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Leading UK gambling companies sign up to Safer Gambling Commitments

- *Betting and Gaming Council industry body launched with focus on championing standards*
- *5 core safer gambling commitments with 22 new actions to address safer gambling*
- *Includes 4 year national programme to educate young people delivered by GamCare and YGam*
- *Commitment to independent monitoring and evaluation*

The Chief Executives of the leading gambling companies in the UK, including Aspers, bet365, Caesars, Flutter Entertainment (Paddy Power Betfair), Genting, GVC (Ladbrokes and Coral), Playtech, Rank Group, Sky Betting & Gaming and William Hill, today announce a package of Safer Gambling Commitments to address the harm gambling can cause to customers and young people.

The Safer Gambling Commitments represent the most comprehensive set of measures from a wide group of leaders across the sector to support the UK Gambling Commission's National Strategy to Reduce Gambling Harms. They will deliver long-term and fundamental changes in how gambling companies are run in the UK and how they empower, protect and support their customers.

The five core safer gambling Commitments are targeted to: *Prevent underage gambling and protect young people; Increase support for treatment of gambling harm; Strengthen and expand codes of practice for advertising and marketing; Protect and empower our customers and; Promote a culture of safer gambling.*

One of the first actions being announced today is a new four-year national programme to educate young people, which is being shaped and delivered by two charities, GamCare and YGAM. The charities will work with young people, their parents, families and the youth professional workforce to improve awareness and understanding of the risks associated with gambling. The Commitments will also see the development of new codes of conduct for direct and affiliate marketing and sponsorship activities.

To ensure transparency, the signatories have committed that the Safer Gambling Commitments will be regularly and publicly reported on, with an independent monitoring and evaluation process consistent with the best practice approach used by public bodies, including the Gambling Commission, HM Treasury and UK Evaluation Society.

Support for the Safer Gambling Commitments, comes on the same day that a new representative body for the UK's betting and gaming industry formally launches, which will champion and drive forward these commitments. The Betting and Gaming Council will represent betting shops, online gaming businesses and casinos, and has been established in response to calls for the industry to work together to guarantee an enjoyable, fair and safe betting and gaming experience for all.

Commenting on the announcement, Peter Jackson, Chief Executive of Flutter Entertainment, said:

“These commitments are an important step forward for the sector in their own right and also signal a genuine desire to ensure that acting responsibly is at the heart of our businesses.”

Commenting on the announcement, Brigid Simmonds OBE, Chairman of the Betting and Gaming Council, said:

“The Betting and Gaming Council welcomes these commitments from the chief executives. This is a major step towards preventing underage gambling and addressing harm. Working together as an industry we will create a culture of safer gambling - increasing the competency of professionals who educate young people, increasing support for treatment, strengthening and expanding codes of practice and empowering consumers.

“These are commitments that the BGC will champion and drive forward to build public and institutional trust in our industry.”

Commenting on the announcement, Tim Miller, Executive Director of the Gambling Commission, said:

“Through the National Strategy to Reduce Gambling Harms we have been clear on the important role for greater collaboration and partnership working across the industry, alongside robust regulatory action by us. We have been encouraged by moves across the industry in recent months to work together on player protection and hope that this programme marks another step forward by gambling companies in delivering on the ambitions in the National Strategy.”

Commenting on the announcement, Anna Hemmings, Chief Executive of GamCare, said:

“The commitment to meet GamCare’s Safer Gambling Standard and to work towards achieving our Advanced Level accreditation will drive a step-change in industry standards. We are also delighted to be working alongside YGAM to deliver our shared aspirations for youth education around gambling and the harms it can cause. Education is essential in ensuring that young people understand the risks of gambling and are able to make informed decisions about their participation in these activities and think critically about them before doing so.”

Commenting on the announcement, Lee Willows, Founder & Chief Executive of YGAM (the Young Gamers & Gamblers Education Trust), said:

“In collaboration with GamCare we’ll deliver a national education programme to raise awareness of the risks of gambling as well as help build digital resilience among young people. The transparent way in which this programme will be reported on and evaluated is helpful to aid public understanding of its impact and further raise awareness.”

Ends.

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Notes to editors:**About the Betting and Gaming Council**

The Betting and Gaming Council (BGC) is the new industry association for betting and gaming which represents betting shops, online betting and gaming businesses and casinos. The BGC, launched today (6th Nov) will represent around 90 percent of the betting and gaming market, and membership is open to all operators with a UK licence. Members will be required to adhere to a new BGC Code of Conduct. Its mission is to champion industry standards in betting and gaming to ensure an enjoyable, fair and safe betting and gaming experience for all customers.

Young People and Gambling

The Gambling Commission published the 2019 Young People & Gambling survey in October which looks at gambling trends of 11 - 16-year-olds in Great Britain. The findings show that “11% of 11-16-year olds that took part in the survey say they have spent their own money on gambling in the past seven days, compared with 14% in 2018. The long-term trend shows a decline in participation since the questions were first asked in 2011.” The report can be found [here](#).

About the Safer Gambling Commitments

Development of the Safer Gambling Commitments was facilitated and coordinated by the Senet Group. They will be delivered by working groups and subject matter experts drawn from across the gambling industry.

Further detail on the Safer Gambling Commitments can be found at:

www.safergamblingcommitments.co.uk

Key actions under the Safer Gambling Commitments

1. Prevent underage gambling and protect young people: prevent underage gambling on their platforms and introduce the most effective protections for early stage customers of any age-restricted product category

- Provide £10m of funding for a national education programme designed and delivered by relevant experts for children and young people over the next four years
- Work with the financial services industry to block gambling transactions on accounts held by under-18s
- Work with advertising bodies to explore using adtech to prevent under-18s seeing gambling adverts online

2. Increase support for treatment of gambling harm: support the scaling up of treatment services across the UK by recognised treatment providers as part of a long-term strategic plan

- We will engage with national stakeholders and recognised treatment and support providers as they map capacity requirements alongside gaining a comprehensive understanding of need and agree increased financial support over the next five years that supports delivery of this strategic plan.

3. Strengthen and expand codes of practice for advertising and marketing: develop and adopt the highest standards in marketing and advertising codes of conduct

- Commission an independent review into the effectiveness and impact of the whistle-to-whistle television advertising ban
- Develop and adopt a new Code of Conduct for sponsorship activities, including integrating safer gambling into brand activation in consultation with sports clubs, rights holders and advertising bodies by 2020
- Develop a new Code of Conduct for Responsible Promotions, including bonuses, customer contact, VIP promotions and rewards

4. Protect and empower our customers: introduce new player protections in product design and customer engagement, making it easier for people to gamble safely

- Create new industry-wide standards to embed safer gambling practices throughout the customers' gambling experience, including publishing a minimum set of markers of harm and interventions to identify and interact with at-risk customers
- Work with operators and industry partners to devise and implement best practice in relation to identifying and interacting with at-risk customers via affordability assessments
- Work with the banking industry to encourage all banks to offer blocking software
- Develop clear and consistent product labelling and product information to help customers make informed choices
- Working with government and the regulator, we will explore creating a mechanism to enable gambling companies to share data on vulnerable or at-risk customers

5. Promote a culture of safer gambling: create a positive culture within both their businesses and the industry, where safer and well-controlled gambling is the norm

- Commit our businesses to achieve GamCare's Safer Gambling Standard and to work towards achieving the Advanced Level Awards
- Ensure all participating operators have an appropriate Employee Safer Gambling Policy setting out actions to deliver these commitments, including internal training programmes to build awareness, capability and capacity on Safer Gambling practices and standards across our workforce
- Develop an open source collaboration repository for all gambling companies to access safer gambling tools, open source code and share best practice to raise safety standards across the industry.