

Frequently Asked Questions

Gambling Act 2005

**Statement of Principles 2026 - 2029
consultation**

1. What is Gambling?

Gambling is defined in the Act as either gaming, betting, or taking part in a lottery. 'Gaming' means playing a game for the chance to win a prize. 'Betting' means making or accepting a bet on:

- The outcome of a race, competition, or other event.
- The likelihood of anything occurring or not occurring.
- Whether anything is true or not.

A 'Lottery' is where participants are involved in an arrangement, following a payment to participate, where prizes are allocated wholly by a process of chance.

2. What are the Council's responsibilities under the Gambling Act 2005?

Under the Gambling Act 2005, Bolton Council is responsible for taking the lead on regulating gambling within the borough. We issue licences and permits to authorise legal and responsible gambling and will take action if the requirements of the Gambling Act 2005 are not met.

3. What is a gambling establishment?

A gambling establishment is a premises that offers commercial gambling services including casinos, betting shops, bingo halls and arcades. The activities that take place in these establishments include playing gaming machines, placing bets, and playing bingo games. Bolton Council is responsible for granting premises licences to authorise these types of gambling.

4. What about gambling in pubs?

Gambling may be offered in places such as pubs, clubs, or community venues that do not have a gambling licence. In such cases, the Council provides permits or sets limits to prevent gambling from exceeding certain boundaries. We will always consider the impact of this type of gambling to the 'Licensing Objectives'.

5. Do you deal with online gambling?

Online gambling, also called remote gambling, refers to the use of digital platforms such as websites and apps for gambling. Bolton Council is not responsible for regulating online gambling, and it is not covered under our Statement of Principles (Gambling Policy). The Gambling Commission is responsible for issuing licences for online gambling and regulating it. Further information can be found on the [Gambling Commission website](#).

6. Who issues licences for lotteries?

Lotteries are a type of gambling that require a licence to operate legally. They can only be used to raise funds for charitable or good causes. The Gambling Commission regulates larger charity lotteries and the National Lottery. However, Bolton Council issues licences to small societies that sell tickets, for example for

school or work raffles or 100 club lotteries. Some lotteries may not need a licence if they are provided under certain thresholds and based on rules around how they are promoted and operated. Further information can be found on the Gambling Commission website [Fundraising and lotteries](#)

7. What are the 'Licensing Objectives'?

The Gambling Act 2005 outlines how gambling can be legally provided. It is based on three 'Licensing Objectives' which must be promoted by anyone involved in providing gambling. We must consider the impact on these objectives before granting gambling licences. These objectives are:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime.
- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way.
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

8. Who is vulnerable / what do we mean by vulnerable individuals?

Gambling can be harmful to anyone, but some individuals can be more vulnerable to gambling harm. Vulnerable individuals include children and customers who are especially susceptible to harm due to personal circumstances. This can include people who spend more money or time gambling than they want, gamble beyond their means, or those who may not be able to make informed decisions due to health problems, learning disabilities, or substance misuse. Young adults may be particularly vulnerable to gambling-related harm.

9. What do we mean by 'gambling related harm'?

The Gambling Commission has defined gambling-related harm as 'the adverse impacts from gambling on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, communities and society. These harms impact on people's resources, relationships and health. Negative effects can include loss of employment, debt, crime, breakdown of relationships and deterioration of physical and mental health.'

10. Consultation Process

How often do we have to review our Gambling Act Statement of Principles (Gambling Policy)?

Bolton Council as the Licensing Authority is required to review the Statement of Principles (Gambling Policy) every three years. We may decide to review our Statement of Principles (Gambling Policy) earlier if there is a need to make significant changes.

What has changed?

The key changes are to the Bolton profile, gambling-related harm and Public Health, the location of premises, the local risk assessments, the local area profile, and minor changes to reflect the Greater Manchester Statement of Principles. The sections that have been reviewed are highlighted yellow within the Statement of Principles (Gambling Policy).

Where will the consultation be published

The consultation is published on the Council's Active Consultation website:

https://bit.ly/Bolton_Consultation.

Who can comment on the consultation

Anyone can comment on the consultation – this can be done by submitting your comments by email to:

consultations@bolton.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can submit your comments to the freepost address below:

FREEPOST RTTT-YTEL-YSXS
Consultation & Engagement Team
2nd Floor
Town Hall
Victoria Square
Bolton
BL1 1RU

If you would like support to complete the consultation, please contact the consultation team on 01204 334875, leaving your name, address and telephone number and the name of the consultation you are interested in, '*Licensing Policy Consultation*'.

How long will the consultation last

The consultation period will commence on 19/11/2025 and close at midday on 31/12/2025. Any comments received after this period will not be taken into consideration.

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