communicating findings with impact	Building a learning culture	Impact measurement & 5 types of data	Theory of change	Social Return on Investment session	
Coram's Field		X			X		Responded to request for mechanisms that lead to prevention of gambling harms
Derbyshire Alcohol Advice Service						X	Shared guidance on measurement tools
Epic Restart Foundation	X	X	X	X	X		Delivered a theory of change workshop with staff (six staff members)
Hull FC						X	Delivered session on Social Return on Investment with staff
IMO Charity	X	X	X				Received limited engagement from grantee.
Just B	X	X			X		Provided support and guidance to JustB on implementing and evaluating co-design approaches and involving users in their work
Mind Suffolk							NPC worked with Mind Suffolk to provide support and guidance on accessible evaluation and Theory of Change materials

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Grantee	Capability building learning support received						1-to-1 support received
	Involving users in programme design	Communicating findings with impact	Building a learning culture	Impact measurement & 5 types of data	Theory of change	Social Return on Investment session	
Prison Radio Association	X			X			Created a data dashboard for 'prisoner producer' survey data which automatically analyses PRA's survey data and presents findings, at the individual and group level. Upskilled PRA staff on using the dashboard so going forwards they will be able to update and edit this themselves.
Reframe	X						Delivered a session to explore Theory of Change and guidance on developing a measurement plan, including qualitative and creative tools for monitoring and evaluation. NPC provided additional guidance on how charities can use qualitative research.
Shama Women's Centre		X					Delivered an in-person training session to Shama Women's centre to upskill staff on writing case studies and guidance on measuring their impact as an organisation.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capability building and support

Grantee	Capability building learning support received						1-to-1 support received
	Involving users in programme design	Communicating findings with impact	Building a learning culture	Impact measurement & 5 types of data	Theory of change	Social Return on Investment session	
Simon Community Scotland							Provided guidance on: • Implementing and evaluating co-design • Equitable evaluation • Person-centred approaches to evaluation • Trauma-informed design principles
Solihull Moors Foundation							Requested flexible critical friend support as and when needed and was interested in data collection for supporting the referral pathway – specifically distance-travelled measurement tools.
The Cedar Trust	X		X			X	Requested support on building a learning culture and Theory of Change
Wigan Warriors		X	X				Requested support on developing a Theory of Change and held a planning session for an all-staff theory of change session.
Yellow Scarf CIO	X			X			No support requested

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Report produced for GambleAware by Ipsos and NPC

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Ipsos's standards & accreditations provide our clients with the peace of mind that they can always depend on us to deliver reliable, sustainable findings. Moreover, our focus on quality and continuous improvement means we have embedded a 'right first time' approach throughout our organisation.

ISO 20252 – is the international market research specific standard that supersedes BS 7911 / MRQSA & incorporates IQCS (Interviewer Quality Control Scheme); it covers the 5 stages of a Market Research project. Ipsos UK was the first company in the world to gain this accreditation.

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ISO 27001 – International standard for information security designed to ensure the selection of adequate and proportionate security controls. Ipsos UK was the first research company in the UK to be awarded this in August 2008.

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This work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the international quality standard for market research, ISO 20252