

**Cheshire West and Chester  
Statement of Licensing  
Principles**

**Gambling Act 2005**

**1 April 2026**

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The information provided within Appendices 2 and 3 is subject to change by Central Government/Gambling Commission and therefore is not considered part of this Statement of Principles. Notwithstanding, the information within Appendices 2 and 3 will be updated as and when required. Such consequential amendments will not be considered as a review of the Statement of Principles and therefore will not be consulted upon.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Cheshire West and Chester Council (the Council) is the Licensing Authority for the Cheshire West and Chester District, under the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 (the Act). The district covers an area of 350 square miles.
- 1.2 It is estimated that 365,100 people live in Cheshire West (mid-2023 population estimate) with just over a quarter living in rural areas. Some 17 percent of residents are 0-14 years old; 21 percent are over 65 and 61 percent are between 16 and 64 years old. This is an older population than the England average.
- 1.3 The population is forecast to increase by about 8 per cent between 2023 and 2033. Older age groups will see the biggest increase, with the number of residents aged 65 plus expected to increase by 22 per cent.
- 1.4 According to the 2021 Census around 5 per cent of residents were from Black and Minority Ethnic minority groups, far less than the 27 per cent England average. Polish is the most frequently spoken non-English language
- 1.5 Cheshire West and Chester Council is the fourth largest unitary authority in the Northwest. The borough includes the city of Chester and the major towns of Ellesmere Port, Frodsham, Neston, Northwich and Winsford. The area is an interesting mixture of both rural and urban communities and combines an exciting range of attractions, festivals, events and shopping experiences for both residents and tourists alike.
- 1.6 The Cheshire West and Chester Council Plan 2024 – 2028 sets out a plan for the Borough to deliver a stronger future where we all play our part in thriving, caring and sustainable communities.

The plan has six missions:

### **Starting well:**

The best start for our children and young people, with improved opportunity, a healthier start, greater resilience in families and the best possible support and care when it is needed.

### **Tackling Hardship and poverty:**

More people feel more financially secure as the causes and impact of hardship and poverty are addressed by working alongside residents.

## **Resilient people living their best lives:**

Local people are enabled to flourish, be healthy, happy and independent for longer in supportive communities.

## **Neighbourhood Pride:**

Residents live in well maintained, connected and safe places with good and affordable homes.

## **Greener communities:**

Individuals, public services and businesses take action to move to tackle the climate emergency, achieve net zero, protect the natural environment and adapt to the impact of climate change.

A copy of the plan can be found at:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-and-performance/council-plans-policies-and-strategies/borough-plan-2024-2028>

**NB** The information at paragraph 1.6 above will be amended in-line with changes to Council plans and priorities as determined within the life of this policy. Any changes made to paragraph 1.6 will therefore be deemed to be consequential and will be included within this policy without further consultation.

### **1.7 Gambling Related Harm Strategy**

There is increasing awareness about the harms that can be caused by gambling. This includes the impact not only on the individual, but on their families, friends and local communities too. In response to this, the Council's public health team has begun working with partners to develop a Gambling Related Harms Strategy for the borough. Once in place, a description will appear here, and the strategy will be attached as Appendix 6.

1.8 Effective licensing secures the safety and amenity of individual residents and communities whilst facilitating a vibrant and sustainable entertainment industry within a diverse local economy.

1.9 In exercising most of its functions under the Gambling Act 2005 ("the Act"), the Licensing Authority must have regard to the licensing objectives as set out in section 1 of the Act. The licensing 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

- 1.10 The Act requires the Licensing Authority to prepare and publish a Statement of Principles which sets out the policies that the Council will generally apply to promote the licensing objectives when making decisions on applications made under the Act.
- 1.11 The Statement of Principles must be published at least every three years.
- 1.12 This Statement of Principles has been prepared having regard to the licensing objectives contained within the Act and the guidance issued by the Gambling Commission. It was adopted by Cheshire West and Chester Council on 11 December 2025 having considered any comments received from those consulted on the draft Statement of Principles.
- 1.13 As required by the Act, the draft Statement of Principles was subject to formal consultation with: -
- Cheshire County Constabulary
  - Representatives of those carrying on gambling businesses within the Cheshire West and Chester district
  - Representatives of those persons likely to be affected by the exercise of the Licensing Authority's functions under the Act

A full list of consultees is set out in **Appendix 2**.

- 1.14 The Statement of Principles will come into effect on **1 April 2026** and will be available on the Council's website.
- 1.15 As indicated at 1.11 above, a further statement of principles must be published by **1 April 2029**.

## **2. Gambling Act 2005**

- 2.1 "Gambling" is defined in the Act as either gaming, betting, or taking part in a lottery.
- gaming means playing a game of chance for a prize
  - betting means making or accepting a bet on the outcome of a race, competition, or any other event; the likelihood of anything occurring or not occurring; or whether anything is true or not
  - a lottery is where persons are required to pay to take part in an arrangement, during the course of which one or more prizes are allocated by a process which relies wholly on chance
- 2.2 The Act provides for three categories of licence:
- operating licences

- personal licences
- premises licences

2.3 The Licensing Authority is responsible for issuing premises licences. The Gambling Commission is responsible for issuing operating and personal licences.

2.4 The main functions of the Licensing Authority are to:

- license premises for gambling activities
- grant permits for gambling and gaming machines in clubs
- regulate gaming and gaming machines in alcohol licensed premises
- grant permits to family entertainment centres for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines
- grant permits for prize gaming
- consider notices given for the temporary use of premises for gaming
- consider occasional use notices for betting at tracks
- register small societies lotteries

2.5 It should be noted that:

- Spread betting is regulated by The Financial Services Authority
- Remote (on-line) gambling is dealt with by the Gambling Commission
- The National Lottery is regulated by The National Lottery Commission

2.6 This document sets out the policies that the Licensing Authority will apply when making decisions upon applications or notifications made for: -

- Premises licences
- Temporary and Occasional Use Notices
- Permits as required under the Act
- Registrations as required under the Act

2.7 This Statement of Principles relates to all those licensable premises, notices, permits and registrations identified as falling within the provisions of the Act, namely: -

- Casinos
- Bingo premises
- Betting premises
- Tracks
- Adult Gaming Centres
- Family Entertainment Centres
- Club Gaming and Club Machine Permits
- Prize Gaming and Prize Gaming Permits

- Temporary and Occasional Use Notices
- Registration of small society lotteries

2.8 The Categories of Gaming Machine Regulations 2007 define four classes of gaming machine, categories A, B, C and D, with category B divided into a further 5 subcategories. A full list of the categories of Gaming Machine, together with the current maximum stakes and prizes, is set out in **Appendix 3**.

2.9 The Act includes the definition of a child and young person at S.45 as:

Meaning of “child” and “young person”

(1) In this Act “child” means an individual who is less than 16 years old

(2) In this Act “young person” means an individual who is not a child but who is less than 18 years old.

### **3. Decision Making**

3.1 The approval of the Statement of Principles and the passing of a resolution not to issue casino licences must be taken by Full Council.

3.2 All other licensing functions under the Act will be carried out by the Licensing Committee. In the interests of efficiency and effectiveness the Committee will delegate certain decisions and functions to officers or to the Licensing Act Sub-Committee.

3.3 The table shown at **Appendix 5** sets out the proposed delegation of decisions and functions to the Licensing Committee, Licensing Act Sub-Committee and officers. This scheme of delegation is without prejudice to officers referring an application to the Licensing Committee or Licensing Act Sub-Committee if considered appropriate in the circumstances of any particular case.

### **4. General Principles**

4.1 Licensing authorities have responsibility for licensing gambling premises within their area, as well as undertaking functions in relation to lower stake gaming machines in clubs and miners' welfare institutes. The Act also provides a system of temporary and occasional use notices. These enable licensing authorities to authorise premises that are not licensed generally for gambling purposes to be used for certain types of gambling for limited periods.

4.2 In exercising most of its functions under the Act, the Licensing Authority must have regard to the licensing objectives (See paragraph 1.8 above).

4.3 In carrying out its licensing functions under the Act the Licensing Authority will aim to permit the use of premises for gambling if it is considered to be:

- in accordance with any relevant codes of practice issued by the Gambling Commission
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission
- in accordance with this Statement of Principles, and
- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives

4.4 Where appropriate, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they comply with all relevant codes of practice issued by the Gambling Commission, BACTA (British Amusement Catering Trade Association), GamCare or similar organisations.

4.5 The Licensing Authority will endeavour to avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes.

4.6 While this Statement of Principles sets out the Licensing Authority's general approach to making licensing decisions, each application will be considered on its individual merits.

4.7 This Statement of Principles is not intended to override the right of any person to make an application under the Act, and to have that application considered on its merits.

4.8 Equally, this Statement of Principles is not intended to undermine the right of any person to make representations about an application or to seek a review of a licence.

## **5. Responsible Authorities**

5.1 Responsible authorities are generally public bodies that must be notified of all applications and are entitled to make relevant representations to the Licensing Authority.

5.2 Section 157 of the Act defines those authorities as:

- A Licensing Authority in whose area the premises is wholly or partly situated
- The Gambling Commission
- The Chief Officer of Police in whose area the premises is wholly or partly situated
- The Fire & Rescue Service in whose area the premises is wholly or partly situated
- The Local Planning Authority in whose area the premises is wholly or partly situated
- The Environmental Protection Team
- A body designated in writing by the Licensing Authority to advise about the protection of children from harm
- HM Revenue and Customs
- Any other person

The Secretary of State may prescribe other responsible authorities by means of regulations.

5.3 The Licensing Authority will apply the following principles when designating, in writing, a body which is competent to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm:

- the need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of the Licensing Authority's area
- the need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons, rather than any particular vested interest group etc.

5.4 This authority proposes to designate Cheshire Constabulary for this purpose.

5.5 Section 211(4) of the Act provides that in relation to a vessel, but to no other premises, responsible authorities should also include navigation authorities within the meaning of section 221(1) of the Water Resources Act 1991 that have statutory functions in relation to the waters where the vessel is usually moored or berthed or any waters where it is proposed to be navigated at a time when it is used for licensable activities. These would include:

- the Environment Agency
- the British Waterways Board
- the Secretary of State acting through the Maritime and Coastguard Agency

5.6 The contact details of all the Responsible Authorities under the Gambling Act 2005 will be available on the Licensing Authority's website.

## **6. Interested Parties**

6.1 An interested party is someone who:

- lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities, or
- has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities, or
- represents persons in either of the two groups above

6.2 In determining whether someone lives sufficiently close to a particular premises to be affected the Licensing Authority will take into account, among other things:

- the size of the premises
- the nature of the premises
- the distance of the premises from the person making the representation

- the nature of the complainant
- the potential impact of the premises

6.3 In determining whether a person has a business interest which could be affected the Licensing Authority will consider, among other things:

- the size of the premises
- the catchment area of the premises, and
- whether the person making the representation has business interests in the catchment area that might be affected

6.4 Business interests will be given a wide interpretation and could include for example partnerships, faith groups and medical practices.

6.5 In considering these factors, each case will be decided upon its own merits.

6.6 Representatives of interested parties may include MPs, Ward Councillors and Parish Councillors. Residents' and tenants' associations, trade unions and trade associations may also represent interested parties if they have members living sufficiently close to the premises. Except in the case of Councillors or MPs representing the ward or wards likely to be affected, written evidence will be required that a person or body represents an interested party.

6.7 If individuals approach Ward Councillors or Parish Councillors, care should be taken that the Councillor is not on the Licensing Committee or Licensing Act Sub-Committee which will deal with the application nor has a prejudicial interest which would prevent them from addressing the Committee or Sub-Committee. If there are any doubts, advice should be sought from the Licensing Team.

6.8 Interested parties can make representations about licence applications or apply for a review of an existing licence.

6.9 Details of those persons making representations will be made available to applicants and, in the event of a hearing being held, will form part of a public document.

## **7. Exchange of Information**

7.1 Subject to the provisions of data protection legislation, the Licensing Authority will share any information it receives through the application process with the Gambling Commission and with other persons listed in Schedule 6 of the Act. In doing so, the Licensing Authority will have regard to the Act, any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission and any relevant regulations issued by the Secretary of State.

7.2 Should any protocols be established regarding information exchange with other bodies then they will be made available on the Licensing Authority's website.

## **8. Enforcement**

8.1 In general, the Gambling Commission will take the lead role on the investigation and, where appropriate, the prosecution of illegal gambling.

8.2 The main enforcement and compliance role for the Licensing Authority will be to ensure compliance with the premises licences and other permissions which it authorises.

8.3 The Licensing Authority will adopt a risk-based inspection programme and will work with the Commission, the police and other enforcing authorities to provide for the targeting of agreed problem or high-risk premises.

8.4 The Licensing Authority will be guided by the Gambling Commission's guidance and will endeavour to be:

- Proportionate: regulators should only intervene when necessary: remedies should be appropriate to the risk posed, and costs identified and minimised
- Accountable: regulators must be able to justify decisions, and be subject to public scrutiny
- Consistent: rules and standards must be joined up and implemented fairly
- Transparent: regulators should be open, and keep regulations simple and user friendly
- Targeted - regulation should be focused on the problem, and minimise side effects

8.5 The Licensing Authority will comply with its own enforcement policies and protocols which will be available on the Council's website.

8.6 In carrying out its enforcement and compliance role, the Licensing Authority will comply with the Regulators' Compliance Code and will take account of any guidance issued by Central Government.

8.7 Should the Licensing Authority receive any complaints of irresponsible retailing associated with operator activities regulated by the National Lottery Commission (lottery tickets or scratch cards) the Licensing Authority will look to work collaboratively with the Gambling Commission, Licensing Enforcement, Trading Standards and the police to carry out, where appropriate, enforcement action.

## 9. Premises Licences

- 9.1 Premises can be 'any place' but the Act prevents more than one premises licence applying to any one place. A single building could be subject to more than one premises licence provided they are for different parts of the building and those parts can be genuinely regarded as being different "premises".
- 9.2 There are requirements for entrances and exits from parts of a building covered by one or more licences to be separate and identifiable so that the separation of the premises is not compromised, and that people are not allowed to 'drift' accidentally into a gambling area. The Gambling Act 2005 (Mandatory and Default Conditions) Regulations 2007 set out the access provisions for each type of premises.
- 9.3 A licence to use premises for gambling will normally be issued only in relation to premises that are ready to be used for gambling. Where premises have not yet been constructed, an applicant may apply for a provisional statement – See Section 11.
- 9.4 An application for a premises licence may only be made by persons who have a right to occupy the premises.
- 9.5 Except in the case of a track premises licence, an application for a premises licence can only be made by a person who either holds an operating licence authorising him to carry on the activity in respect of which a premises licence is sought or has made an application for an operating licence which has not yet been determined.
- 9.6 When considering applications for premises licences the Licensing Authority cannot take into consideration the expected 'demand' for facilities. It should also be noted that moral objections to gambling are not a valid reason to reject applications.
- 9.7 Applications for the grant, transfer or variation of a premises licence should be accompanied by an assessment that demonstrates how the applicant will promote all the licensing objectives.
- 9.8 Premises licences granted must be reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives as follows:
- preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime.
- 9.9 The Gambling Commission will be taking a leading role in preventing gambling from being a source of crime.
- 9.10 The Gambling Commission will deal with operating licences and personal licences so the Licensing Authority will not be concerned about the suitability of an applicant. If

concerns arise about a person's suitability, the Licensing Authority will bring those concerns to the attention of the Gambling Commission.

- 9.11 The Licensing Authority will take into consideration the proposed location of gambling premises in terms of this licensing objective. Where an area has known high levels of organised crime, the Licensing Authority will consider carefully whether gambling premises are suitable to be located there.
- 9.12 Where appropriate, conditions may be attached to a premises licence requiring the provision of door supervisors. For example, if the premises cannot be adequately supervised from the counter, door supervision may be necessary.
- 9.13 There is a distinction between disorder and nuisance. The Licensing Authority will consider factors such as whether police assistance was required and how threatening the behaviour was to those who could see or hear it in determining that distinction. It should be noted that issues of nuisance cannot be addressed under the Act.
- 9.14 The Gambling Commission does not expect licensing authorities to become concerned with ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way as this will either be a matter for the management of the gambling business or will relate to the suitability and actions of an individual. Both issues will be addressed by the Commission through the operating and personal licensing regime.
- 9.15 Because track betting operators do not need an operating licence from the Gambling Commission the Licensing Authority may, in certain circumstances, require conditions to ensure that the environment in which betting takes place is suitable.
- 9.16 Apart from one or two limited exceptions, the intention of the Act is that children and young persons should not be allowed to gamble and should therefore be prevented from entering gambling premises which are 'adult only' environments.
- 9.17 In practice, steps will generally be taken to prevent children from taking part in or being near gambling. There may also be restrictions on advertising so that gambling products are not aimed at children or advertised in such a way that makes them particularly attractive to children.
- 9.18 It is the Licensing Authority's view that premises should not normally be licensed which are close to schools, playgrounds, or other educational establishments such as museums. However, any such policy does not preclude any application being made and each application will be decided on its own merits with the onus upon the applicant showing how the concerns may be overcome.
- 9.19 When considering whether to grant a premises licence or permit, the Licensing Authority will consider whether any measures are necessary to protect children, such as the supervision of entrances, the segregation of gambling from areas frequented

by children and the supervision of gaming machines in non-adult gambling specific premises, such as pubs, clubs and betting tracks etc.

- 9.20 The Act does not define the term “vulnerable persons”, but the Licensing Authority considers that this will include people who gamble more than they want to, people who gamble beyond their means, and people who may not be able to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling; perhaps due to a learning disability, mental health problem or the effects of alcohol or drugs.
- 9.21 Licence holders will be expected to make information publicly available about organisations that can provide advice and support, both in relation to gambling itself and to debt e.g. GamCare, Gamblers Anonymous, Gordon House Association, National Debt line, local Citizens Advice Bureau, Beacon Counselling Trust and independent advice agencies.
- 9.22 Social Responsibility Code Provision 3.5.6 requires that all non-remote casino and bingo and betting licences (except those at a track) and holders of gaming machine general operating licences for adult gaming centres must offer self-exclusion schemes to customers requesting such a facility.

### **Gambling Machines and the meaning of “available for use”**

- 9.23 Section 242 of the Act makes it an offence for a person to make a gaming machine available for use where they do not hold an operating licence or other permission covering gaming machines, and where no other exemption applies.
- 9.24 The Act does not define what ‘available for use’ means, but the Gambling Commission considers that a gaming machine is ‘available for use’ if a person can take steps to play it without the assistance of the operator.
- 9.25 More than the permitted number of machines may be physically located on a premises, but the onus is on licensees to demonstrate that no more than the permitted number are ‘available for use’ at any one time.
- 9.26 A machine that can operate at more than one category, which is operating at a lower category, does not contribute to the number of machines ‘available for use’ at a higher category until it switches to that category. Licensees must ensure no more than the permitted number are ‘available for use’ at any one time.
- 9.27 Systems in which several machines are networked so that the player can select which game and category they play are permitted but licensees must still adhere to any restrictions on the number of machines ‘available for use’ for each category of machine.

- 9.28 Gaming machine entitlements in AGC's or bingo premises allow only 20% of machines to be category B machines to ensure a balanced offering of gambling products and restrict harder gambling opportunities.
- 9.29 Machine design has changed in recent years and space-saving gaming machines (tablets, multi-player units and narrow/in-fill machines) have become available. Some of these machines appear to have been designed primarily to maximise category B machine entitlements.
- 9.30 The Gambling Commission updated its 'available for use' guidance in 2019 to make it clear that for the purpose of calculating the category B machine entitlement in gambling premises, gaming machines should only be counted if they can be played simultaneously by different players without physical hindrance. For example, the Gambling Commission would consider that a multi-position machine that technically allows two or more players to play simultaneously but in reality, requires those players to stand very closely together or adopt unnatural participation positions, to the effect that a second player would be discouraged from attempting to use the machine, could not be classed as two or more machines.
- 9.31 In relation to tablets, licensees should ensure that there is sufficient floor space in the premises to permit counted tablets to be used simultaneously.
- 9.32 Electronic Bingo Terminals (EBTs) that offer gaming machine content in addition to bingo content are gaming machines and subject to adherence with the above principles. Licensees are reminded however that an EBT must only allow participation in one gambling activity at a time and should not therefore contain functionality which allows participation in bingo and gaming machine activity simultaneously.
- 9.33 The Gambling Commission has published its 'available for use' guidance on the Commission website and provided additional information specifically in relation to when is a gaming machine 'available for use' in AGC or bingo premises under the 20% regulations.
- 9.34 Section 172(7) of the Act, as amended, provides that the holder of a bingo premises licence may make available for use a number of category B gaming machines not exceeding 20% of the total number of gaming machines on the premises. For example, a premises with a total of 25 gaming machines available for use can make five or fewer category B3 gaming machines available on that premises. Premises that were licensed before 13 July 2011 are entitled to make available eight category B gaming machines, or 20% of the total number of gaming machines, whichever is the greater. There are no restrictions on the number of category C or D machines that can be made available. Regulations state that category B machines at bingo premises are restricted to sub-category B3 (SI 2007/2158: Categories of Gaming Machine Regulations 2007) (but not B3A) and B4 machines, as per the Gambling Commission's guidance within Part 16. For the purpose of calculating the category B machine entitlement in gambling

premises, gaming machines should only be counted if they can be played simultaneously by different players without physical hindrance and this includes tablets.

## **10. Risk Assessments/Area Profiles**

10.1 The Licensing Authority expects applicants for new licences or variations to prepare a risk assessment for their business which takes into account the nature and characteristics of the locality in which they are situated. To assist applicants, the Council has prepared local area profiles, See **Appendix 5**. The Council will request sight of the risk assessment as part of the application process and will consider both the adequacy of the risk assessment and the control measures identified and determine whether or not it is proportionate to incorporate the control measures as conditions on the licence.

10.2 The Licensing Authority will expect the risk assessment to consider:

- whether premises are in an area of deprivation
- whether the premises are in an area subject to high levels of crime and/or disorder
- the ethnic profile of residents in the area
- the demographics of the area in relation to vulnerable groups
- the location of services for children such as schools, playgrounds, toy shops, leisure centres and other areas where children will gather

Risk assessment should also show how vulnerable people, including the people with gambling dependencies, are protected and a copy of the risk assessment must be retained on the premises.

10.3 Licensees must review (and update as necessary) their local risk assessments to take account of significant changes in local circumstances, including those identified in this Statement of Licensing Principles and when there are significant changes at a licensee's premises that may affect their mitigation of local risks.

10.4 The Licensing Authority expects all licences to have policies, procedures, and adequate control measures in place to mitigate all risks identified during the risk assessment/review process.

## **11. Licence Conditions**

11.1 There are three types of conditions which may be attached to premises licences: -

- Mandatory Conditions prescribed in the Gambling Act 2005 (Mandatory and Default Conditions) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 made by the Secretary of State which must be attached to all licences

- Default Conditions – Conditions prescribed in the above regulations made by the Secretary of State which will be attached unless specifically excluded by the Licensing Authority
- Conditions imposed by the Licensing Authority

The Licensing Authority notes that mandatory conditions made under these regulations are set with the intention that no further regulation in relation to that matter is required. Therefore, it is extremely unlikely that the Licensing Authority will need to impose individual conditions in relation to matters that are already dealt with by mandatory conditions. The Licensing Authority will only consider doing so where there are regulatory concerns of an exceptional nature and any additional licence conditions must relate to the licensing objectives.

11.2 Any conditions imposed by the Licensing Authority will be proportionate and will be:

- relevant to the need to make the proposed building suitable as a gambling facility
- directly related to the premises and the type of licence applied for
- fairly and reasonably related to the scale and type of premises; and
- reasonable in all other respects.

11.3 Applicants are encouraged to offer their own suggested conditions to demonstrate how the licensing objectives can be met.

11.4 There are conditions which the Licensing Authority cannot attach to premises licences which are:

- any condition which makes it impossible to comply with an operating licence condition
- conditions relating to gaming machine categories, numbers, or method of operation
- conditions which provide that membership of a club or body be required (the Act specifically removes the membership requirement for casino and bingo clubs)
- conditions in relation to stakes, fees, winnings or prizes

11.5 Where a condition is attached to a premises licence requiring door supervisors, the Licensing Authority will normally require those door supervisors to be Security Industry Authority (SIA) registered.

11.6 Door supervisors employed in-house at casinos or bingo premises are exempt from being registered by the SIA but the Licensing Authority considers that it is best practice for door supervisors working at casinos or bingo premises to have SIA training or similar.

## **Adult Gaming Centres**

11.7 The Licensing Authority will expect applicants to demonstrate that there will be sufficient measures in place to meet the licensing objectives, for example, to ensure that under 18-year-olds do not have access to the premises.

11.8. Appropriate licence conditions may cover issues such as:

- Proof of age schemes
- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self-barring schemes
- Provision of posters and/or information leaflets and helpline numbers and website addresses for organisations such as GamCare, Gamblers Anonymous, Gordon House Association, National Debtline and local Citizens Advice Bureau, Beacon Counselling Trust and independent advice agencies

This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.

## **(Licensed) Family Entertainment Centres**

11.9 The Licensing Authority will expect applicants to demonstrate that there will be sufficient measures in place to meet the licensing objectives, for example, to ensure that under 18-year-olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machine areas.

11.10 Appropriate licence conditions may cover issues such as:

- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self-barring schemes
- Provision of posters and/or information leaflets and helpline numbers, website addresses for organisations such as GamCare, Gamblers Anonymous, Gordon

House Association, National Debtline, local Citizens Advice Bureau, Beacon Counselling Trust and independent advice agencies.

- Measures / training for staff on how to deal with suspected truant school children on the premises

This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.

### **Casinos**

- 11.11 This Licensing Authority has not passed a “no casino” resolution under Section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005 but is aware that it has the power to do so. Should the authority decide in the future to pass such a resolution, this Statement of Principles will be updated. Any such decision must be made by Full Council.
- 11.12 This Licensing Authority is not currently able to issue premises licences for casinos. Should the Government propose that more casinos maybe licensed in the future, the authority will review its position, and this Statement of Principles will be updated.

### **Bingo Premises**

- 11.13 It is important that, if children are allowed to enter premises licensed for bingo they do not participate in gambling, other than on category D machines.
- 11.14 Where category C or above machines are available in premises to which children are admitted the Licensing Authority will expect applicants to demonstrate that there will be sufficient measures in place to ensure that:
- all such machines are in an area of the premises separated from the remainder of the premises by a physical barrier which is effective to prevent access other than through a designated entrance
  - only adults are admitted to the area where the machines are located
  - access to the area where the machines are located is supervised
  - the area where the machines are located is arranged so that it can be observed by the staff of the operator or the licence holder; and at the entrance to, and inside any such area, there are prominently displayed notices indicating that access to the area is prohibited to persons under 18
  - where appropriate conditions will be attached to the premises licence
- 11.15 The Licensing Authority will take account of any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission about the issues which should be considered in relation to the suitability and layout of bingo premises.

## **Betting Premises**

- 11.16 Betting premises may make available for use machines that accept bets on live events as a substitute for placing a bet over the counter. Known as Self-Service Betting Terminals (SSBTs) these machines are not classed as gaming machines and therefore neither count towards the maximum permitted number of gaming machines, nor must comply with any stake or prize limits.

The Licensing Authority will consider the matters listed below when considering the number, nature and circumstances of any betting machines an operator may want to offer.

- the size of the premises
- the number of counter positions available for person-to-person transactions
- the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable people

- 11.17 Section 172(8) of the Act provides that the holder of a betting premises licence may make available for use up to four gaming machines of category B, C or D. Regulations state that category B machines at betting premises are restricted to sub-category B2, B3 and B4 machines (the terminals commonly in use are able to provide both B2 and B3 content).

## **Tracks**

- 11.18 Tracks may be subject to one or more premises licence, provided that each licence relates to a specified area of the track.
- 11.19 The Licensing Authority will expect applicants to demonstrate that there will be sufficient measures in place to ensure that entrances to each type of premises are distinct and that children are excluded from gambling areas and do not have access to adult only gaming facilities.
- 11.20 It should be noted that children and young persons will be permitted to enter track areas where facilities for betting are provided on days when dog racing and/or horse racing takes place, but that they are still prevented from entering areas where gaming machines (other than category D machines) are provided.
- 11.21 Appropriate licence conditions may cover issues such as:
- Proof of age schemes
  - CCTV
  - Supervision of entrances / machine areas

- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self-exclusion schemes
- Provision of posters and/or information leaflets and helpline numbers, website addresses for organisations such as GamCare, Gamblers Anonymous, Gordon House Association, National Debt line, local Citizens Advice Bureau, Beacon Counselling Trust and Independent advice agencies.

This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.

- 11.22 The Licensing Authority will take account of any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission regarding where gaming machines may be located on tracks and any special considerations that should apply in relation, for example, to supervision of the machines and preventing children from playing them.
- 11.23 Where the applicant holds a pool betting operating licence and is going to use his entitlement of four gaming machines, if these machines are above category D, the applicant must demonstrate that they will be in areas from which children are excluded. Children and young persons are not prohibited from playing category D gaming machines on a track.
- 11.24 The Licensing Authority will consider restricting the number and location of betting machines in respect of applications for track premises licences.
- 11.25 When considering the number, nature and circumstances of betting machines an operator wants to offer, the Licensing Authority will consider:
- the size of the premises
  - the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable people
- 11.26 It is a mandatory condition of premises licences that clear and accessible information about the terms on which a bet may be placed must be displayed at betting premises, including tracks. This requirement could be met by printing the rules in the racecard or making them available in leaflet form from the main track office.
- 11.27 Applications must be made in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005 (Premises Licences and Provisional Statements) Regulations 2007.
- 11.28 The Licensing Authority will require detailed plans for the racetrack itself and the area that will be used for temporary “on-course” betting facilities (often known as the

“betting ring”). In the case of dog tracks and horse racecourses, the plans should also show fixed and mobile pool betting facilities operated by the Tote or track operator, as well as any other proposed gambling facilities. Plans should make clear what is being sought for authorisation under the track betting premises licence and what, if any, other areas are to be subject to a separate application for a different type of premises licence.

11.29 The Licensing Authority will normally require all self-contained premises operated by off-course betting operators to be the subject of separate premises licences to ensure that there is clarity between the respective responsibilities of the track operator and the off-course betting operator running a self-contained unit on the premises.

11.30 Section 179 of the Act provides that a betting premises licence in respect of a track may not authorise pool betting to take place, other than in respect of dog or horse racing and only where the acceptance of bets is by the holder of the betting premises licence, or in accordance with arrangements made by them. In the case of dog racing, this preserves the existing arrangements at dog tracks where the totalisator is operated by or on behalf of the occupier of the track.

11.31 Pool betting on a licensed greyhound track will only be permitted while the public are admitted to the track for the purpose of attending greyhound races, and no other sporting events are taking place.

## **12 Provisional Statements**

12.1 An applicant may apply for a provisional statement in respect of premises expected to be constructed, altered or acquired.

12.2 Applications for provisional statements will be dealt with in a similar manner to applications for a premises licence.

12.3 Where a provisional statement is granted and an application subsequently made for a premises licence, the Licensing Authority will disregard any representations made which address matters that could have been addressed when the provisional statement was considered unless there has been a change of circumstances.

12.4 A premises licence will be granted in the same terms as the provisional statement unless:

- representations are received which address matters that could not have been addressed when the provisional statement was considered
- there has been a change of circumstances, or

- the premises have been constructed or altered otherwise than in accordance with the plans and information included with the application for the provisional statement.

12.5 When determining an application for a provisional statement the Licensing Authority will operate in accordance with the Act and will not have regard to any issues related to planning consent or building regulations, for example, the likelihood that planning consent will be granted.

## **13 Reviews**

13.1 Requests for a review of a premises licence can be made by interested parties or responsible authorities.

13.2 A review will be carried out provided it is:

- in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission
- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- in accordance with the authority's statement of principles

13.3 A review will not be carried out if the Licensing Authority considers that the request is frivolous, vexatious, will certainly not cause this authority to alter, revoke or suspend the licence, or it is substantially the same as previous representations or requests for review.

13.4 The Licensing Authority can also initiate a review of a licence or of a particular type of licence based on any reason which it thinks is appropriate.

## **14 Permits**

### **Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre (FEC) Gaming Machine Permits**

14.1 Where Category D gaming machines are to be provided at premises which do not have a premises licence but will be wholly or mainly used for making Category D gaming machines available for use, an application may be made for a permit. As a result, it is generally not permissible for such premises to correspond to an entire shopping centre, airport, motorway service station or similar. Typically, the machines would be in a designated, enclosed area.

- 14.2 In exercising its functions in respect of FEC permits, the Licensing Authority need not but may have regard to the licensing objectives and must have regard to any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission.
- 14.3 The Licensing Authority cannot attach conditions to this type of permit but will consider the matters set out below in paragraphs 14.5 to 14.7 when determining the suitability of an applicant for a permit.
- 14.4 Applicants will be expected to show that there are policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. These may include appropriate measures and training for staff in dealing with:
- suspected truant school children on the premises
  - unsupervised young children on the premises
  - children causing problems on or around the premises
- 14.5 Applicants will be expected to demonstrate a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes of the gambling that is permissible in unlicensed FECs, and that staff are trained to have a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes.
- 14.6 Applicants will be required to demonstrate that they have no relevant convictions as set out in Schedule 7 of the Act.
- 14.7 The Council will not normally grant a FEC permit for premises which are located close to schools.

#### **(Alcohol) Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits**

- 14.8 The Licensing Authority can remove the automatic authorisation if:
- provision of the machines is not reasonably consistent with the pursuit of the licensing objectives
  - gaming has taken place on the premises that breaches a condition of section 282 of the Gambling Act (i.e. that written notice has been provided to the Licensing Authority, that a fee has been provided and that any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission about the location and operation of the machine has been complied with)
  - the premises are mainly used for gaming; or
  - an offence under the Gambling Act has been committed on the premises
- 14.9 If a licensed premises wishes to have more than two machines, then a permit is required.

- 14.10 The Licensing Authority must take account of the licensing objectives, and any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission issued under Section 25 of the Act when considering an application for a permit.
- 14.11 The Licensing Authority may also consider such matters as it thinks are relevant. Such matters will be decided on a case-by-case basis but generally there will be regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.
- 14.12 The Licensing Authority will expect the applicant to demonstrate that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18-year-olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machines. Such measures may include notices and signage, adult machines being in sight of the bar or in sight of staff who will monitor that the machines are not being used by those under 18.
- 14.13 As regards the protection of vulnerable persons, applicants may wish to consider the provision of posters and/or information leaflets and helpline numbers/website addresses for organisations such as GamCare Gamblers Anonymous, Gordon House Association, National Debtline and local Citizens Advice Bureaux. Beacon Counselling Trust and independent advice agencies.
- 14.14 It is recognised that some alcohol licensed premises may apply for a premises licence for their non-alcohol licensed areas. Any such application would most likely need to be applied for and dealt with as an Adult Gaming Centre premises licence.
- 14.15 The Licensing Authority may decide to grant the application with a smaller number of machines and/or a different category of machines than that applied for. No other conditions can be attached to the permit.
- 14.16 The holder of a permit must comply with any Code of Practice issued by the Gambling Commission about the location and operation of the machines.

### **Travelling Fairs**

- 14.17 A travelling fair is defined as a fair consisting wholly or principally for the provision of amusements and is provided by persons who travel from place to place and is held at a place which has been used for the provision of fairs on no more than 27 days per calendar year.
- 14.18 Category D gaming machines or equal chance gaming may be provided without a permit if facilities for gambling amount to no more than ancillary amusement at the fair.

## **Prize Gaming Permits**

14.19 Gaming is prize gaming if the prize is not affected by the number of people playing or the amount paid for or raised by the gaming.

14.20 In exercising its functions in respect of prize gaming permits, the Licensing Authority need not, but may, have regard to the licensing objectives and must have regard to any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission.

14.21 There are conditions in the Act which a permit holder must comply with which are:

- the limits on participation fees, as set out in regulations, must be complied with
- all chances to participate in the gaming must be allocated on the premises on which the gaming is taking place and on one day
- the game must be played and completed on the day the chances are allocated and the result of the game must be made public in the premises on the day that it is played
- the prize for which the game is played must not exceed the amount set out in regulations (if a money prize), or the prescribed value (if nonmonetary prize); and
- participation in the gaming must not entitle the player to take part in any other gambling

14.22 The Licensing Authority cannot attach any other conditions to this type of permit.

14.23 Applicants should set out the types of gaming intended to be offered and should demonstrate:

- that they understand the limits to stakes and prizes that are set out in regulations; and
- that the gaming offered is within the law

14.24 The Licensing Authority will consider the above matters when determining the suitability of an applicant for a permit.

## **Club Gaming and Club Machine Permits**

14.25 If a Members Club or a Miners Welfare Institute does not wish to have the full range of facilities permitted by a club gaming permit, they may apply to the Licensing Authority for a club machine permit authorising the holder to have up to three gaming machines of categories B3A, B4, C and D. Commercial Clubs are not permitted to provide nonmachine gaming (other than exempt gaming under section 269 of the Gambling Act 2005) and should apply for a club machine permit, however, this permit will not

allow the Commercial Club to site category B3A gaming machines offering lottery games in the club.

- 14.26 The Club Gaming Permit will enable the premises to provide gaming machines (3 machines of categories B, C or D), equal chance gaming and games of chance in accordance with regulations made under the Act.
- 14.27 A Club Gaming Machine Permit will enable Members Clubs and Miners' Welfare Institutes to provide three machines of categories B3A, B4, C or D. Commercial Clubs may apply for a Club Gaming Machine Permit which will enable the premises to provide three machines of categories B4, C or D.
- 14.28 Members Clubs must:
- have at least 25 members
  - be established and conducted wholly or mainly for purposes other than gaming, unless the gaming is permitted by separate regulations (It is anticipated that this will include bridge and whist clubs)
  - be permanent in nature
  - not be established to make commercial profit
  - controlled by its members equally
- 14.29 Examples include working men's clubs, branches of the Royal British Legion and clubs with political affiliations and Commercial Clubs.
- 14.30 The Licensing Authority may only refuse an application on the grounds that
- the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for a members' or Commercial Club or Miners' Welfare Institute and therefore is not entitled to receive the type of permit for which it has applied
  - the applicant's premises are used wholly or mainly by children and/or young persons
  - an offence under the Act or a breach of a permit has been committed by the applicant while providing gaming facilities
  - a permit held by the applicant has been cancelled in the previous ten years; or
  - an objection has been lodged by the Commission or the police
- 14.31 There is also a 'fast-track' procedure available under the Act for premises which hold a Club Premises Certificate under the Licensing Act 2003 (Schedule 12 paragraph 10).
- 14.32 Under the fast-track procedure there is no opportunity for objections to be made by the Gambling Commission or the police, and the grounds upon which an authority can refuse a permit are reduced.

14.33 The only grounds upon which an application under the fast-track process may be refused are:

- that the club is established primarily for gaming, other than gaming of a prescribed kind (currently bridge and whist)
- that in addition to the prescribed gaming, the applicant provides facilities for other gaming; or
- that a club gaming permit or club machine permit issued to the applicant in the last ten years has been cancelled

14.34 There are statutory conditions on club gaming permits that no child uses a category B or C machine on the premises and that the holder complies with any relevant provision of a code of practice about the location and operation of gaming machines.

## **15 Temporary Use Notices**

15.1 A temporary use notice may only be given by the holder of an operator's licence.

15.2 A set of premises may not be the subject of temporary use notices for more than 21 days within a 12-month period.

15.3 A set of premises will be the subject of a temporary use notice if any part of the premises is the subject of a notice. Consequently, operators cannot extend the limits on temporary use notices in respect of large premises by giving separate notices for different parts of the premises.

15.4 The Licensing Authority will object to temporary use notices where it appears that they are being used to permit regular gambling in a set of premises.

15.5 In determining whether a place falls within the definition of "a set of premises" the Licensing Authority will take into consideration ownership/occupation and control of the premises. For example, a large exhibition centre will normally be regarded as one set of premises and will not be allowed separate temporary use notices for each of its exhibition halls. Individual units in a shopping centre may be regarded as different sets of premises if they are occupied and controlled by different people.

## **16 Occasional Use Notices**

16.1 Where betting takes place on a track on eight days or less in a calendar year, betting may be permitted by an Occasional Use Notice (OUN) without the need for a full premises licence. The Secretary of State has the power to increase or decrease the number of OUN's that an operating licence holder could apply for each calendar year. 'Day' is defined as midnight to midnight, so an event that starts on one calendar day and ends on the following day would count as two days. OUNs are designed to allow

licensed betting operators to provide betting facilities at genuine sporting events (such as point-to-point racecourses and golf courses for major competitions) within the boundaries of the identified venue on a specific date, without the need for a full betting premises licence. An OUN must be served by a person who is responsible for the administration of events on the track or by an occupier of the track. The following should be noted in relation to an OUN:

- OUNs can only be relied upon for eight days or fewer in a calendar year and therefore licensing authorities should keep a record of the number of notices served in relation to each track. The period of eight days applies to the venue and not the individual who has submitted the notice.
- An OUN must be submitted for each day that betting activity will be conducted on the premises. If betting activity is to be held over a period of eight consecutive days, the operator will be required to submit eight separate notices.
- The notice must specify the day on which it has effect. An event running past midnight and ending on the following day accounts for two occasional use days, even though in practice it is one event.
- Notice must be given to the licensing authority and the police, in writing, before the event starts.
- No premises licence can exist for the place which is the subject of the notice.

16.2 A track includes a horse racing course, a dog track or any other premises on any part of which a race or other sporting event takes place or is intended to take place. This could include, for example, agricultural land upon which a point-to-point meeting takes place. The track need not be a permanent fixture.

16.3 Those giving OUN's will be expected to demonstrate that the premises fall within the definition of a track.

16.4 The Licensing Authority has very little discretion regarding these notices other than to ensure that the statutory limit of eight days in a calendar year is not exceeded.

## **17 Small Society Lotteries**

17.1 The Licensing Authority is responsible for the registration of small society lotteries. Licensing Authorities are required by paragraph 44 of Schedule 11 of the Act to record details of the society on a register. The authority holds a public register and once the application for registration has been accepted and entered on the local register, the licensing authority will then notify both the applicant and the Gambling Commission of the registration as soon as practicable.

17.2 A society is a non-commercial organisation established and conducted:

- for charitable purposes
- for the purpose of enabling participation in, or of supporting
- sport, athletics or a cultural activity; or
- for any other non-commercial purpose other than that of private gain and the proceeds of any lottery must be devoted to those purposes

17.3 The total value of tickets to be put on sale per single lottery must be £20,000 or less or the aggregate value of tickets to be put on sale for all lotteries in a calendar year must not exceed £250,000. If either of these values is exceeded, the society will need to be licensed by the Gambling Commission to operate large lotteries.

17.4 Applications for registration must be made in accordance with the Small Society Lotteries (Registration of Non-Commercial Societies) Regulations 2007.

17.5 An application may be refused on the following grounds:

- An operating licence held by the applicant for registration has been revoked or an application for an operating licence by the applicant for registration has been refused within the past five years
- The applicant is not a non-commercial society
- A person who will or may be connected with the promotion of the lottery has been convicted of a relevant offence
- Information provided in or with the application for registration is found to be false or misleading

17.6 Registrations run for an unlimited period, unless the registration is cancelled or revoked.

17.7 The limits placed on small society lotteries are as follows:

- At least 20% of the lottery proceeds must be applied to the purposes of the society
- No single prize may be worth more than £25,000
- Rollovers between lotteries are only permitted where every lottery affected is also a small society lottery promoted by the same society and the maximum single prize is £25,000
- Every ticket in the lottery must cost the same and the society must take payment for the ticket before entry into the draw is allowed

17.8 No later than three months after each lottery draw, returns must be sent to the Licensing Authority containing the following information:

- The arrangements for the lottery

- The total proceeds of the lottery
- The amounts deducted for prizes
- The amounts deducted for expenses
- The amount applied to the purposes of the society
- Whether any expenses incurred in connection with the lottery were not paid for by deduction from the proceeds and, if so, the amount of such expenses and the sources from which they were paid

## **18 Human rights**

18.1 The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporated the European Convention on Human rights into English law. It makes it unlawful for a local authority to act in a way which is incompatible with a Convention right.

18.2 The Licensing Authority will have particular regard to the following rights in determining licence applications:

**Article 6** – in determination of civil rights and obligations everyone is entitled to a fair public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law

**Article 8** – everyone has the right to respect for his home and family life

**Article 1 of the First Protocol** – every person is entitled to peaceful enjoyment of his or her possessions

## **19. Promotion of Equality**

19.1 Cheshire West & Chester Council recognises that:

- there is a legal obligation on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination; and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different groups
- local authorities are also required, to produce equality schemes, assess and consult on the likely impact of proposed policies on equality, monitor policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of equality, and publish the results of such consultations, assessments and monitoring

19.2 An assessment will be undertaken with the Council's Equality and Diversity Officer to confirm that the policy meets the Council's Equality and Diversity Objectives. The assessment will be made available as a public document on the Council's website.

## 20 Advice and contact points

20.1 Advice for applicants and members of the public can be obtained during office hours from the following Cheshire West and Chester Council offices:

The Portal, Wellington Road, Ellesmere Port CH65 0BA  
Tel 03001237737

The Drummer, Winsford CW7 1AH  
Tel 03001237737

Email; [Licensing@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:Licensing@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)  
Website; [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

A copy of the guidance issued by the Gambling Commission can be viewed at [www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk](http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk)

**Consultees**

Age UK  
Association of British Bookmakers  
BACTA  
Bingo Association of Great Britain  
British Casino Association  
Burtonwood Brewery Plc  
Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Trust  
Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service  
Cheshire West and Chester Localities (for onward distribution)  
Cheshire West and Chester Planning  
Chester Racecourse  
Chief Constable Cheshire Constabulary  
Citizens Advice Bureau  
Coral  
Gambling Commission  
GamCare  
J. W. Lees & Co.  
Ladbrokes Betting and Gaming Limited  
Leisure Link  
Meca Bingo  
Police Licensing  
Punch Taverns  
Reel Leisure Ltd  
Responsible Gambling Trust  
Royal Mencap Society  
Sanctuary Housing Association  
Save The Children  
Save The Family  
The Racecourse Association  
William Hill  
Working Men's Club and Institute Union

## Gaming Machine Categories

Category of machine	Maximum stake (from April 2019)	Maximum prize (from Jan 2014)
A	Unlimited – No category A gaming machines are currently permitted	
B1	£5	£10,000*
B2	£2	£500
B3A	£2	£500
B3	£2	£500
B4	£2	£400
C	£1	£100
D – non-money prize	30p	£8
D – non-money prize (crane grab machines only)	£1	£50
D – money prize	10p	£5
D – combined money and non-money prize	10p	£8 (of which no more than £5 may be a money prize)
D – combined money and non-money prize (coin pusher or penny falls machines only)	20p	£20 (of which no more than £10 may be a money prize)

\* With option of max £20,000 linked progressive jackpot on premises basis only

Source: Gambling Commission

## Summary of Machine Provisions by Premises

Premises Type	Machine Category				
	B2	B3	B4	C	D
<b>Betting premises and tracks occupied by pool betting</b>	Maximum of 4 machines categories B2 to D (except B3A machines)				
<b>Bingo premises<sup>1</sup></b>		Maximum of 20% of the total number of gaming machines which are available for use on the premises categories B3 to B4		No limit on category C or D machines	
<b>Adult gaming centre<sup>2</sup></b>		Maximum of 20% of the total number of gaming machines which are available for use on the premises categories B3 to B4		No limit on category C or D machines	
<b>Licensed Family entertainment centre<sup>3</sup></b>				No limit on category C or D machines	
<b>Family entertainment centre (with permit)<sup>3</sup></b>					No limit on category D machines
<b>Clubs or miners' welfare institute (with permits)<sup>4</sup></b>			Maximum of 3 machines in categories B3A or B4 to D		
<b>Qualifying alcohol licensed premises</b>				1 or 2 machines of category C or D automatic upon notification	
<b>Qualifying alcohol licensed premises (with licensed premises gaming machine permit)</b>				Number of category C-D machines as specified on permit	
<b>Travelling fair</b>					No limit on category D machines

<sup>1</sup>Bingo premises licence are entitled to make available for use a number of category B gaming machines not exceeding 20% of the total number of gaming machines on the premises. Where a premises licence was granted before 13 July 2011, they are entitled to make available eight category B gaming machines, or 20% of the total number of gaming machines, whichever is the greater. Category B machines at bingo premises are restricted to sub-category B3 and B4 machines, but not B3A machines.

<sup>2</sup>Adult gaming centres are entitled to make available for use a number of category B gaming machines not exceeding 20% of the total number of gaming machines which are available for use on the premises and any number of category C or D machines. Where a premises licence was granted before 13 July 2011, they are entitled to make available four category B gaming machines, or 20% of the total number of gaming machines, whichever is the greater. Category B machines at adult gaming centres are restricted to sub-category B3 and B4 machines, but not B3A machines.

<sup>3</sup>Only premises that are wholly or mainly used for making gaming machines available may hold an unlicensed FEC gaming machine permit or an FEC premises licence. Category C machines may only be sited within licensed FEC's and where an FEC permit is in force. They must be in a separate area to ensure the segregation and supervision of machines that may only be played by adults. There is no power for the licensing authority to set a limit on the number of machines under the FEC permit.

<sup>4</sup>Members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes with a club gaming permit or with a club machine permit, are entitled to site a total of three machines in categories B3A to D but only one B3A machine can be sited as part of this entitlement.

<sup>5</sup>Commercial clubs with club machine or gaming permits are entitled to a total of three machines in categories B4 to D.

Source: Gambling Commission (Guidance to licensing authorities published April 2021)

## Appendix 4

### Summary of Licensing Authority Delegations Permitted Under the Gambling Act 2005

Matter to be dealt with	Full Council	Sub-committee of Licensing Committee	Officers
Final approval of the Licensing Authority statement of policy	X		
Policy not to permit casinos	X		
Fee setting (when appropriate)		X (if delegated by full council)	
Application for premises licences		X Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	X Where no representations Received/representations have been withdrawn
Application for a variation to a licence		X Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	X Where no representations received/representations have been withdrawn
Application for a transfer of a licence		X Where representations have been received from the Commission or responsible authority	X Where no representations received from the Commission or responsible authority
Application for a provisional statement		X Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	X Where no representations received/representations have been withdrawn
Review of a premises licence		X	

Application for club gaming/club machine permits		<b>X</b> Where objections have been made and not withdrawn	<b>X</b> Where no objections made/objections have been withdrawn
Cancellation of club gaming/club machine permits		<b>X</b>	
Applications for other permits			<b>X</b>
Cancellation of licensed premises gaming machine permits			<b>X</b>
Consideration of temporary use notice			<b>X</b>
Decision to give a counter notice to a temporary use notice		<b>X</b>	

X indicates the lowest level to which decisions can be delegated

Source: Gambling Commission (Guidance to licensing authorities 5th edition September 2015)

## Local Area Profile 2025

### 1. How do people gamble?

Gambling includes taking part in activities such as:

- Lottery and scratch cards
- Fruit or slot machines
- Casino games
- Sports betting
- Bingo
- Arcade games
- Betting on events

Gambling is considered a risk-taking behaviour, but it encompasses a wide range of products with different risk levels. For example, the National Lottery is played twice a week while gaming machines offer players the chance to gamble frequently in a short space of time.

The most recent data from the Gambling Commission shows that National Lottery draws and other charity lottery draws are the most commonly reported forms of gambling by adults aged 18 and over (29% and 15% respectively). This is followed by scratch cards (12%) and betting (10%).

### 2. Where do people gamble?

Gambling activities tend to take place either:

- In person in licensed premises such as:
  - Betting shops
  - Bingo and Adult Gaming Centres
  - Racetrack
  - Family Entertainment Centres
  - Qualifying alcohol-licensed premises like pubs
- Remotely online through devices such as:
  - Smartphone
  - PC / Laptop / Table
  - Smart TV
  - Gaming Consoles

The Gambling Survey for Great Britain<sup>1</sup> found little difference between the number of adults who gamble online (17%) compared to those gambling in-person (18%) (when excluding lottery draw only players).

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics on gambling participation – Year 2 (2024), wave 4: Official Statistics, Gambling Commission

### 3. **Why do people gamble?**

The 2023 Annual Gambling Survey<sup>2</sup> asked people who had gambled in the past 12 months their reasons for gambling. The most commonly reported answer was 'for the chance of winning big money' (86% in England), 'Because it's fun' (71% in England) and 'because it's exciting' (56% in England).

### 4. **Gambling-related harm**

For many people, gambling is an enjoyable leisure activity, undertaken from time to time often as part of celebrating a social or family event. For some people however, gambling can lead to serious and significant problems including adverse socio-economic and health outcomes, alongside the effects on wider social networks and relationships. Gambling-related harm (GRH) is the adverse impact from gambling on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, communities, and society.

The Gambling Survey for Great Britain 2023<sup>3</sup> uses the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI) to explore gambling related harm. The PGSI uses the following scale:

- 0 = no identified problems
- 1-2 = low risk of problems
- 3-7 = moderate risk of problems
- 8+ = experiencing problem gambling

The survey found that men and those aged under 35 were more likely to experience problem gambling. Those who bet on non-sporting events in person and those who gamble on online slots, are also more likely to be experiencing problem gambling than the average person who gambled in the past 12 months. The most frequently reported adverse consequences were reducing spending on everyday items (6.8%), lying to family (6.4%) and feeling isolated (5.5%).

### 5. **Who is most likely to gamble?**

In 2019, Public Health England published a gambling related harm evidence review<sup>4</sup> It found that the highest rates of gambling participation are among people who are employed, have higher academic qualifications, and are in a relatively less deprived group. They also have better general psychological health and higher life satisfaction than those less likely to report gambling participation. However, the profile of gamblers changes as gambling risk increases, with gambling related harm associated with people who are unemployed, live in more deprived areas, have poor health and low life satisfaction and wellbeing. They are typically male and in younger age groups.

The review indicated that demographic factors, particularly being male, were more significant in predicting at-risk gambling behaviour than economic factors such as income, employment, and relative deprivation. Poor mental health is a stronger

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<sup>2</sup> Gambling Survey for Great Britain – Annual Report (2023): Official Statistics

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Gambling-related harms: evidence review, accessed online, published 18 October 2019 last updated 11 January 2024, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and Public Health England

predictor of at-risk gambling than both poor physical health and negative health behaviours, with the notable exception of alcohol.

The 2023 Gambling Survey for Great Britain<sup>5</sup> found little difference across the IMD percentiles 1,2,3 and 4 in terms of participating in gambling over the last 12 months, and those in IMD 5 (least deprived) were less likely to have participated in gambling. However, those living in the most 20% deprived areas in England, are more likely to experience more severe gambling problems compared to other deciles.

The evidence review<sup>6</sup> found an association between gambling at all levels of harm and increased alcohol consumption. This association is evident for overall gambling participation but is greater for at-risk and problem gambling. Harmful gambling was also associated with participation in online gambling (including online slots), casino and bingo games, electronic gambling machines in bookmakers, sports and other event betting, betting exchanges and dog racing. Harmful gamblers are more likely to participate in seven or more gambling activities.

## 6. Gambling prevalence

In the period September 2024 to January 2025, the Gambling Survey for Great Britain found overall participation in any gambling activity for those aged 18 plus (in the past 4 weeks), to be 46%. This is wave 4 of the survey, in previous waves gambling participation rates varied at 48% and 49%<sup>7</sup>.

An annual 2024 figure is unavailable at the time of writing. However, the Gambling Survey for Great Britain 2023 annual report<sup>8</sup> indicated that almost half of the adult population had participated in some form of gambling in the past 4 weeks (48%). This increased to 61% over a 12-month period, the highest it had been in the last five years with previous figures staying close to the 50% mark.

There is variation across regions as shown in figure one and two. The proportion of people gambling is highest in the Northwest.

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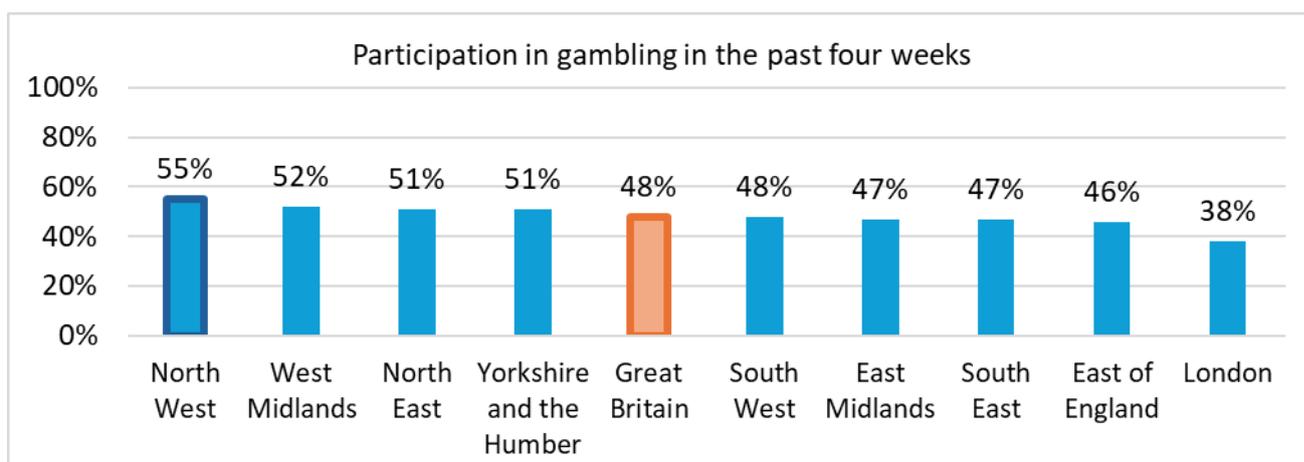
<sup>5</sup> Gambling Survey for Great Britain – Annual Report (2023): Official Statistics

<sup>6</sup> Gambling-related harms: evidence review, accessed online, published 18 October 2019 last updated 11 January 2024, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and Public Health England

<sup>7</sup> Statistics on gambling participation – Year 2 (2024), wave 3: Official Statistics, Gambling Commission; Statistics on gambling participation – Year 2 (2024), wave 2: Official Statistics, Gambling Commission; Statistics on gambling participation – Year 2 (2024), wave 1: Official Statistics, Gambling Commission

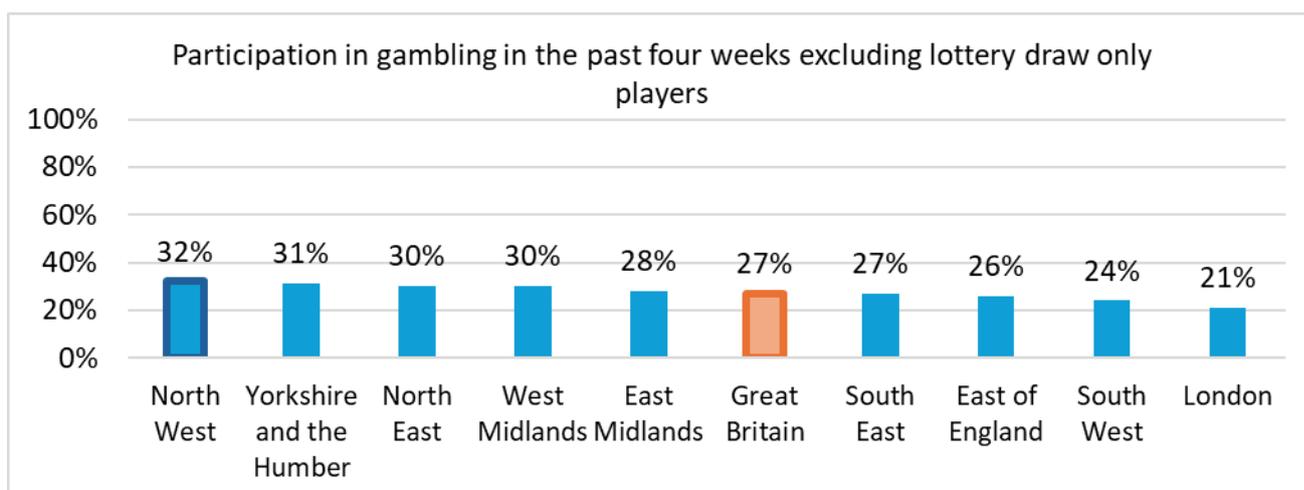
<sup>8</sup> Gambling Survey for Great Britain – Annual Report (2023): Official Statistics

Figure 1: People participating in any gambling activity in the past four weeks by region



Source: Gambling Survey for Great Britain, 2023, adults aged 18 and over

Figure 2: People participating in any gambling activity in the past four weeks excluding lottery draw only players, by region



Source: Gambling Survey for Great Britain, 2023, adults aged 18 and over

If we look at the types of gambling people in the Northwest are taking part in, they have a slightly higher proportion of people partaking in any lottery draw, online instant win games and casino games than other regions. A more noticeable difference is a higher proportion betting at 14% compared to an average of 10%. Most of the difference in betting is for betting on sports and racing online or via an app (13%).

## 7. Local data

### 7.1 Local prevalence

Gambling prevalence is not available at a Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) geography. If we take a crude average of the 2024 wave 1 to 4 gambling participation data to be 48% including lottery draws, and 28% excluding lottery draws (both 'rate over the previous 4 weeks'), we can apply this to the CW&C adult population<sup>9</sup> (aged 18 and over). However, the 2023 survey<sup>10</sup> indicated that gambling rates are higher in the Northwest than the national average, at 55% including lottery draws and 32% excluding them.

Taking this into account, there are an estimated 141,200 to 161,800 adults who have taken part in gambling in the last 4 weeks in CW&C. If we remove those who took part in lottery draws only, there are an estimated 82,400 to 94,100 adults who took part in some sort of gambling activity<sup>7</sup>.

### 7.2 Type of gamblers in Cheshire West and Chester

The Great Britain Gambling Behaviours Classification (GB2C) observed online transactional behaviours drawn from industry data<sup>9</sup>. It used 1.2 million anonymised online gambling accounts recorded through 2022 to segment customers into 11 active subgroups, linking customer records to neighbourhood attributes and Index of multiple deprivation. An active gambler was determined as an individual who had a verified online gambling account, who participated in at least one form of gambling using money, made multiple deposits on multiple days within a year, gamble at least once a month on average, and maintain an account tenure of over three years.

In CW&C there were 50,244 active gamblers, 17.2% of the adult population. Of these active gamblers, 54.8% participated in betting and gaming online, 21.7% in betting only, and 23.5% in gaming only. The most common online gambler classification in CW&C were:

- 'BG5 – Neighbourhood Deprivation' of which there were 7,212 individuals. For these gamblers participation is high frequency and high intensity with frequent deposits being made. It is the group that has the lowest proportion of participants turning a profit in any given month and is overrepresented with males aged 35 to 44 and is strongly associated with deprivation.
- 'B2 – Well Resourced Hobbyists' of which there were 6,835. These gamblers are typically less deprived than average and reside in a wide range of neighbourhood types. They gamble infrequently, following a predictable and low intensity pattern, mainly at weekends or around major sporting events.
- 'BG4 - Mindful Entertainment Seekers' of which there were 6,234. These individuals gamble frequently at regular intervals but have infrequent and modest deposits. They tend to be strategic and mindful in their gambling using low stakes to maintain continuous engagement. These gamblers have

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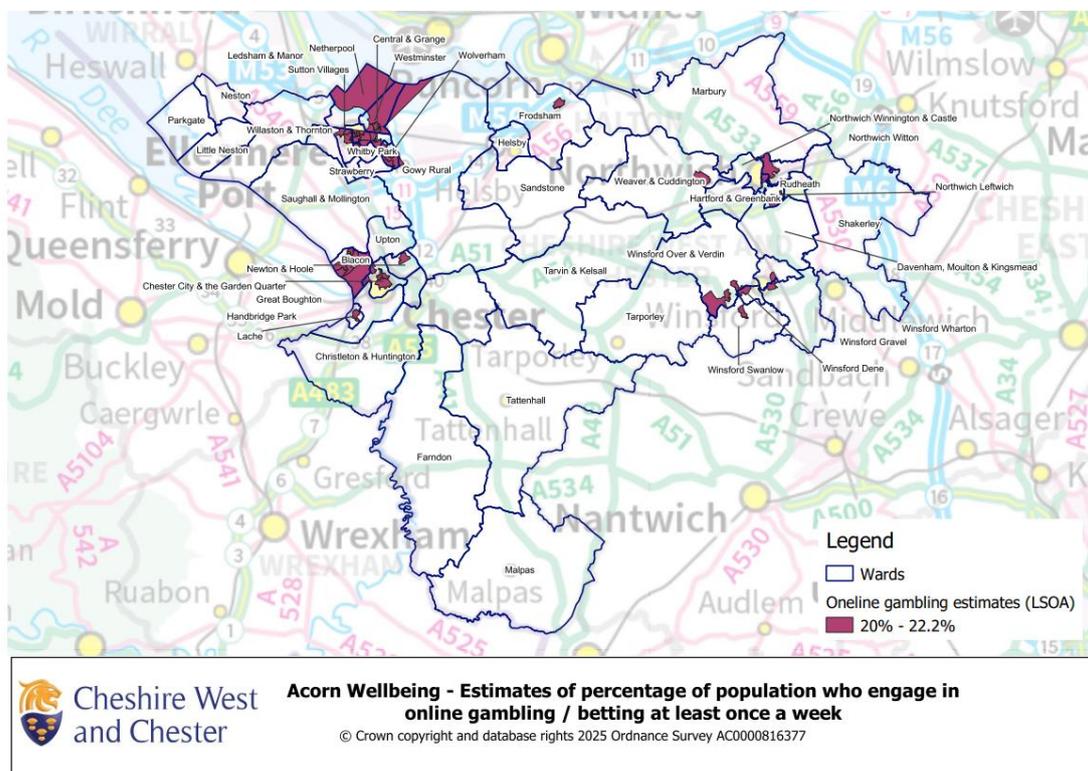
<sup>9</sup> Population data taken from Mid-year population estimates, mid-2023, Office for National Statistics

<sup>10</sup> Gambling Survey for Great Britain – Annual Report (2023): Official Statistics

higher unemployment rates, are in routine occupations or retired, live in deprived areas, have low incidence of higher education, and prevalent health challenges.

Acorn Wellbeing is a classification tool segmenting the UK population by analysing demographics, social, health and wellbeing characteristics<sup>11</sup>. Acorn Wellbeing also looks at online gambling activity with the variable 'Online activity (one or more times per week) – Gambling / Betting'. It estimates that 18.7% of the UK population engage in online gambling/betting one or more times a week. Those living in communal establishments are more likely to engage in online gambling (35%). In Cheshire West and Chester, 18.2% of the population are estimated to engage in online gambling / betting one or more times a week. This ranges from 17% to 22% across the LSOAs. LSOAs with higher rates of gambling are shown in map 1.

Map 1: Estimates of online gambling hotspot map – Acorn Wellbeing 2024



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### 7.3 Estimated gambling related harm in Cheshire West and Chester

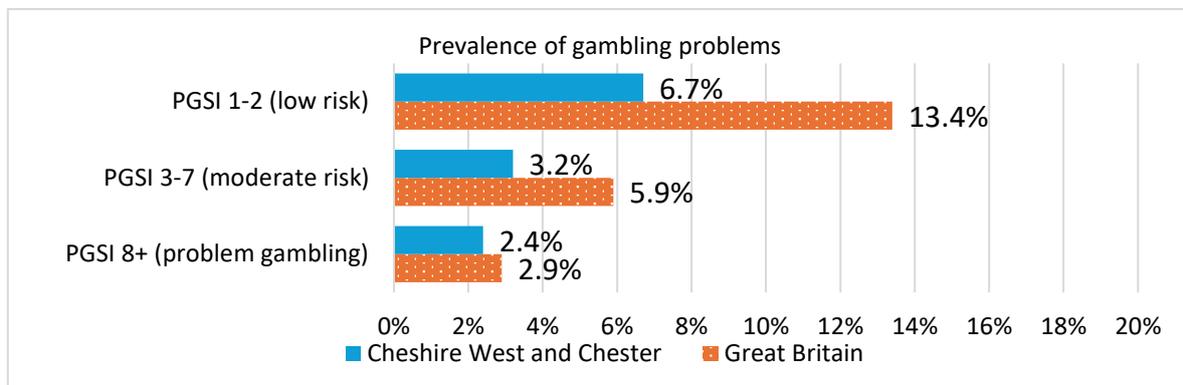
GambleAware have produced local authority profiles of gambling related harm<sup>12</sup> based on the Annual Great Britain Treatment and Support Survey 2023. The profile estimates that prevalence of low-risk (6.7%) and moderate-risk (3.2%) gambling in Cheshire West and Chester are both lower than the national average (13.4% and

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<sup>12</sup> GambleAware GB maps local authorities, GambleAware, accessed online, <https://www.gambleaware.org/our-research/publication-library/treatment-and-support-survey/gambleaware-gb-maps-local-authorities/>

5.9% respectively), while levels of problem gambling (2.4%) are slightly lower than the national average (2.9%). This is shown in figure three.

Figure 3. Estimated levels of gambling behaviour which may cause harm

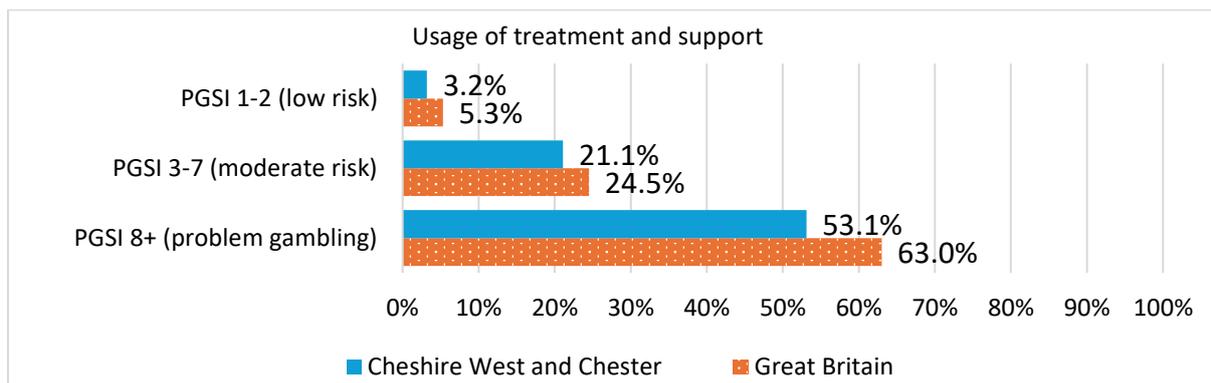


Source: GambleAware GB maps local authorities, GambleAware, based on 2023 data

#### 7.4 Estimated usage of treatment and support by gamblers in Cheshire West and Chester

GambleAware<sup>13</sup> further estimate that fewer gamblers in CW&C have accessed treatment or support in the last year compared to the England average. This is for all levels of gambling. A notably higher proportion of problem gamblers have accessed treatment or support (53.1%) than low risk (3.2%) and moderate risk (21.1%) gamblers.

Figure 4: Proportion of adults who gamble who have accessed treatment or support in the last year by level of gambling problems

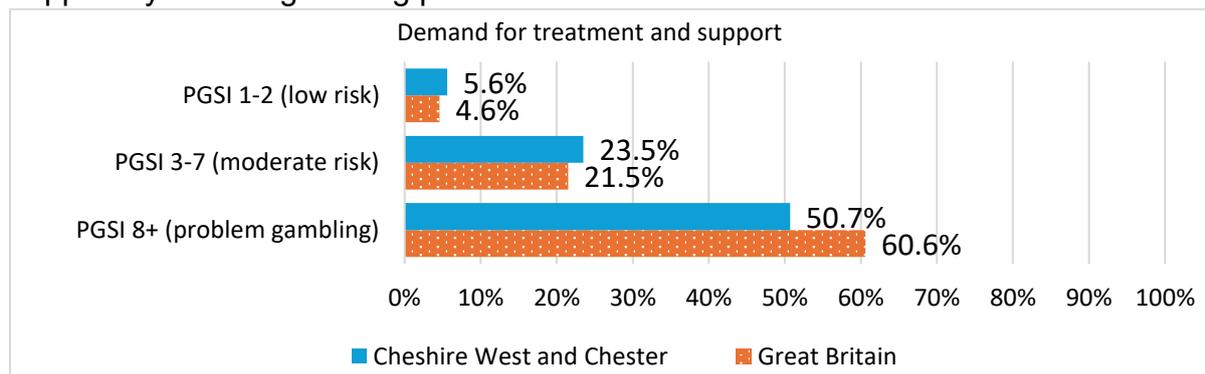


Source: GambleAware GB maps local authorities, GambleAware, based on 2023 data

Although estimates for usage of treatment and support by gamblers in CW&C is lower than the Great Britain average, the proportion of adults with low risk and moderate risk gambling behaviours who would like access to treatment or support is higher in CW&C than the Great Britain average<sup>10</sup> as shown in figure 5.

<sup>13</sup> GambleAware GB maps local authorities, GambleAware, accessed online, <https://www.gambleaware.org/our-research/publication-library/treatment-and-support-survey/gambleaware-gb-maps-local-authorities/>

Figure 5: Proportion of adults who gamble and would like access to treatment or support by level of gambling problems



Source: GambleAware GB maps local authorities, GambleAware, based on 2023 data

### 7.5 Estimated fiscal cost of ‘problem gambling’ in Cheshire West and Chester

GambleAware, YouGov and the National Institute of Economic and Social Research carried out research to explore the fiscal cost of gambling<sup>14</sup>. The cost estimates include statutory homelessness, deaths from suicide, depression, alcohol dependence, illicit drug use, unemployment benefits, imprisonment and gambling treatment.

The estimated cost associated with ‘problem gambling’ per year in Cheshire West and Chester is £5 million. This equates to £17.00 per head of the population aged 18 plus. Table 1 shows the fiscal costs associated with problem gambling for CW&C and neighbouring authorities.

Table 1: Fiscal costs associated with ‘problem gambling’ per year for Cheshire West and Chester and neighbouring authorities

	Fiscal costs	Population aged 18+	Cost/head of population aged 18+
<b>Cheshire East</b>	5,800,000	330,824	£17.53
<b>Cheshire West and Chester</b>	5,000,000	294,180	£17.00
Flintshire	2,500,000	124,995	£20.00
Halton	800,000	102,054	£7.84
Shropshire	5,300,000	269,867	£19.64
Warrington	2,400,000	168,236	£14.27
Wirral	4,100,000	258,977	£15.83
Wrexham	2,800,000	108,383	£25.83

Source: GambleAware GB maps local authorities, GambleAware, based on 2023 data applied to Population Estimates mid-2023, Office for National Statistics

<sup>14</sup> The economic and social cost of harms associated with gambling in England, Evidence update 2023, Office for Health Improvement & Disparities

## 8. The gambling industry in Cheshire West and Chester

### 8.1 Number of gambling premises

Table 2: Number of gambling premises at June 2025

Type of premises	Definition	CW&C wards
<b>31 betting shops</b>	Take bets on sporting fixtures and can have two gaming machines with up to £500 prize and maximum £2 stake	Chester City & the Garden Quarter x6 Central & Grange x4 Northwich Witton x3 Blacon x2 Newton & Hoole x2 Frodsham Great Boughton Handbridge Park Ledsham & Manor Neston Netherpool Northwich Winnington & Castle Strawberry Sutton Villages Tarpoley Upton Weaver & Cuddington Winsford Dene Winsford Wharton
<b>6 adult gaming centres</b>	Up to 20% gaming machines with £2.00 stake and £400 prize and 80% £100 prize all with a max £1 stake	Chester City & the Garden Quarter x2 Gowy Rural x2 Central & Grange Northwich Witton
<b>3 family entertainment centres</b>	Amusement arcade. Allows under 18. Lower stake machines max stake 10p with maxi prize £100 (over 18 and £0.10 to £1.00 with prizes of £5.00 to £50.00, includes crane grab machines with no age restrictions)	Saughall & Mollington Whitby Groves Wolverham
<b>1 track betting</b>	A race course accepting bets for the races taking place	Chester City & Garden Quarter
<b>1 bingo</b>	Prize bingo (with gaming machines)	Central & Grange
<b>281 premises with 2 or less gaming machines</b>	Maximum stake £1.00 to max prize £100	
<b>64 premises with 3+ gaming machines</b>	Maximum stake £1.00 to max prize £100	
<b>6 club machine permit</b>	Up to 3 machines including one £2.00 stake and £500 prize, and two £1.00 stake with max prize £100	

The opening times on gambling premises are set by standard condition, so all betting shops are 7am until 10pm but they may choose not to open for all those hours. Five

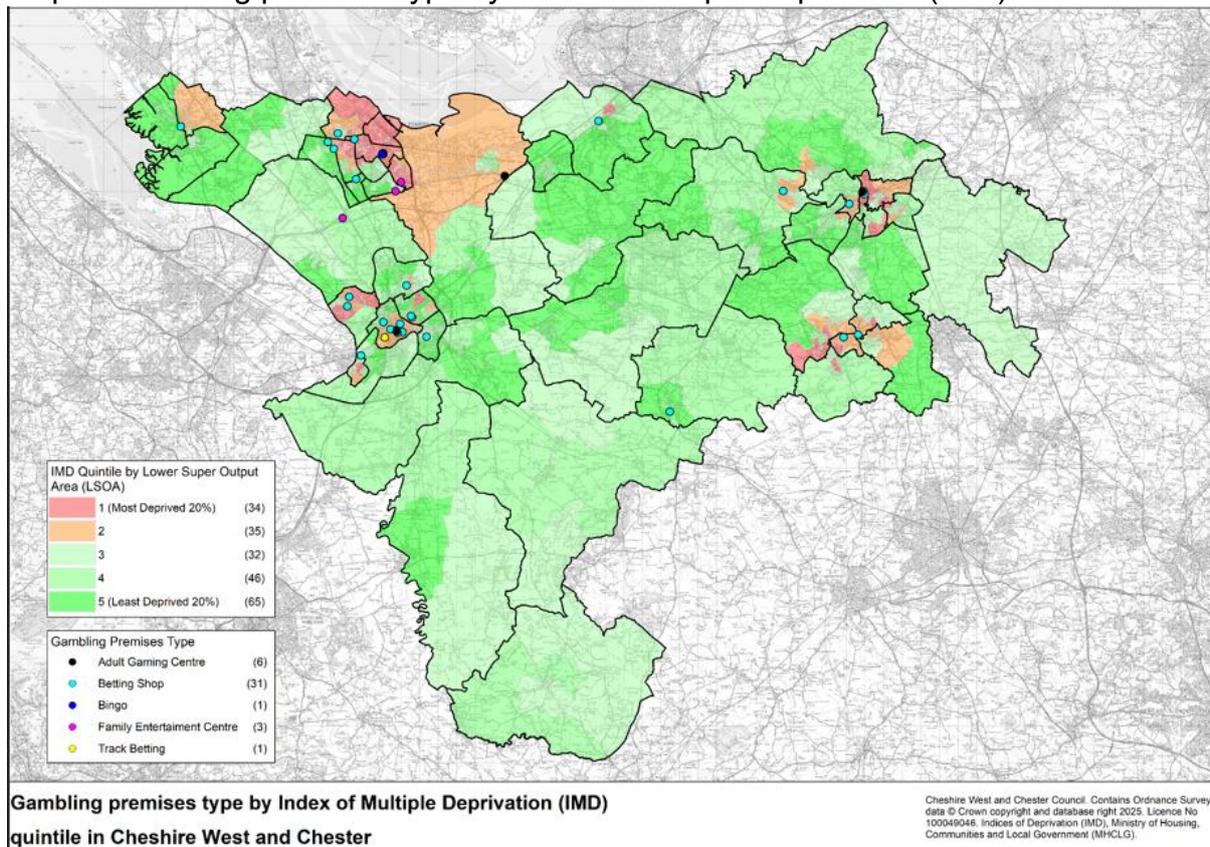
of the six adult gaming centres can open for 24 hours although they may not adopt these hours.

Historically in CW&C, a gambling application has not been refused.

## 8.2 Map of gambling sites in Cheshire West and Chester

Map 2 shows the gambling site locations in CW&C and is overlaid with the index of multiple deprivation quintiles. A high number of sites are located in LSOAs that have higher levels of deprivation (quintile 1 and quintile 2 most deprived).

Map 2: Gambling premises type by Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)



## About Cheshire West and Chester

The most recent data for Cheshire West and Chester can be found in the State of the Borough Dashboard [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/borough](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/borough)

### 1. Overview

The borough of Cheshire West and Chester covers approximately 350 square miles and is the fourth largest unitary authority in the Northwest. The area is characterised by attractive countryside, varied landscapes and diverse settlements. This includes the historic City of Chester, industrial towns, market towns and rural hamlets. Over 365,000 people live in the borough, and over a quarter live in rural areas. The population is expected to increase over the next twenty years, particularly in older age groups.

Map 3: Location of Cheshire West and Chester



### 2. Population structure and projections

#### 2.1 Resident population

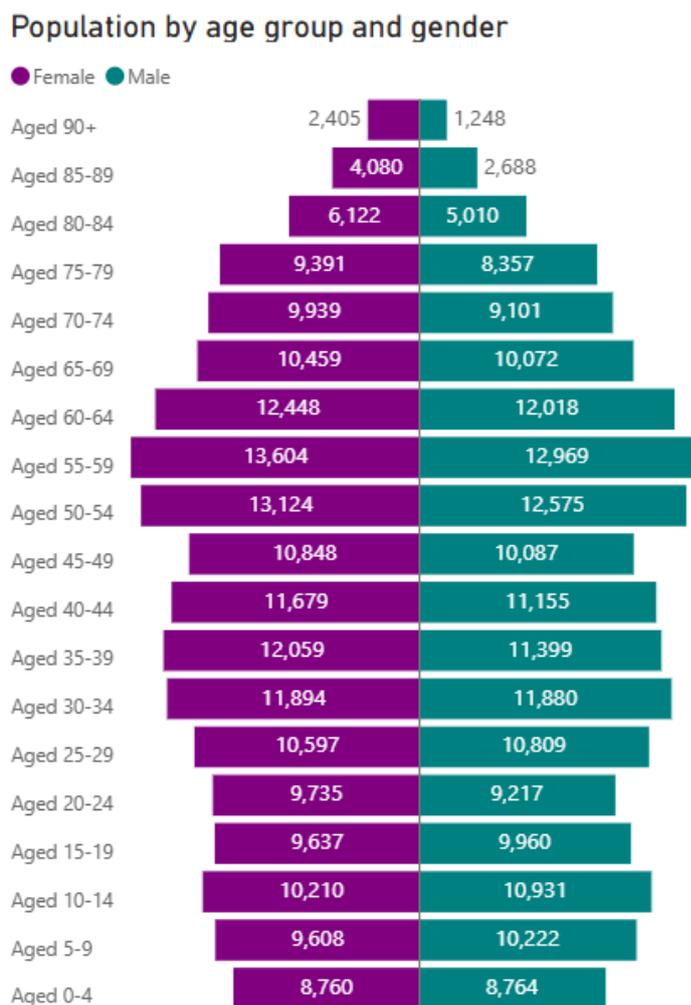
An estimated 365,100 people live in Cheshire West, with just over a quarter living in rural areas (ONS Mid-year 2023 population estimates). In CW&C, 51% of the population are female and 49% are male. As table 22 highlights, CW&C has an older population than the England average.

Table 3: Population estimates

Age group	CW&C count	CW&C %	England %
0-15	62,766	17.2%	18.5%
16-64	223,423	61.3%	62.8%
65+	78,872	21.6%	18.7%
85+	10,421	2.9%	2.5%
All ages	365,061	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Population estimate mid-2023, Office for National Statistic

Figure 6: Cheshire West and Chester population proportion by 5-year age band



Source: Population estimate mid-2023, Office for National Statistics

Table 4: Population figures for Cheshire West and Chester (Residents)

Age	Estimated number	Proportion of the population
<b>0-4</b>	17,524	4.8%
<b>5-9</b>	19,830	5.4%
<b>10-14</b>	21,141	5.8%
<b>15-19</b>	19,597	5.4%
<b>20-29</b>	40,358	11%
<b>30-39</b>	47,232	12.9%
<b>40-49</b>	43,769	12.0%
<b>50-59</b>	52,272	14.3%
<b>60-69</b>	44,997	12.3%
<b>70-79</b>	36,788	10.1%
<b>80 plus</b>	21,553	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>365,061</b>	

Source: Population estimate mid-2023, Office for National Statistics

According to the 2021 Census, there are 8.8% residents from ethnic minority communities in CW&C, which is far less than the 26.5% England average. Polish is the most frequently spoken non-English language.

## 2.2 Resident population forecasts

The population in CW&C is forecast to increase by 8% to 393,500 by 2033. Older age groups will see the biggest increase, with the number of residents aged 65 plus expected to increase by 22%. It is predicted that there will be more than 100,000 local people aged 65 and over by 2033.

Table 5: Population forecasts by age group

Age	2023	2033	Change 2023-33	% change
0-15	62,800	61,600	-1,200	-2%
16-64	223,400	235,800	12,400	6%
65+	78,900	96,100	17,300	22%
85+	10,400	15,600	6,200	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>365,100</b>	<b>393,500</b>	<b>28,500</b>	<b>8%</b>

Source: Interim forecasts (2023 to 2033), Insight and Intelligence Team, Cheshire West and Chester Council

## 3. Deprivation

Whilst Cheshire West is an affluent borough the overall picture masks stark gaps between areas of prosperity and deprivation:

- There are approximately 18,147 households (11.4%) in CW&C in fuel poverty (2022 data)<sup>15</sup>
- Approximately 11,164 children live in low-income families which equates to 17.8% of the families in CW&C compared to 21.8% in the UK (2023/24 data). In four wards in the borough (Wolverham, Central & Grange, Blacon and Winsford Swanlow), over 30% of children were living in low income households. Low-income families are those claiming child and household benefit with an income less than 60% of the UK median household income (relative measure before housing costs)<sup>16</sup>.
- In 2024/25, 18,115 food parcels were distributed in CW&C from 34 distribution centres<sup>17</sup>
- The median local household income is £37,800 per year but 20% of local households have an annual income of less than £22,700 (income below 60% of UK median household income)<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Sub-regional Fuel Poverty in England, Experimental Statistics 2022, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy 2024

<sup>16</sup> Children in low income families, 2023/2024 local area statistics, Department for Work & Pensions, Office for National Statistics

<sup>17</sup> Food parcel distribution, 2024/2025, End of year stats, The Trussell Trust

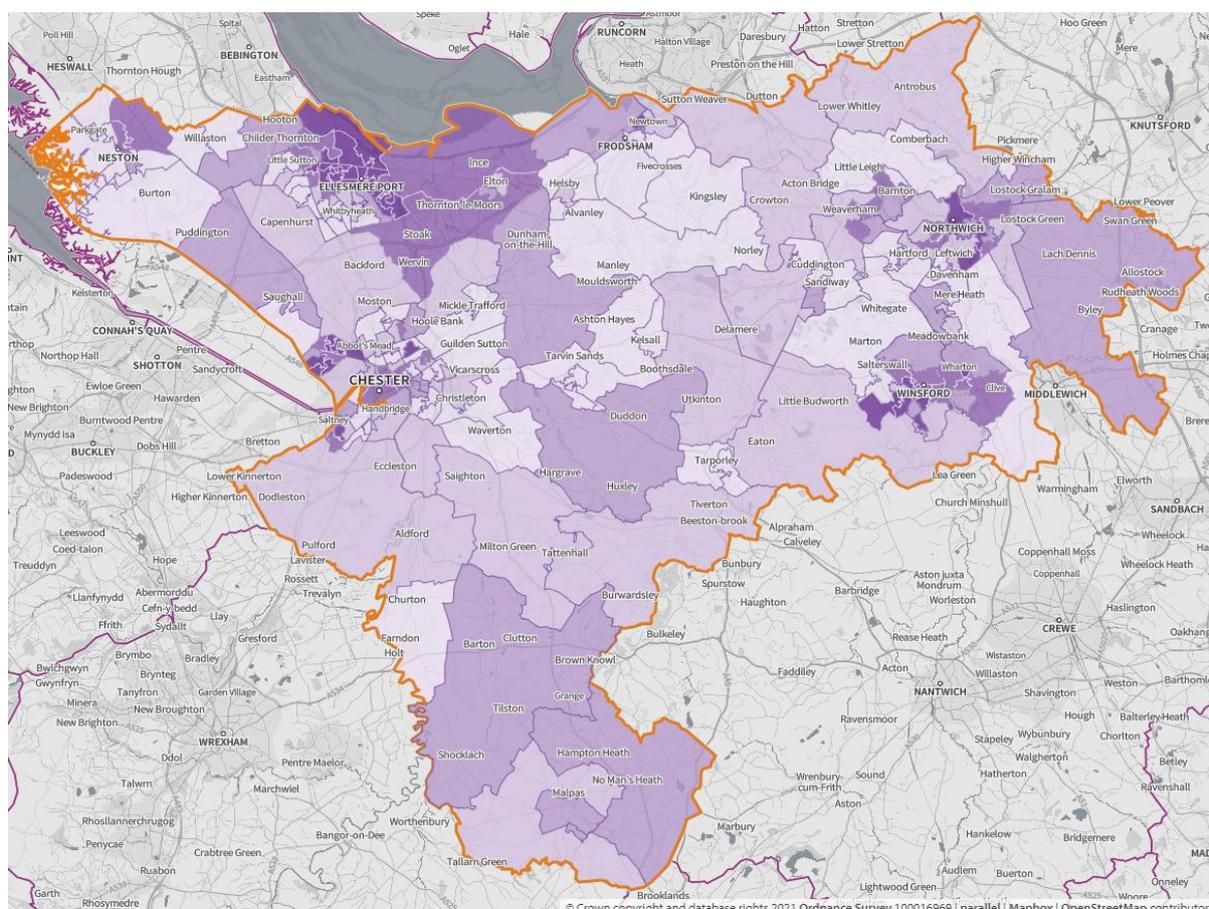
<sup>18</sup> Equalised Paycheck 2024, 1996-2024 CACI Limited

- 20.2% of pupils were eligible for free school meals in 2025. This has steadily increased over the last five years<sup>19</sup>.

The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 (IMD 2019) are the government's official measure of deprivation. The IMD is constructed by combining seven domains, each of which relates to a major social or economic deprivation. The scores for each domain are combined into a single deprivation score for each small area in England allowing each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation.

CW&C is ranked 183rd most deprived out of 317 local authorities in England (where 1 is most deprived and 317 the least deprived). There are pockets of deprivation across the borough with 26,700 local people living in 16 small neighbourhoods ranked in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in England. Two of these 16 neighbourhoods rank in the 2% most deprived areas in England. These neighbourhoods are in Lache and Winsford. The highest levels of deprivation are found in the urban areas, primarily within the City of Chester and the towns of Ellesmere Port, Northwich and Winsford. Map 24 shows the levels of deprivation across the borough by lower super output area (LSOA).

Map 4: Levels of deprivation in Cheshire West and Chester, IMD 2019



Source: SHAPE

In Cheshire West and Chester's most deprived areas (those areas amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England), more neighbourhoods and residents are affected

<sup>19</sup> Statistics school and pupil numbers, 2025, Department for Education

by health deprivation and disability than any other type of deprivation; 55 neighbourhoods with a population of 85,964. In these neighbourhoods, quality of life may be impaired through poor physical and mental health, and there is increased risk of premature death.

## 4. Economy

### 4.1 Employment

Cheshire West and Chester has a working age population (those aged 16-64), of approximately 223,423 (ONS Population estimates - local authority based by five-year age band 2023). 85% are economically active and 15% are economically inactive (includes students, carers, unable to work due to illness or injury, retired or people in other situations that preclude work)<sup>20</sup>.

In September 2024, Cheshire West and Chester's employment rate had increased to 82.6%, higher than both the national (75.7%) and regional levels (73%) of employment<sup>21</sup>. Unemployment also increased to 2.5% but remains lower than both national (3.9%) and regional (4.2%) rates<sup>22</sup>.

Whilst 52,168 people commute out of the borough for work (with Cheshire East the most popular destination), 51,003 commute into the borough (with Flintshire the most popular source).

In 2023, the health sector was the largest employment sector with 20,000 jobs (11.8% of total employment). The professional scientific and technical sector was the second largest with 18,000 jobs (10.7%)<sup>23</sup>.

### 4.2 Business

In 2024 there were 13,495 businesses in CW&C. The largest sector was professional scientific and technical with over 2,620 businesses, followed by construction with 1,515 businesses. Small and micro businesses make up 97.7% of the local economy<sup>24</sup>.

The most recent 2023 figures show a drop in business births (from 1,475 to 1,435) but also a decrease in business deaths (from 1,650 to 1,405). Between 2019-2023 the number of new business registering decreased by 8%. During the same period, the number of businesses ceasing trading reduced by 7.3%. The percentage of local businesses that survive two years has decreased slightly (from 71.3% to 69%). CW&C has a higher survival rate than the regional rate of 67% but lower than the national rate of 70.3%<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Annual population survey (January 2024-December 2024)

<sup>21</sup> Annual population survey (January 2024-December 2024)

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*

<sup>23</sup> NOMIS, Business Register and Employment Survey API

<sup>24</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS) UK Business Count API

<sup>25</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS), Business demography 2023 (published November 2024)

CW&C's economy grew by 6% between 2021-2022, higher than the North West (4.9%) and UK (4%) average. Manufacturing remains the largest sector in terms of economic output, making up 19.3% of CW&C GVA<sup>26</sup>.

### 4.3 Qualifications

CW&C has a skilled labour force with 67% of residents qualified to RQF 3 (two or more A levels, advanced GNVQ, NVQ3), similar to the England average of 68%; and over half of residents (50.5%) qualified to degree level and above (RWF 4+), higher than the England average 44%<sup>27</sup>.

## 5. Housing

The 2021 Census showed there were 163,300 dwellings in CW&C. Around 40% are owned outright, 30% owned with a mortgage or loan, and 30% are rented, with 15% being rented privately and 15% socially rented. House prices have been steadily increasing over the last ten years, as has house affordability, both following the England trend. At year end December 2021, the median house price was £230,00 compared to £280,000 nationally.

CW&C Local Plan indicates an annual average of 1,100 net dwellings need to be built each year up to 2030 to meet the target of 7,000 built between 2020 and 2030. The largest developments will be seen in Northwich, Winsford and Ellesmere Port areas.

## 6. Health

For the three-year period 2021-2023 the estimated life expectancy at birth for CW&C was similar to the England average for men and significantly better for women; male 79.4 years (England 79.1 years) and female 83.5 years (England 83.1 years). The increased number of deaths in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, impacted life expectancy estimates. In line with national trends, life expectancy for men has decreased since 2017/19<sup>28</sup>.

Healthy life expectancy (HLE) estimates have reduced for both males and females since 2017-19. In the 2021-2023 period, the majority of local areas in England and in Wales had lower HLE at birth than before the COVID-19 pandemic in 2017-2019. In CW&C, between 2017-19 and 2021-23, male HLE at birth fell by 5.2 years, whilst for females it fell by 5.1 years. However, the reductions are not statistically significant. In 2021-23, healthy life expectancy in CW&C was similar to England for both males and females. Males in CW&C could expect to spend 62 years of their lives in good health (England 61.5); for females, it was 63 years (England 61.9)<sup>29</sup>.

Health inequalities have persisted with significantly lower life expectancy in our more deprived areas. The inequality gap between men living in the most and least deprived areas of CW&C has reduced but remains wider than for women (9.8 years

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<sup>26</sup> Office for National Statistics, Regional economic activity by gross domestic product UK 2022 (published October 2024)

<sup>27</sup> NOMIS, Annual Population Survey, Qualification levels December 2023

<sup>28</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), Public Health Outcomes Framework

<sup>29</sup> *ibid*

vs 7.8 years). The inequality gap has also reduced for women (OHID fingertips Inequality in life expectancy at birth 2018-2020)<sup>30</sup>.

Life expectancy is impacted by rises and falls in causes of mortality and inequality in mortality rates which will be further explored in the next section.

Cancer and cardiovascular diseases continue to be the biggest killers of people aged under 75 in CW&C, accounting for 39% and 22% of premature deaths respectively in 2023. The premature mortality (under 75 mortality rate) rate is similar to the England average, with rates for men are significantly higher than rates for women<sup>31</sup>.

In the 2024 GP patient survey, two-thirds (62.7%) of patients reported they have a long-standing health condition, equating to approximately 4,200 patients. This is slightly higher than the national average of 60.6%. Ellesmere Port, Winsford and Chester East Primary Care Networks (PCNs) reported a higher percentage of long-standing health conditions, compared with the CW&C average (66.6%, 65.2% and 65.1% respectively).

The most common chronic conditions in CW&C 2023/2024 were hypertension, asthma, obesity, diabetes mellitus and depression<sup>32</sup>. A number of these conditions are risk factors for disease, including the top condition hypertension, which is a risk factor for heart attack, stroke, kidney disease and some forms of dementia.

Poor health is often linked to unhealthy behaviours, including smoking and obesity. The percentage of adults classified as overweight or obese has been increasing over the last three years with an estimated 68.3% of adults aged 18+ classified as overweight or obese (2022/23.) This is significantly higher than the England average of 64%. improved in CW&C but is still 60% (20/2021). Smoking prevalence has been decreasing nationally and locally. Smoking prevalence for adults aged 18 and over increased in 2023 to 10.5% from 8.9% the previous year. This is similar to the England average of 11.6%. 25

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<sup>30</sup> ibid

<sup>31</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) Mortality Profile

<sup>32</sup> NHS Quality Outcomes Framework (QOF)