

# Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2024

Overview of facts and figures about  
**Gambling Harms - DRAFT**



# Introduction

- This report is part of the 2024 update of the Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and includes data on gambling harms.
- Great Britain has one of the most accessible gambling markets in the world. Opportunities to gamble exist on most high streets and, with access to the internet, in virtually every home. Concerns regarding the harms associated with gambling have been increasing in the UK in recent years and gambling is viewed as a public health issue.
- The [types of gambling harms](#) identified by Public Health England are:
  - financial
  - relationship disruption, conflict or breakdown
  - emotional or psychological distress
  - cultural
  - reduced performance at work or study
  - criminal activity
  - detriments to healthWider societal costs:
  - Healthcare costs
  - Welfare and employment costs
  - Housing costs
  - Criminal justice costs

The [Office for Health Improvement and Disparities](#) estimate a financial costs between £1.05 billion and £1.77 billion (note this is likely a conservative estimate due to the range of outcomes that could be costed)

- The full set of JSNA resources is available at [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment | Oxfordshire Insight](#)

# Contents

1. Summary
2. Gambling Behaviour
3. Young people and gambling
4. Gambling treatment need and support
5. Finding out more

# 1. Summary

# Summary

- Data captured at an Oxfordshire level relating to gambling is limited
- Nationally, around **1 in 3 people have gambled** in the past **4 weeks**, according to the latest statistics on gambling behaviour by the Gambling Commission
- **Males aged 18 to 44** have the highest gambling participation rates
- There are currently 15 NHS run evidenced based treatment centres in the country
- Oxfordshire estimates state that just **over 18,000 adults** may benefit from some type of treatment or support for harmful gambling
- Oxfordshire estimates state that there **over 10,000 children** living in households with an adult who gambles who may require treatment or support
- There is no consistent entry method for people with problem gambling. Various recommendations for treatment, care and service delivery have been put forward by NICE, which is due for publication in July 2024.

## 2. Gambling behaviour

## Gambling behaviour - national

*Gambling is a leisure activity enjoyed by many, and the majority of those who gamble appear to do so without signs of problematic behaviour. There are however some individuals who experience significant harm as a result of their gambling. Great Britain has one of the most accessible gambling markets in the world; opportunities to gamble exist on most high streets and, with the spread of the internet, in virtually every home.*

- The latest statistics on gambling behaviour by the Gambling Commission (July-November 2023) shows that nearly half the population (48%) aged 16+ had participated in at least one form of gambling in the past four weeks
- Excluding those who only play lottery draws, around one in three (27%) people told us they have gambled in the past four weeks.
- Overall gambling participation is highest for males aged 45 to 54 years old, however, removing lottery only draw players, shifts the age profile downwards, resulting in males aged 18 to 44 having the highest gambling participation rates.

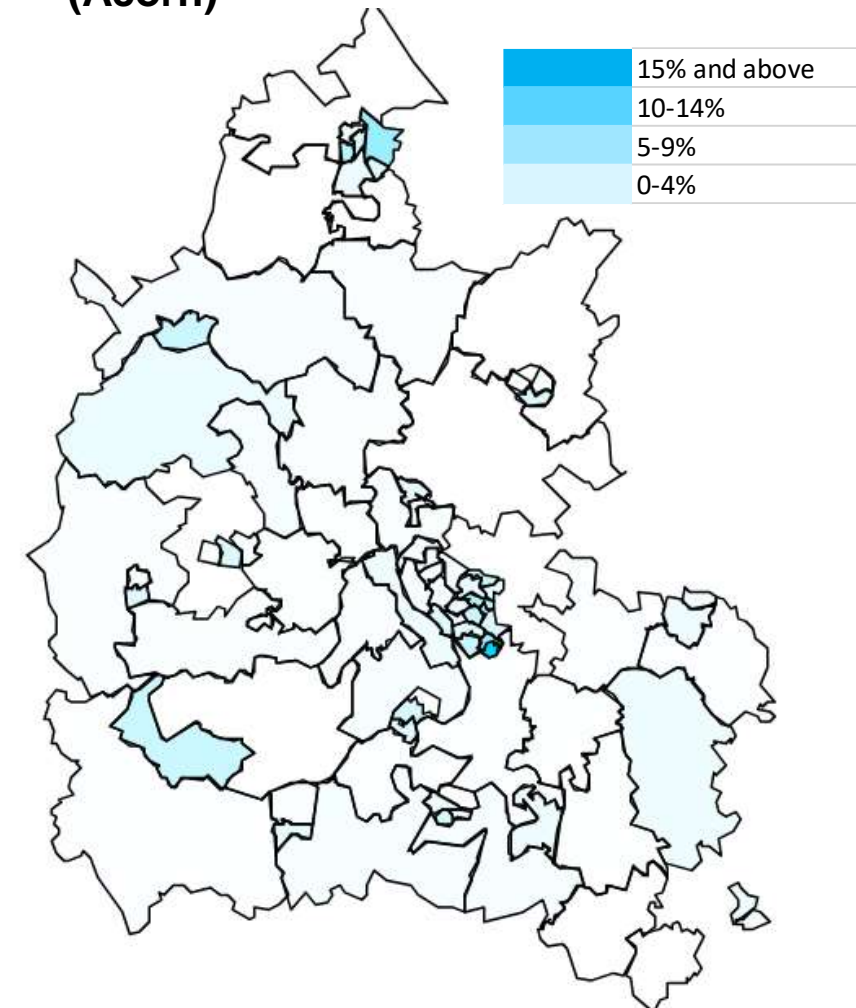


The Gambling Survey for Great Britain provides a consistent and frequent way of collecting data amongst adults in Great Britain and will provide regular data outputs in order to help understand changes in gambling behaviour amongst the population and amongst sub population groups.

## Acorn classification - Gambling / betting offline

- Acorn from CACI is a geodemographic segmentation dataset which classifies postcodes in the UK on factors such as demographics, lifestyle and behaviours, by splitting into 7 categories, 22 groups and 65 types [1].
- It is designed to help understand the needs and behaviours of residents which can help inform various decisions such as resource allocation, service provision and policy making.
- Each Acorn group has characteristics, one of which is gambling offline under the lifestyle classifications. According to Acorn gambling offline more common in the Acorn groups called 'Low Income Living' [2].
- This group makes up 2.3%, approximately 17,000 residents in Oxfordshire
- Areas in Oxfordshire that have a greater number of residents in this group reside in Greater Leys (18%), Banbury Grimsbury (12%), Blackbird Leys (11%) and Churchill (9%). These are some of the 20% most deprived in the county [3].

**A map of Oxfordshire showing 'Low income Living' areas (Acorn)**



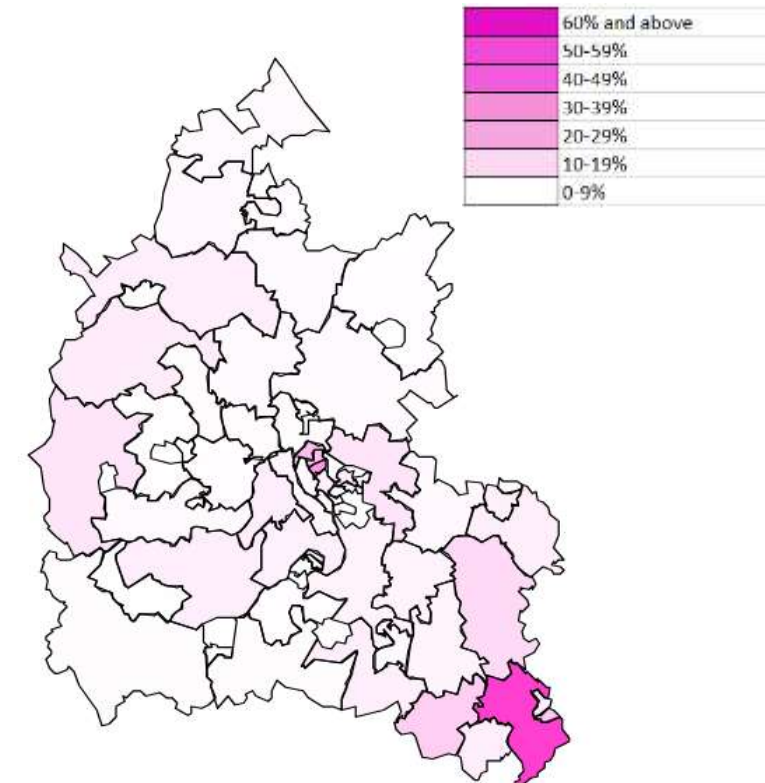
[What is Acorn? - Acorn \(caci.co.uk\) \[1\]](#) [Acorn Oxfordshire Dashboard - Power BI](#)

[\[2\] Acorn - Knowledge Tool | Tableau Public](#), [\[3\] English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## Acorn classification - Gambling / betting online

- Based on Acorn's lifestyle characteristics, gambling offline is more common in the Acorn group 'Luxury Lifestyles' [1].
- This group makes up 5.4%, approximately 40,000 residents in Oxfordshire
- Areas in Oxfordshire that have a greater number of residents in this group reside in Shiplake & Binfield Heath (63%), North Central Oxford (56%), Summertown (34%) and Wolvercote & Cutteslowe (34%). These areas do not fall within the most deprived areas of Oxfordshire [2].

**A map of Oxfordshire showing the group 'Luxury Lifestyle' areas (Acorn)**



[Acorn Oxfordshire Dashboard - Power BI](#)

[1] [Acorn - Knowledge Tool | Tableau Public](#), [2] [English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)



## 3. Young people and gambling

## Gambling behaviour - national

- 26% of 11 to 17 year olds spent their own money on gambling in the twelve months prior to taking part in the survey.
- During that period, the most common types of gambling activity that young people spent their own money on were legal or did not feature age restricted products, namely:
  - playing arcade gaming machines such as penny pusher or claw grab machines (19 percent)
  - placing a bet for money between friends or family (11 percent)
  - playing cards with friends or family for money (5 percent).
- Three in ten (28%) young people had seen the family members they live with gamble, with 14 percent indicating that it had resulted in arguments or tension at home.
- Please see section on [children, gambling and treatment](#)

## **3. Gambling Treatment need and support**

# Gambling treatment need and support in England

The treatment and support of people experiencing harmful gambling is currently provided by a combination of a small number of specialist NHS clinics, private healthcare providers, voluntary and third sector providers, and some primary care gambling services with specialist GP input [1].

## Evidenced based treatment

The NHS has established several specialist clinics which have significantly increased the amount of treatment available to support those experiencing gambling related harms. There are 15 services available across the country.

Southern Health offers a service providing evidence-based treatment to people with gambling-related harms / gambling disorder [2]. It is funded by NHS England. The Southern Gambling Service offers assessment and evidence-based treatments for people with gambling-related harms / gambling disorder. Psychological support is offered in the form of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and other evidence-based approaches [3].

## Referrals for treatment

- The Southern Gambling Service [1] was created in 2023 and is funded by the NHS. The Southern Gambling Service offers assessment and evidence-based treatments for people with gambling-related harms / gambling disorder. This includes three main treatment pathways:
  - Individual psychotherapy (delivered virtually or in person)
  - Group psychotherapy (delivered virtually or in person)
  - Medication for problematic gambling
- Since its establishment, there have been a total of 49 referrals into the Southern Gambling Service across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West, the BOB ICS [2]
- 40% of referrals (20) were into Oxfordshire ICS

### Referrals into the Southern Gambling Service, people aged 17+ who meet the referral criteria since June 2023

BOB ICS	Count of referrals (since June 2023)
Oxfordshire	20
Buckinghamshire	8
Berkshire West	21
Total	49

[1] Southern Gambling Service :: Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, [2] <https://bobicb.nhs.uk>

# Gambling support in England

The following support mechanisms are in place but are not evidenced-based:

## Charities

A variety of charities offer support for people affected by gambling. Some of these are independent, while others have close ties to the gambling industry and may have financial conflicts of interest.

## Pharmacological treatment

The use of pharmacological approaches to reduce impulsivity and break the cycle of reward-seeking behaviour are sometimes used in combination with psychological treatment. A range of different therapeutic agents have been tried in this context but there are no medications licensed in the UK for the treatment harmful gambling [1].

Various recommendations for treatment, care and service delivery have been put forward by NICE, which is due for publication in July 2024.

[1] [\[E\] Pharmacological treatment of harmful gambling](#)

# Gambling treatment need and support in England

*The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities commissioned researchers at the University of Sheffield and the University of Glasgow to produce estimates of the number of adults who gamble in England who might benefit from treatment or support. The data has been produced using the Health Survey for England for 2015, 2016 and 2018.*

## Types of support and treatment for harmful gambling

For the prevalence estimates, OHID and the research team grouped the support and treatment available for people who gamble into 6 types.

1. **Brief advice.** This typically involves a brief conversation that could be delivered by non-specialists. It also includes referral to self-help groups, such as online forums.
2. **Extended brief interventions.** This typically involves 2 or 3 sessions of motivational interviewing delivered by gambling-specialist practitioners.
3. **Psychosocial interventions delivered by voluntary sector services.** This typically involves around 6 sessions of psychosocial treatment delivered one-to-one or in a group format by gambling treatment practitioners and vary in their techniques and structure. The minimum qualifications needed to deliver these interventions depends on the service provider.
4. **Psychologist-led CBT.** This typically involves 8 to 14 sessions of CBT for gambling disorder, delivered by clinical psychologists or CBT-accredited psychotherapists. It may also include psychological therapy for co-existing mental health conditions.
5. **Intensive residential treatment.** This typically involves a 12-week residential treatment programme that would include one-to-one therapy and group sessions.
6. **Peer support.** For example, peer support groups like Gamblers Anonymous, GamLearn, PeerAid, as well as GamFam.

## Gambling treatment need and support

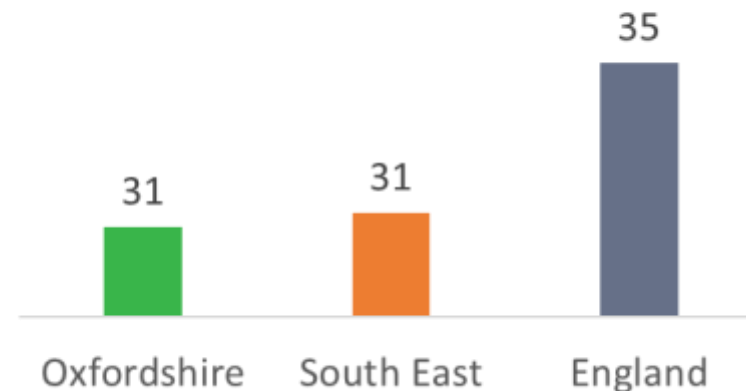
### Adult (18+) gambling treatment need and support in England: prevalence estimates

- In England, there are almost 1.6 million adults who gamble who may benefit from some type of treatment or support for harmful gambling. This is 35 people per 1,000 population. Of these, the majority (970,000) might benefit from a 'level 2 intensity' treatment. Around 243,000 adults might benefit from a 'level 4 intensity' treatment.

### Adult (18+) gambling treatment need and support in Oxfordshire: prevalence estimates

- In Oxfordshire, estimates state that just over 18,000 adults who gamble who may benefit from some type of treatment or support for harmful gambling. This is 31 people per 1,000 population, lower than the England rate but similar to the South East rate.
- Of these, the majority (13,000) might benefit from a 'level 2 intensity' treatment.
- Around 280 adults might benefit from a 'level 4 intensity' treatment.

Estimated rate per 1,000 adult population of adults who would benefit from gambling treatment





# Gambling treatment need and support

## Children living in households with adults who gamble who might need support

- The following estimates the number of children living in a household with an adult who gambles who might require treatment or support. The overall estimate is that there are 912,805 children living in these kinds of households in England.
- The overall estimate is that there are 10,422 children living in households with an adult who gambles who may require treatment or support in Oxfordshire

## 4. Finding out more

## Finding out more

- More information on many of these topics is available from:
  - Harms associated with gambling - PHE
  - Health Survey for England - NHS Digital
  - [NHS Long Term Plan » The NHS Long Term Plan](#)
  - NICE - Harmful gambling: identification, assessment and management (in development due July 2024)
  - OHID - Gambling treatment: assessing the current system in England
  - Southern Gambling Service
  - [Tackling gambling related harm a whole council approach \(local.gov.uk\)](#)
- Other JSNA resources are available from Oxfordshire Insight