

Appendix 2

Islington is London's smallest Borough, covering just over six square miles. It is the eighth most deprived borough in the Country, with a large number of residents out of work and reliant on benefits. Islington also ranks the second highest authority in the country for the proportion of children living in households dependent on benefits.

As reported by the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board, "There is evidence that some groups in the population may be more vulnerable to gambling-related harm. This includes some BME groups as well as **people with low incomes**. Children and young people may be particularly susceptible, as their youth and limited life experience may make them more inclined to risk-taking behaviour and less able to manage the consequences of these decisions."

In Islington the main opportunities to gamble in licensed premises arise from betting shops and AGCs. Since the introduction of the Gambling Act 2005, while the number of betting shops has remained constant, Islington has seen a rapid rise in the number of potential AGCs.

Nationally between March 2008 and March 2009 there was an increase in the number of AGCs from 601 to 632, representing a 5% rise. Over the same period Islington has seen the number of AGCs rise from 8 to potentially 14, representing a 75% increase. The potential rise has come predominantly from "split premises" type applications; two of which have been refused and the others are still pending.

Islington has serious concerns around the impact a further increase in the opportunity to gamble in the Borough will have on its most vulnerable residence. Islington recognises that the relationship between health and low income exists across almost all health indicators. As a consequence the Islington Strategic Partnership has set the reduction of poverty as the primary objective of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Islington has particular concerns over "split premises" applications being used as a device to increase the permitted number of high stake, high prize gaming machines.

As a consequence, while Islington recognises the generally permissive nature of the Gambling Act 2005, the Licensing Authority will seek to limit facilities for gambling in areas where it feels its vulnerable residents will be put at potential risk of harm.