Exploring alternatives to 'safer gambling' messages

Sara Davies, Sharon Collard, University of Bristol, Personal Finance Research Centre
Simon McNair, Lauren Leak-Smith, The Behavioural Insights Team
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Simon McNair, Lauren Leak-Smith
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About this report

Acknowledgments

About the authors

Sara Davies is a Senior Research Fellow at the Personal Finance Research Centre.

Sharon Collard is Research Director of the Personal Finance Research Centre and Professor of Personal Finance at the University of Bristol.

Dr Simon McNair is Senior Behavioural Designer, Cowry Consulting and previously was an Advisor at the Behavioural Insights Team.

Lauren Leak-Smith is an Advisor at the Behavioural Insights Team.

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Executive summary

There are questions about the effectiveness of 'safer gambling' messages - such as the long-running strapline 'when the fun stops, stop' - particularly when the gambling industry spends more than £1.5 billion a year on paid-for advertising to promote its products. By comparison, campaign spend for the 'Bet Regret' safer gambling campaign was just £3.3 million in 2019 – or roughly 0.22% of total industry advertising spend.

Our research looked at the efficacy of existing 'safer gambling' messages seen in Britain; and designed and tested possible alternative messages to gauge their potential effectiveness. It contributes new evidence that can help inform alternative approaches to 'safer gambling' communications, for example as part of public health campaigns to prevent or reduce the harms from gambling that affect individuals and communities across Britain.

Six key findings:

- Existing 'safer gambling' messages do not change the behaviour of people who gamble
- Messages should have an appropriate tone and be authentic, relatable and engaging
- Messages must be tailored to their target audiences
- Messages should aim to produce a positive emotional response and avoid evoking negative emotions such as shame
- For those at risk of harms, message should signal ways to identify signs of harmful gambling
- Messages are needed for people affected by someone else's gambling.

Three calls to action:

- Gambling advertising is a focus of the government's review of the 2005 Gambling Act. Equal attention should be given to the development and testing of effective messages that can help prevent and reduce gambling harms across Britain.
- Well-funded, long-term social marketing campaigns have been shown to reduce stigma and harm. A similar campaign is required to prevent and reduce gambling harms.
- Key audiences for harm prevention and reduction messages must include people who gamble regularly but do not recognise they may be at risk of harm; and people affected by someone else's gambling.

These findings and calls to action are based on a comprehensive study that:

- **Examined the existing evidence** about the efficacy of 'safer gambling' messages, including for different socio-demographic groups.
- **Engaged 45 people in group discussions** who took part in betting or gambling, to explore their views about existing 'safer gambling' messages and get their input on new alternative messages designed by the research team that could be pilot tested.
- **Conducted an online pilot test with a nationally representative sample of 987 people** of existing messages and novel alternatives to generate quantitative insights around the kind of messages that might resonate most with adults in Britain.

Key findings

Existing 'safer gambling' messages do not change behaviour

In theory, 'safer gambling' messages engage players with information about 'safer gambling' behaviours and strategies, with the aim of increasing their awareness and knowledge, shifting their attitudes towards gambling and ultimately changing what they do in ways that prevent or reduce gambling harms. The existing evidence about the effectiveness of these messages is limited, but generally indicates they are ineffective at changing behaviour although they can raise awareness.

Messages should have an appropriate tone and be authentic, relatable and engaging

Messages that have an appropriate tone; are authentic and relatable; and have engaging help are likely to be more effective at preventing or reducing gambling harms. Getting the tone of a message right is likely to make it more relatable, as will engaging content.

	Appropriate tone. Emotion and positivity are important and linked elements in getting the tone of messages right, combined with a clear and simple call to action.
	Authentic and relatable. Being 'authentic' can increase people's receptiveness to public health messages; people also need to be able to relate to the language and imagery used in a message.
	Engaging content. Dynamic content (such as animated videos) is more effective than 'static' information. Studies have shown there may be value in giving impartial information about the likelihood of winning; highlighting the signs of harmful gambling; and counter-marketing messages showing industry as the 'bad actor'.

Messages must be tailored to their target audiences

Messages should be tailored or personalised to appeal to specific target groups, because different messages resonate with different types of people and in different ways. The pilot study found that respondents' reactions to the different messages were strongly shaped by their age and levels of gambling engagement; and less so by their sex and ethnicity. Younger people generally had stronger emotional responses to the messages than older respondents.

This applies equally to the channel through which messages are delivered. We know from research on gambling advertising that online and social media particularly attract younger audiences and the same is likely to be true for messages aimed at preventing or reducing gambling harms.

Messages should evoke positive emotional resonance

Messages to prevent or reduce gambling harms must resonate with the emotional drivers of gambling in a way that will produce a positive and active response, and not evoke emotions that may be counterproductive.

Survey respondents in our pilot test who gambled regularly generally had much stronger emotional responses to messages; were significantly more likely to feel that the messages were personally relevant to them; yet had a lower likelihood of acting on them. One possible explanation is that the

messages provoked negative emotions like shame, which has been shown to reduce people's tendency to behave in socially constructive ways.

For those at risk of harms, messages should signal ways to identify signs of harmful gambling

We designed and pilot tested new messages that were intended to encourage reflective thinking among people who may be at risk of gambling harms but don't recognise their gambling could be harmful – an area where there has been little research to date. For example, one such message was 'Is gambling taking over your life? It might be time to make a change' with a call to action of contacting a gambling helpline.

While respondents who gambled regularly found these messages highly personally relevant, they reported little intention to follow the call to action of contacting a gambling helpline. This suggests that 'contemplative' messages may need to focus more strongly on signalling ways in which people can identify signs of potential harmful gambling in their own play.

Messages are needed for people affected by someone else's gambling

Around 4.5 million adults and children in Britain are negatively affected by someone else's gambling, and, statistically, women are more likely to experience the full range of negative impacts of being an affected other (e.g. impacts to health and wellbeing, personal relationships, financial impacts). Yet we found only one existing message directly addressed to affected others and their support needs (an Australian public health video).

Our research provides valuable new insights into this woefully under-researched topic. In our discussion groups, people affected by someone else's gambling reacted negatively to messaging that used patronising or condescending language, highlighting the need for authentic and sincere narrative. They also felt that affected others needed strong reassurances of confidentiality when responding to a call to action such as phoning a helpline. In our pilot study, messages targeted at affected others evoked much stronger emotions than the other messages, across the whole spectrum of emotions asked about.

Calls to action

#1 Develop and test effective messages to help prevent and reduce gambling harms

Gambling advertising is a focus of the government's review of the 2005 Gambling Act. Equal attention should be given to the development and testing of effective messages that can help prevent and reduce gambling harms across Britain. In general, funding for gambling harms research lags very far behind that for alcohol, smoking and substance abuse. For example, there have been nearly 700 alcohol studies funded by Research Councils UK and the National Institute for Health Research, but only 23 gambling research studies.[1]

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[1] Advisory Board for Safer Gambling: Advice to the Gambling Commission on a statutory levy (2020).

#2 Fund long-term social marketing campaigns to help reduce stigma and harm

Evaluation of the Time to Change campaign (to reduce stigma and discrimination regarding people with mental illness) shows that **well-funded, long-term social marketing campaigns can help reduce stigma and harm.** This is a useful model for new communication campaigns to prevent and reduce gambling harms, building on the insights from this and other research.

#3 Target key at-risk audiences

Key audiences for harm prevention and reduction messages must include **people who gamble regularly but do not recognise they may be at risk of harm; and people affected by someone else's gambling.** Tailored and personalised messaging is required for these and other groups at risk of harm, including understanding the most effective communication channels.

1 Introduction

1.1 What is a 'safer gambling' message and what is their role in policymaking?

The terms 'safer gambling' and 'safer gambling message' have been adopted relatively recently by the gambling industry in response to concerns about the phrase 'responsible gambling' and the idea of 'responsible gambling messages', which are felt to imply that people who experience harm from gambling have behaved irresponsibly; that individuals can and should be able to control their gambling; and puts the onus on individuals to recognise that their gambling may be harmful and take action to reduce it (Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland, 2020; Money and Mental Health Policy Institute, 2021; Miller and Thomas, 2018; Dickerson and O'Connor, 2006).

'Safer gambling' is a term used to describe the industry's approach to limiting the risk of problem gambling and gambling-related harm (Safer Gambling Standard, 2022) and Newall et al (2021) describe safer gambling messages as "*a common freedom-preserving method of protecting individuals from gambling-related harm*". The Gambling Commission, which regulates gambling in Britain, talks about wanting to *'make sure that everyone is staying safe while they gamble, and be able to reach out if they are struggling'* (Gambling Commission, 2021a).

The Gambling Commission's License Conditions and Codes of Practice for gambling operators include a social responsibility code which stipulates that "*licensees must make information readily available to their customers on how to gamble responsibly and how to access information about, and help in respect of, problem gambling*" (section 3.3.1). This information must cover any measures provided by the licensee to help individuals monitor or control their gambling; timers, other reminders or 'reality checks' where available; self-exclusion options; and information about the availability of further help or advice (Gambling Commission, 2020).[2]

The Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice (October 2020) also require operators to comply with the Advertising Codes, administered by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)[3], which stipulate that gambling advertising must be socially responsible, must not be targeted at under 18s, and must not encourage irresponsible gambling behaviour. The Betting and Gambling Council's (BGC) Codes of Conduct require, among other things, adherence to an Industry Code for Socially Responsible Advertising[4] (Woodhouse, 2021).

As part of a wider action plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, BGC members committed to increase safer gambling messaging (such as setting deposit limits or taking time out from betting) across all sites, apps and channels including inbox messaging to all existing and new customers reminding them of the safer gambling tools available (BGC, 2020).

According to the BGC, the number of direct mails with a safer gambling message rose to over 11 million a month in the first six months of the plan (an increase of 89 per cent). The number of direct interventions by operators where a player had been spending more time or money betting than they

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[2] Breaches of the Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice may result in regulatory action such as formal warnings; suspending or revoking a licence; and financial penalties (Gambling Commission, 2021c).

[3] Sanctions for advertisers that are unwilling or unable to work with the ASA to follow its rules include listing non-compliant advertisers on the ASA website (i.e. bad publicity) and referrals to other bodies (such as Trading Standards or Ofcom) for further action, such as on-the-spot fines and revocation or suspension of licences.

[4] The Betting and Gaming Council is an industry body set up in 2019 which represents around 90% of the UK's betting and gaming industry. BGC members found to be in breach of its Codes of Conduct will have their membership suspended or withdrawn (BGC, 2022).

did before the pandemic was reported to have increased by 25 per cent (BGC, 2021). The impact of these messages on the attitudes and behaviours of recipients is not mentioned.

In April 2021, the Gambling Commission announced there was work in progress with gambling operators to improve safer gambling messaging across website content, intervention messaging and retail environments. This included appropriate language, audience targeting and timing of safer gambling messages (Gambling Commission, 2021d).

1.2 About the research

There are questions about the effectiveness of 'safer gambling' messages, especially in the face of pervasive and sophisticated gambling industry marketing and the high speed and easy availability of online gambling products (House of Lords, 2020). The gambling industry spends more than £1.5 billion a year on paid-for advertising (House of Lords, 2020); six in ten adults in Britain report seeing gambling adverts or sponsorships at least once a week; and just over a third of people who gambled in the last year said they were prompted to spend money on a gambling activity by advertising they had seen (Gambling Commission, 2021b). By comparison, campaign spend for the 'Bet Regret' campaign (see section 2.2.2) was just £3.3 million in 2019, which represented a 2.6% share of voice in terms of all sports betting advertising (GambleAware, 2020) – or roughly 0.22% of total industry advertising spend.

Our research looked at the efficacy of existing 'safer gambling' messages seen in Britain; and designed and tested possible alternative messages to gauge their potential effectiveness. It contributes new evidence that can help inform alternative approaches to 'safer gambling' communications, for example as part of public health campaigns to prevent or reduce the harms from gambling that affect individuals and communities across Britain.

There were three stages to the research:

- **An evidence review**, which examined the evidence about the efficacy of 'safer gambling' messages, including for different socio-demographic groups.
- **Six group discussions** with a total of 45 people who took part in betting or gambling, which explored their views about existing 'safer gambling' messages and got their input on new alternative messages designed by the research team that could be pilot tested.
- **An online pilot test** of existing messages and novel alternatives to generate quantitative insights around the kind of messages that might resonate most with adults in Britain. A nationally representative sample of 987 people took part in the pilot test.

WE TESTED ALTERNATIVES TO 'SAFER GAMBLING' MESSAGES IN AN ONLINE SURVEY OF 987 PEOPLE TO GENERATE INSIGHTS INTO THE KIND OF MESSAGES THAT MIGHT RESONATE MOST WITH ADULTS IN BRITAIN.

1.3 This report

This report sets out the key findings from our research:

- **Chapter 2** considers the evidence about how effective 'safer gambling' messages are, drawing on the evidence review and the group discussions.
- **Chapter 3** examines what makes for an effective 'safer gambling' message, again drawing on the evidence review and the group discussions.
- **Chapter 4** describes how we generated alternatives to 'safer gambling' messages and sets out the key findings from the pilot study which tested some of these new messages alongside existing ones.
- **Chapter 5** explores the implications of our findings for the design and use of 'safer gambling' messages.
- **The Appendix** contains full details of our research methods, including the pilot study questionnaire and the regression models used to analyse the pilot study data.

2 How effective are 'safer gambling' messages?

Summary

- In theory, 'safer gambling' messages engage players with information about 'safer gambling' behaviours and strategies, with the aim of increasing their awareness and knowledge, shifting their attitudes towards gambling and ultimately changing what they do in ways that prevent or reduce gambling harms.
- Seeing a 'safer gambling' message is unlikely to bring about immediate changes; and the likelihood of someone making a change will depend on whether they see any need to change their behaviour.
- The available evidence indicates that campaigns can have an impact on *awareness* of 'safer gambling' messages; but the evidence on the *effect* of such messages is mixed, and the evidence base is weak (consisting of around 12 studies, including some that examined the impact of personalised 'in-game' messaging by gambling operators).
- There have been few detailed investigations of how 'safer gambling' campaigns impact different groups of people depending on factors such as age, sex, and gambling practices.

2.1 About the evidence review

In our evidence review, we assessed research evidence from both academic and non-academic studies, for example conducted by market research organisations, charities, think-tanks. We focussed on three things:

- What evidence is there about the impact of 'safer gambling' messages?
- What evidence is there about the impact of other public health messages?
- What factors seem to influence the effectiveness of 'safer gambling' messages (which we report in the next chapter)?

In total we reviewed 45 pieces of evidence and from these identified 12 studies that contained some evaluation of 'safer gambling' campaign messages. These studies primarily examined the effectiveness of three campaign messages that have run in Britain: 'When the fun stops, stop' (WTFSS), 'Bet Regret' and 'Tap Out'. We have also included evidence from evaluations that examined the impact of personalised 'in-game' messaging by gambling operators, for example telling individual players how much time they had spent gambling in that session; and some insights from studies looking at the impact of other public health campaigns (such as smoking).

While it is rare for 'safer gambling' campaigns to publish a theory of change that comprehensively describes how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context, the evidence suggests that we might expect three outcomes from 'safer gambling' messages at an individual level:

1. Players access timely and credible information to inform their gambling behaviours
2. Players increase their knowledge of safer gambling strategies, signs of being at-risk, and available treatment and supports
3. Players adopt behaviours and take actions to prevent or reduce their harms (Greo, 2021, page 6).

In other words, 'safer gambling' messages may provide information and knowledge of 'safer gambling' behaviours and strategies, which could ultimately result in individual players changing what they do in ways that prevent or reduce gambling harms.

With this in mind, we set out below the main findings from our evidence review about (1) how effective campaigns are at building *awareness* of 'safer gambling' messages, and (2) whether these messages have any impact on people's gambling *behaviour.* Where relevant, we also include data from our six discussion groups to provide additional insight.[5]

Overall, the evidence indicates that campaigns can have an impact on *awareness* of 'safer gambling' messages; but the evidence on the *effect* of such messages is mixed, and the evidence base is weak.

2.2 Campaigns can increase awareness of 'safer gambling' messages

As noted above, the evidence about awareness mainly relates to three 'safer gambling' campaign messages that have run in Britain. Here we assess the available evidence about their effectiveness.

2.2.1 'When the fun stops, stop'

'When the fun stops, stop' (WTFSS) was a long running 'safer gambling' message designed by the gambling industry.[6] It was mainly seen on gambling operators' adverts across multiple channels (e.g. on television, in print, online, in gambling premises). An industry-led evaluation of the WTFSS campaign noted a 40% general awareness among the public, increasing to 59% among people who gambled (Senet Group, 2016). One third of respondents who gambled regularly said the campaign had made them think about their own gambling behaviour. However, we do not know whether this self-reported change resulted in individuals acting, for example to reduce their gambling.

More recently, an academic study that comprised three large experimental tests of different variants of the WTFSS message showed no beneficial effect or a small 'backfire effect' on respondents' gambling behaviour (Newall et al, 2021).

We tested WTFSS with our six discussion groups in its two formats – the less common standalone advert with five 'calls to action' (shown on the right) and on gambling adverts.

Most discussion group participants knew the WTFSS message but generally felt its use on gambling adverts would have little impact on people's gambling behaviour. This was because, on the adverts we showed in the groups, the message appeared right at the bottom below the terms and conditions, where it was very unlikely to be read. Some gambling adverts also mirrored the colour scheme of the message (yellow/blue) which meant the message blended in and got lost. And having

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the message on a gambling advert seemed inherently contradictory, as participants commented:

"*Don't do this but here you are, do this*" (Older, less engaged)

"*We've got the best odds, but by the way don't gamble too much*" (Younger, more engaged).

2.2.2 'Bet Regret' and 'Tap Out'

The 'Bet Regret' campaign was designed by the national charity GambleAware with industry funding. It aimed to moderate the gambling behaviour of 'risky sports bettors', defined as young men aged 16-34 who gamble two or more times a week, who bet online and who bet on football (GambleAware, 2020). Part of a two-year campaign, it first ran in 2019 and included TV adverts, social media digital marketing and out-of-home advertising (e.g. on billboards and bus shelters, in a stadium). It had several key messages such as 'You shouldn't let your gambling get out of control' and 'You shouldn't bet when you have been drinking too much' (ibid).

Tracking data for the 'Bet Regret' campaign found that people on average recalled 3.5 key messages out of six, with the top six messages achieving recall of between 35% and 42%. There were also small changes in self-reported behaviour, with a 4-6% increase in respondents saying they had cut back or changed their gambling behaviour over four waves of data (Ipsos MORI, 2020). However, it is important to note that this data only measures *self-reported* changes in behaviour and doesn't account for any alternative reasons for these changes either.

The 'Tap Out' campaign (also designed by GambleAware) extended the 'Bet Regret' campaign by encouraging people to 'Tap Out' of online gambling apps or take a moment to reflect before placing a bet. It aimed to help cut impulsive betting, e.g. when sports bettors are bored or chasing losses. The campaign ran in 2020 and 2021 across TV, on-demand video, radio, and digital platforms. The full message is 'Tap out. Take a moment. Avoid Bet Regret.'

In its early evaluation of the 'Tap Out' campaign, GambleAware reported that the messages were clearly received, especially by 'risky sports bettors' for whom they were the most relevant behaviourally. It found that the messages proved highly 'talkable' and had the potential to complement 'Bet Regret' by becoming a meme and useful mental aid amongst the target audience of young men who bet online on sports. However, it was too early to say if it could become a regular, default behaviour that people integrated into their routines. (GambleAware 2020).

In our six group discussions, although awareness of 'Bet Regret' and 'Tap Out' was lower among participants than that for WTFSS, the messages were generally received more positively. This was partly because participants had seen the campaign adverts on TV and, as we discuss in Chapter 3, the medium can be as important as the message. There is evidence, for example, that the cost of television advertising can imply a confidence in the product or service offered, a concept described as 'costly signalling' (Shotton, 2020). This may have positively affected how the 'Bet Regret' and 'Tap Out' messages were received by our research participants. The message design also helped convey a contemporariness: as one participant commented: '*It feels very like social media internet culture*'.

Where the 'Bet Regret' and 'Tap Out' campaign messages resonated with our group discussion participants, they echoed their own concerns about how easy it was to get caught up in gambling and to keep gambling, for example where the odds are continually changing or there is a time imperative to place a bet. The movement between a 'cold' state, typified by clearer thinking and a 'hot' state where emotions affect decision making is a well-recognised feature of gambling (Behavioural Insights Team, 2021). As one participant reflected about the 'Bet Regret' message:

> *'Habits are hard to break, you've got to break them somewhere so if you, yes, as trivial as it might sound, the three minutes it makes to boil the kettle and make a drink is three minutes you're not spending £10, £20, £30 on a bet that may not come to fruition.'*
> (Older, less engaged).

2.3 'Safer gambling' messages have little impact on behaviour

In theory, 'safer gambling' messages engage players with information about 'safer gambling' behaviours and strategies, with the aim of increasing their awareness and knowledge, shifting their attitudes towards gambling and ultimately changing what they do in ways that prevent or reduce gambling harms (Greo, 2021; Tabri et al, 2021). Seeing a 'safer gambling' message is unlikely to bring about immediate changes; and the likelihood of someone making a change will depend on whether they see any need to change their behaviour. The Transtheoretical Model, developed by James Prochaska and Carlo DiClemente in the 1970s, can be used to explain how ready someone is to change a behaviour such as harmful gambling. Someone in a 'pre-contemplative' stage may not be ready to change what they do because they do not believe their gambling behaviour is a problem. [7]

In practice, our review shows that the evidence base about the impact of 'safer gambling' message campaigns is weak. There have only been a small number of robust studies on 'safer gambling' interventions conducted to date (for example using control or comparison groups to isolate the independent effects of interventions), which mainly focus on the effectiveness of gambling operators' in-game harm minimisation tools; and few detailed investigations of how interventions impact different groups of people depending on factors such as age, sex, and gambling practices.

We summarise the key findings below.

A Randomised Control Trial (RCT) across two major online gambling sites (Sky Betting & Gaming and bet365) was conducted to understand the impact of 'social norm' messaging that aimed to prompt people to reflect on their own gambling behaviour. It showed that providing players with feedback on their gambling behaviour or with prompts to reflect on their gambling had no observable impact on their uptake of harm minimisation tools such as setting deposit limits. Making the tools simpler and easier to access was more effective in increasing the number of players setting deposit limits or a cooling off period. The increased take up of these tools did not appear to influence subsequent gambling behaviour, however (BIT, 2018; see also Ekaterina et al, 2019).

A similar trial was evaluated by Jacob et al (2021), working with five operators to conduct RCTs on various messaging interventions, all aimed at changing aspects of gambling behaviour. The study largely confirmed the findings of the aforementioned RCT, noting that *"interventions did not ultimately affect play time or the amount deposited despite some of them affecting the take up of*

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[7] For further details see https://learn.problemgambling.ca/eip/stages-of-change

safer gambling tools" (p. 21). However, it did find some evidence that 'safer gambling' messaging, especially on social media, could increase engagement from customers.

These findings are echoed in a trial of safer gambling messages carried out in Australia, where the messages were in the form of animated signs displayed on gaming machines that advocated playing within affordable limits. The study found that although the message increased awareness of harm minimisation features, it did not significantly increase their usage (Blaszczynski et al, 2014a).

Harris and Griffiths (2017), in a review of harm minimization tools, also found examples of small changes to behaviour through online pop-up messages, but it was not clear if it was the message or the pause in play that produced the change. They concluded *"it may be argued that such informative messaging has a more consistent impact on correcting erroneous cognitions, but that this effect alone is not strong enough to exert influence over gambling behaviour"* (p.202).

As noted above, an experimental study to test different versions of WTFSS found they had no beneficial impact on gambling behaviour and could increase the probability of making a bet (Newall et al, 2021). Recent research also questions the idea that individuals can take effective action to reduce the harm they experience from gambling, once they are already engaged in harmful gambling (Gainsbury et al, 2020).

2.3.1 Personalised messages may have more impact

While 'safer gambling' messages and harm minimisation tools seemingly do little to reduce potentially harmful gambling, there is some evidence that personalised messages based on individual's own patterns of gambling may be more effective.

Williams et al (2012), in reviewing harm minimisation evidence, concluded that *"awareness initiatives appear to have a very limited impact **if people are not explicitly asked to attend to** the information or have no intrinsic interest in it"* (page 16). The importance of finding messages of specific interest to different groups of people resonates with other evidence that personalised messages may have a greater impact on behaviour than more general ones, because they can increase salience and therefore grab the attention of their intended audience, as well as increasing the perceived relevance to them. Auer & Griffiths (2020) found that individuals who received text messages with personalised feedback about their own online gambling went on to gamble significantly lower amounts after reading the message, and even a week later. These results were supported by previous real-world studies (e.g. Auer & Griffiths, 2015b, 2016 cited in Auer and Griffiths 2020).

2.4 There is mixed evidence about the effectiveness of other public health messages

We also looked at evidence from non-gambling public health messages (such as those to prevent or reduce harm from alcohol and smoking), which showed mixed results in terms of effectiveness.

Byrne et al (2005) reviewed evaluations of 20 public health campaigns and found evidence that they could influence public health behaviour and attitudes. In particular, the review showed that highlighting negative health effects and denormalizing harmful behaviours could be effective, especially among young people.

In a more recent study, however, Harris et al (2018) found mixed evidence on the effect of using fear and other negative emotions as a means of reducing levels of cigarette smoking. While fear-inducing messages reduced cigarette consumption among smokers overall, they had no impact on young people in the areas of cigarettes, alcohol and drug abuse. Employing negative emotions could also make people feel that the message did not apply to them.

In our six group discussions, participants generally felt there *should* be public health messages around potentially harmful behaviours such as smoking, alcohol and gambling even if they were not convinced of their effectiveness. This seemed predicated on the idea that it was important to raise awareness of public health issues; they might prevent people from *taking up* potentially harmful activities; but they were unlikely to have much impact on people *already engaged* in such activities. Several participants who were current or ex-smokers, for example, said they took little or no notice of the graphic images and messages on cigarette packaging (which in any case felt too late once the purchase was made) and likened this to the 'safer gambling' message WTFSS.

> *'The cigarette packets that have got damaged lungs and everything…I feel like you'd see it that often you become a bit acclimatised to it….The same as, is it, '**when the fun stops, stop**', you kind of hear it, take it in but you don't think about it do you, you just, it's kind of just another passing comment.'* (Older, engaged)

Also relevant is Time to Change, a major programme to reduce stigma and discrimination regarding people with mental illness in England over 2009–2015. The largest programme of its kind, it involved social marketing with bursts of mass-media advertising and public relations exercises (Henderson and Thornicroft, 2009). The programme was shown to result in improvements among the adult population in their attitudes to people with mental illness and in stigma-related knowledge, providing support for the effectiveness of Time to Change (Henderson et al, 2016). This suggests that well-funded, long-term social marketing campaigns could help reduce the stigma related to harmful gambling and possibly encourage people at risk of harm from gambling to seek help.

Having reviewed the evidence about the effectiveness of 'safer gambling' and other public health messages, the next Chapter looks at the factors that the evidence suggests can make for an effective message.

3 What makes for an effective 'safer gambling' message?

Summary

- There are four important design features that may improve the effectiveness of 'safer gambling' messages: having an appropriate tone; being authentic and relatable; having engaging content; and using differentiated approaches depending on the target audience.
- **Appropriate tone.** Emotion and positivity are important and linked elements in getting the tone of messages right, combined with a clear and simple call to action.
- **Authentic and relatable**. Being 'authentic' can increase people's receptiveness to public health messages; people also need to be able to relate to the language and imagery used in a message.
- **Engaging content.** Dynamic content (such as animated videos) is more effective than 'static' information. Studies have shown there may be value in giving impartial information about the likelihood of winning; highlighting the signs of harmful gambling; and counter-marketing messages showing industry as the 'bad actor'
- **Differentiated approaches**. People respond differently to 'safer gambling' messages depending on factors like their age and level of gambling participation, indicating that messages should be designed to appeal to specific target groups.
- As Britain moves towards a public health approach to gambling harm, these insights can inform campaigns to change public attitudes to gambling to reduce the stigma associated with gambling-related harm and allow those needing help to come forward.

3.1 Designing messages to improve effectiveness

While there is limited evidence on the impact of 'safer gambling' message campaigns as described in Chapter 2, the literature does provide insights about the design features that may influence the effectiveness of these types of messages. We identified four important design features in the evidence review that we explore in this chapter:

	Appropriate tone. Emotion and positivity are important and linked elements in getting the tone of messages right, combined with a clear and simple call to action.
	Authentic and relatable. Being 'authentic' can increase people's receptiveness to public health messages; people also need to be able to relate to the language and imagery used in a message.
	Engaging content. Dynamic content (such as animated videos) is more effective than 'static' information. Studies have shown there may be value in giving impartial information about the likelihood of winning; highlighting the signs of harmful gambling; and counter-marketing messages showing industry as the 'bad actor'.
	Differentiated approaches. People respond differently to 'safer gambling' messages depending on factors like their age and level of gambling participation, indicating that messages should be designed to appeal to specific target groups.

These design features are closely inter-related, for example getting the tone of a message right is likely to make it more relatable, as will engaging content. Where relevant, we use data from our six discussion groups to provide additional insights.

As Britain moves away from an individual approach to preventing and reducing gambling harms (such as exhorting people to gamble 'responsibly' or 'safely') towards a multi-faceted, population-level public health approach, these insights about message design can help inform social marketing campaigns to change public attitudes to gambling to reduce the stigma associated with gambling-related harm and allow those needing help to come forward (Faculty of Public Health, 2018).

3.2 Appropriate tone

The evidence suggests that emotion and positivity are two important (and linked) elements in achieving an appropriate tone in 'safer gambling' messages.

3.2.1 Use of emotion

Messages aimed at preventing or reducing gambling harm need to consider the emotional and impulsive nature of gambling and the fact that harmful gambling is more common among individuals with the personality trait of impulsivity (Chataway et al, 2018; Harris et al, 2018; Blaszczynski et al, 2014b). Acknowledging and understanding impulsivity may be key to counteracting its consequences:

> 'The same emotional mechanisms can be used to influence a gambler to cease gambling, by focusing their emotional decision-making on positive external and personally relevant factors.' (Harris et al, 2018, page 266).

People who gamble to a harmful extent often experience an emotionally aroused state while gambling (a 'hot' state as described above). To be effective, therefore, a message needs to resonate with someone in that state. The evidence is less clear about how this might be achieved. It may involve drawing on the familial impacts of harmful gambling or long-term financial impacts, framed in a positive ('you could improve...') rather than a negative tone (Harris et al, 2018). The disruption to home life or letting down a loved one were some of the biggest concerns linked to harmful gambling (Future Thinking 2016).

Participants in our six discussion groups talked openly about the emotions that gambling or betting evoked and appeared to respond well to use of emotion in messaging, such as the message 'don't bet if you're angry' from a version of WTFSS:

> '"Don't bet if you're angry" I think that's really, I guess it's similar to "never chase your losses" but angry is something you can identify with, you can know when you're angry.' (Younger, less engaged)

Another participant particularly liked the 'Tap out' campaign because it reflected the emotional state that people might be in when they are betting; some participants also perceived impulsivity (which might be exploited in the design of gambling products) to be a barrier to 'safer gambling':

> 'It feels like with this, it seems more self-aware and aware of the big picture, because a lot of betting …is impulse, lack of impulse control.' (Older, less engaged)

One study distinguished between two main emotional motivations for gambling: social- or leisure-based gambling versus gambling as thrill-seeking or excitement (Future Thinking 2016). It concluded that to be effective, 'safer gambling' messaging should resonate with these different motivations, for example drawing attention to a loss of social engagement for those whose motivation for gambling is (broadly speaking) social.

Both these emotional motivations were evident among the participants in our group discussions. Participants, especially women, often described their gambling and betting as a fun pastime that was as much (or more) about spending time with friends and family as it was about gambling or betting. For some, going to the bingo with their Nan, or getting together with family and friends for big events such as the Grand National was their first experience of betting. As a result, one of the new messages designed by the research team - '*Wouldn't it be better to spend your time and money with your friends and family?*' – received mixed reactions, as betting and gambling could be associated with fun social events involving their friends and family.

There were also participants who placed bets to make sporting events more interesting, which suggests they were motivated by thrill-seeking (at least some of the time): '*If it's a couple of nations that you don't really care about, you might decide just to put a bet on just to make it interesting*' (Younger, less engaged).

3.2.2 Positivity

The evidence indicates that a positive or gain-framed message (which focuses on attaining a desirable outcome or avoiding an undesirable one) is more effective than a negative or loss-framed message (which focuses on attaining an undesirable outcome or avoiding a desirable one). Drawing on prospect theory (the idea that people place more weight on perceived losses, and are prepared to take more risks in those instances, versus a reduced risk appetite when faced with potential gains), Gainsbury et al (2018) found that all groups (young, old, frequent gamblers, skill game gamblers) responded best to positive, non-judgemental messages that used language that didn't feel 'condescending', 'accusatory' or 'blaming you' (see also Revealing Reality 2021; Crouch et al, 2021).

This is supported by data from our six discussion groups. Participants expressed a preference for positive messages that encouraged people to take control (e.g. 'it's time to make a change') over messages that seemed to be blaming or judgemental (e.g. 'don't put betting before your mates'). As participants generally did not perceive themselves to be at high risk of experiencing gambling harms, this may help explain why gain framing messages were appealing. For example, participants tended to respond positively to messages in the 'Talk Ban Stop' campaign (which uses real-life examples of people who have experienced harmful gambling and sought help), one reason being that the messages were not chiding people about gambling and because they showed people who had overcome their gambling problems with professional help:

> '… it's not patronising or pitying in any way, it's just saying these are the situations if you need help…
>
> Sometimes it's about that positive: "I got help and I've sorted my life out" and, you know, I'm still with my wife and I've still got the house but I recognise I had that problem.' (Women)

The evidence indicates that positive messaging works most effectively when it includes **a 'call to action' that offers practical and easy ways for someone to change their behaviour** (Revealing Reality 2021; Blaszczynski & Gainsbury 2018; Gainsbury et al, 2018). A meta-review of public health campaigns found that gain-framed messages (which focus on attaining a desirable outcome or avoiding an undesirable outcome) were significantly more likely than loss-framed messages (which focus on attaining an undesirable outcome or avoiding a desirable outcome) to encourage prevention behaviours, particularly for skin cancer prevention, smoking cessation, and physical activity (Gallagher and John, 2012). This is supported by evidence from public health youth campaigns (Byrne et al, 2005) and a study of physical activity messaging (Williamson et al, 2020).

3.3 Authentic and relatable

In addition to a positive tone, there is evidence from non-gambling public health campaigns that **being 'authentic'** can increase people's receptiveness to messages. In a counter-marketing[8] e-cigarette campaign, for example, young people were clear on the importance of portraying realistic situations and devices (Kim et al, 2020). This issue was also discussed in our group discussions, where the subjects in some 'safer gambling' adverts were perceived to lack authenticity and participants struggled to relate to them as people who might experience harms from gambling. However, this seemed to be very much a personal matter.

In our discussion groups, the messaging and imagery used in the 'TalkBanStop' campaign[9] (with real-life situations of harmful gambling) felt authentic to participants because it mirrored the same risks and harms from gambling that they perceived (and in some cases had experienced) - on personal mental health, finances, family and relationships. As one participant described:

> "*Even losing a small amount of money causes stress, you know, you're putting that 20 quid on and then 40 quid on, 60 quid on, and then the stress is well you know I could have bought my kids something or I could have bought myself something and that all adds up. ...then there's the stress of how much of an idiot I've been. So you know, it's your own self-esteem as well so there's all that impact, family and on personal life as well.*" (Older, less engaged)

In terms of messages **being relatable**, there was some indication from our discussion groups that people can be deterred by language or images that they don't feel represent them.

> "*I feel like [WTFSS] it's aimed at a more sort of 18-21 audience, like 'don't put betting before your mates' and 'don't bet if you're getting angry'... I don't think it's aimed at adults and obviously gambling is for adults, so I don't like it.*" (Younger, less engaged)

Linked to this, participants across all the discussion groups talked more about 'betting' than 'gambling' in relation to their own behaviour, and associated gambling with riskier behaviour.

> '*Betting feels as though you can do it within limits and safely, but gambling feels a bit more like you've maybe not got as much control over your behaviour.*' (Younger, more engaged)

A woman participant also felt that having two middle aged men in some of the messages was '*very stereotypical*'.[10] These factors could affect how people respond to these messages.

In addition, in line with the Transtheoretical Model described earlier, the evidence indicates that individuals at risk of, or experiencing harmful gambling, may not be aware of any need to change their gambling behaviour or do not perceive that they have any issues with gambling (referred to as a pre-contemplative stage). This means they are unlikely to respond to 'safer gambling' messages (Revealing Reality, 2021; Future Thinking 2016) and suggests that an element of awareness raising may need to be incorporated for messages to resonate with them. This contradiction at the heart of 'safer gambling' messages was summed up by a participant in one of our discussion groups:

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[8] Counter-marketing is the use of commercial marketing tactics to reduce the prevalence of harmful behaviours such as substance use.

[9] The TalkBanStop campaign is a partnership between GamCare, Gamban and GAMSTOP launched in 2021 that brings together blocking software, self-exclusion and helpline support to make them easier for people to access. The partnership has contributed to over 7,000 registrations of Gamban's blocking software.

[10] There was in fact a version of the advert where the subject was a woman, which was tested in some of the discussion groups.

'I think if you're the sort of person that is going to read these warnings and pay attention to them, you don't need them anyway, and if you're the sort of person that doesn't read them, you're the sort of person that actually should.' (Older, more engaged)

As already noted, there was some indication of this in our discussion groups, with participants generally seeming to perceive harmful gambling as something that happened to other people, even though several of them described occasionally betting more money than they intended or feeling addicted to a particular type of gambling at some point in their life. As we discuss in Chapter 4, the new alternative messages that we designed for this study included 'contemplative' messages that aimed to encourage reflective thinking among people who may be at risk of gambling harms but do not recognise their gambling could be harmful.

3.4 Engaging content

The evidence about engaging content in 'safer gambling' messages falls into two categories: first, the type of content; and second, how the content is presented.

3.4.1 Type of content

In terms of the content of 'safer gambling' messages, there is some evidence that **information-based approaches** to counteract common biases may influence behaviour change, or at least self-awareness (Blaszczynski & Gainsbury 2018). We found several studies that have looked at ways of **increasing individual's knowledge about risk and the real likelihood of winning** (Newall et al, 2020; Productivity Commission report (1999) quoted in Dickerson & O'Connor (2006)). Risk information, for example, can be framed in ways that make it clearer, using 'house edge' statistics (e.g. 'This game keeps 10% of all money bet on average') rather than 'return to player' statistics (e.g. 'This game has an average percentage payout of 90%') (Newall et al, 2020), although the authors also note that improved statistical risk warnings might shift gamblers and operators towards lower house edge products, which may then cause more harm due to an increased rate of winning streaks.

Other work finds that communications should **draw attention to risky behaviours** that are displayed by people who gamble such as 'loss chasing' or an increase in the frequency of gambling (Future Thinking 2016). Messages need to help players understand key gaming concepts and to critically reflect on cues and messages that form part of the game (Revealing Reality 2020). There is also evidence that messages encouraging self-appraisal have more impact on within-session thoughts and behaviours, as well as subsequent game play, in comparison with a blank or control message (Monoghan and Blaszczynski 2010). However, while the provision of **better information about the signs of harmful gambling behaviour**, and the real likelihood of winning, may help prevent harmful gambling habits from forming in 'leisure' gamblers, they are unlikely to help those who are already engaged in harmful gambling (Blaszczynski et al, 2014b; Williams et al, 2012).

The emerging field of **counter-marketing** in public heath could also be used to increase the effectiveness of 'safer gambling' messages. Counter-marketing works by discrediting the opponent's message (i.e. gambling operators) '*as the industry, not the consumer, is depicted as the bad actor*' (Strebel and Terry, 2021, page 813). An evaluation of a year-long, state-wide anti-smoking campaign in Florida called the 'Truth Campaign', that used counter-marketing techniques, was shown to change both smoking intentions and behaviour among young people (Neiderdeppe et al, 2004; Farrelly et al, 2002). Teenagers in Florida were less likely to currently smoke or to have ever smoked, and they held less favourable attitudes to tobacco companies than their comparators in different states. An understanding of the messaging used by gambling operators to encourage gambling could help

inform counter-marketing gambling messages. For example, one study found that the three key messages given to players by gambling operators were '*imagine*', '*it could be us*' and '*it's fun*' (Krawczyk and Wlasiuk, 2021).

Interestingly, while the idea that '*you never see a poor bookie*' was raised spontaneously in some of our discussion groups, and clearly struck a chord in others, it did not seem to resonate with participants as a 'safer gambling' message. It is possible that participants had no expectation of fairness from gambling operators, therefore this message was unlikely to impact on behaviour or perceptions. As noted in Chapter 2, Harris and Griffiths (2017) concluded that informative messaging alone was unlikely to change actual behaviour.

3.4.2 How content is presented

Evidence shows that the design of 'safer gambling' message content can also impact on its effectiveness. Studies have found that **dynamic messages** have more impact than messages presented statically, with more information being recalled, with greater accuracy, even two weeks later, as well as positive impacts on within-session thoughts and behaviours (Monoghan and Blaszczynski, 2007; Monoghan and Blaszczynski, 2010). In addition, a Randomised Control Trial examining the impact of showing informational aminated videos on slot machines prior to play found that it reduced the likelihood of a player exceeding their pre-set limit, as well as other attitudinal changes (Wohl et al, 2009). However, the effect was not necessarily long lasting, and waned over the course of a month.   In our discussion groups, it was notable that the visual images and messages used in the 'Bet Regret/Tap Out' campaign adverts had made a strong impression on participants who had seen them, whereas the static text-based version of the same advert shown to participants in the groups was (unsurprisingly) less engaging.

An eye-tracking study of gambling adverts that contained 'safer gambling' information found fewer eye fixations on the 'safer gambling' element compared to wagering information (Lole et al, 2019). The authors concluded that gambling operators presented 'safer gambling' messages in a non-conspicuous manner, with the most looked-at information presented on a solid/block-colour background. This was echoed in our discussion groups, as described in Chapter 2, in relation to 'When the fun stops, stop' on gambling adverts. Participants either felt it was the least noticeable part of the advert or that their eye was drawn to the word 'fun' as opposed to 'stop'. One participant had previously seen the message on aa gambling advert, but not recognised that it was a 'safer gambling' message: '*I actually didn't realise until now that the bottom part of that is actually a Gamble Aware message.*'

3.5 Differentiated approaches by demographic

An important finding from our review of the evidence was that people respond differently to 'safer gambling' messages depending on their age and gambling behaviour, which has implications for the design and targeting of these messages. **Fundamentally, the evidence indicates that personalising the messaging approach to the target audience or even the individual is the most successful strategy** (Gainsbury et al, 2018; Chataway et al, 2018; Harris et al, 2018; Auer & Griffiths 2020), as summarised below:

> '*The use of emotional content in a responsible gambling message context may be able to create an orientating attentional, and ultimately, a greater behavioural effect, this is likely to*

*be more effective for stimuli that is seen as both personally relevant **as well as** emotionally stimulating.'* (Harris et al, 2018, page 272)

Several studies have found age-related differences in people's responses to 'safer gambling' messages. Gainsbury et al (2018) found that **older adults** preferred messages about limit setting, whilst **young adults** preferred messages about their own play and expertise. Techniques that seem particularly effective for adolescents and young people include counter-marketing (Strebel and Terry, 2021, described above) and denormalising[11] risky behaviours (Byrne et al, 2005). 'Peer crowd' based targeting, rather than simple age-based targeting, could also increase favourable responses to public health counter-marketing campaigns (Kim et al, 2020).

Other research shows that fear-based public health campaigns are less successful with young people (Harris et al, 2018), where focusing on the risk of 'irresponsible' drinking, of example, can result in young people convincing themselves that the messages are not aimed at them. Fear-based messages may even be counterproductive, encouraging those who are drawn towards risky behaviours. Taking a family-focused approach was also less effective among younger people and those who did not have families of their own.

In addition, someone's pattern of gambling appears to influence the way in which messages are received. Studies show that 'moderate' gamblers do not always relate to the term 'gambling', as some prefer 'betting' (Future Thinking, 2016); and may relate better to messages focussing on responsibility, for example to their family, to pay bills or to keep on top of their spending. 'Problem' gamblers reported that 'safer gambling' messages reduced their enjoyment of playing, which was not the case for other people who gambled (Blaszczynski et al, 2014b).

3.6 Differentiated approaches by channel

Recent research highlights important channel differences in people's engagement with gambling advertising that will also be relevant to messages aimed at preventing or reducing gambling harm. It found that, while sponsorships and traditional advertising had been seen by all age groups, online advertising was more likely to be seen by younger adults. Similarly, younger adults (aged 18 to 44), men and people who had gambled in the past four weeks were all more likely to follow gambling companies on social media (Gambling Commission, 2021b).

There is however limited evidence on the effectiveness of different channels to reach different groups of people with 'safer gambling' or public health messages. Most of the evaluation evidence referenced in this review is based on large-scale print or TV advertising campaigns or purposeful experiments.[12] The evidence about differentiated approaches by channel is mostly limited to the delivery of 'safer gambling' messages by gambling operators as part of in-game play; and some of the relevant studies that look at other delivery channels were conducted before social media became quite the dominant force that it is now. Indeed, Gainsbury et al (2020) note that as technology evolves, there is a need to assess the impact of individual website features on gambling behaviour.

The available evidence does suggest that different channels may be more effective for different groups (Byrne et al, 2005; Crouch et al, 2021). As already noted, one gambling operator found that using social media resulted in high levels of engagement with customers (Jacob et al,2021), although the operator believed this was because the social media content struck the appropriate tone with

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[11] Challenging the social norms and acceptability of a health-compromising behaviour.
[12] Where messaging has been deliberately placed in front of those gambling to measure the effect.

customers, being '*upfront, interactive and on brand*' (Crouch et al, 2021). In our discussion groups, participants generally thought that social media was a good channel to deliver 'safer gambling' messages, if for no other reason than to counteract the constant flow of gambling advertising that they received on social media.

Another study, which is over 20 years old, found that smoking cessation TV adverts were demonstrably more effective on younger teens (12-13 tear olds) than on older ones (14-15 year olds) (Siegel & Biener, 2000 cited in Byrne et al, 2005). In addition, one gambling operator who sent 'safer gambling' messages via text, email and internal messaging found that texts were the most effective method of communicating with customers. The operator believed this was due to the immediacy of texts in comparison to emails. However, a different operator successfully increased the use of 'safer gambling' tools following a reminder email, with the caveat that they had found the right tone in the email (Crouch et al, 2021). The study does not say if different groups of customers responded differently, however.

4 Designing and testing alternatives to 'safer gambling' messages

Summary

- We generated and tested three novel alternative messages that were piloted alongside three existing messages in a nationally representative online survey of 987 people.
- Encouragingly, respondents generally had a good sense of the purpose of the messages.
- The novel message 'Lose family' (which was targeted at people affected by someone else's gambling) provoked stronger emotions than other messages, particularly guilt and shame.
- The novel message 'Lose family' and the existing message 'Fun stops' were the most likely to encourage respondents to take action.
- The more frequently respondents gambled, the more the messages resonated with them. Two existing preventative messages – 'Fun stops' and 'Tap out' – resonated most with respondents who gambled occasionally or regularly.
- Of the responsive and contemplative messages we tested, 'Real winners' – a counter marketing message– resonated most but was least likely to encourage respondents to act, suggesting that the call to action was incongruous with the message.
- Age and level of gambling engagement were strong differentiators when it came to how respondents perceived the messages; sex and ethnicity were less strong differentiators.

4.1 Four stages for designing and testing existing and new messages

Building on the findings from the evidence review and our six discussion groups, this Chapter describes the four-stage process (summarised in Figure 4.1) that we undertook to generate and test some novel alternative messages that were piloted alongside existing 'safer gambling' messages in a nationally representative online survey of 987 people in July 2021. We consider the key findings from the pilot survey and their implications for the design of a new generation of alternative messages.

Figure 4.1 How we generated and tested new messages

Ideate	Test	Refine	Pilot
We ideated new messages based on the evidence.	We qualitatively tested 12 new and existing messages in six discussion groups.	We applied a behavioural science lens to selected messages.	We piloted six messages in a survey of 987 people.
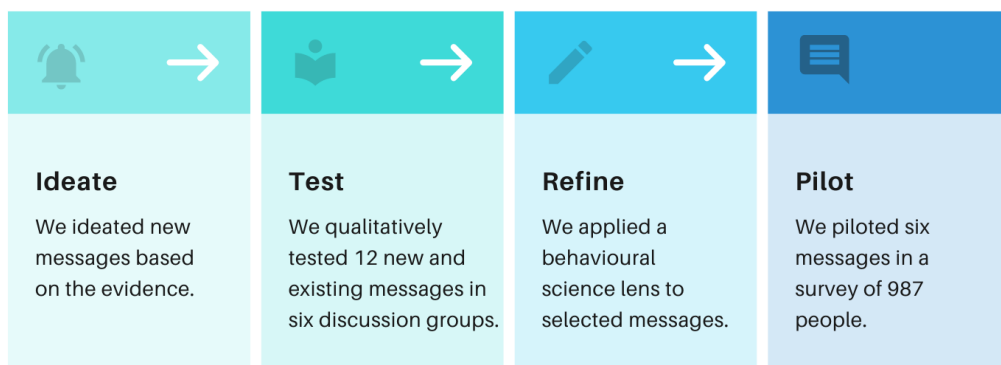
4.2 Ideate

We ideated nine new messages to test qualitatively in our discussion groups, based on what we learned from the rapid evidence review and insights from other qualitative research with people who gambled (including those who experienced gambling harms).[13] These new messages were designed around three key features that were highlighted in our evidence review: purpose, tone and audience.

Purpose:	The new messages were designed to either be: ● **Preventative**, to encourage behaviours that mitigate harm, ● **Responsive**, to deter behaviours that cause harm, or ● **Contemplative**, to encourage reflective thinking among people who may be at risk of gambling harms but don't recognise their gambling could be harmful.
Tone:	The new messages were designed to either be: ● **More informative**, based on evidence or data about gambling; or ● **More emotive**, appealing to people's emotional instincts.
Audience:	The new messages were designed with three audience characteristics in mind: ● **Age**, with evidence that (broadly speaking) younger people are more receptive to logic-based informational messages, and older people to emotion-based messages.[14] ● **Sex,** the differences between women and men's understanding of, and response to, 'safer gambling' messages is under-explored; and there are few messages addressed to affected others, who are more likely to be women. ● **Gambling engagement,** our preventative messages were aimed at people less engaged in gambling activities; while our responsive and contemplative messages were aimed at people more engaged in gambling activities.

4.3 Test

We qualitatively tested the new messages with participants in our six discussion groups. These participants were recruited to reflect the audience characteristics we were interested in: age, sex and gambling engagement. We also tested three existing 'safer gambling' messages as a comparison. Rather than testing the same messages with all the discussion groups, we tested different messages with different groups, as shown in Table 4.1. Full details are provided in the Appendix.

The responsive and contemplative messages we tested were all ones we had ideated as there did not seem to be any existing such messages. The number of messages we tested varied by group depending on the time available. All groups considered the 'safer gambling' message 'When the fun stops, stop' as this was likely to be the most well-known message.

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[13] Evans et al, 2020; Collard et al, 2021.
[14] See for example McNair et al, 2018.

Table 4.1 Number and type of messages tested by group composition

	Message purpose		
Group composition	Preventative	Responsive	Contemplative
Younger[a], less engaged[b]	✓✓[c]	✓✓✓[d]	✓
Older, less engaged	✓✓ ✓	✓✓	-
Younger, more engaged	✓ ✓	✓✓✓	✓
Older, more engaged	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Women with gambling experience	✓ ✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Affected others	-[e]	✓✓✓	-

[a] Younger: 18-30 years old; Older: 31-65 years old. [b] Less engaged: 1-2 gambling activities in the last 4 weeks; More engaged: 3+ gambling activities in the last 4 weeks. [c] Blue tick: existing message; [d] Green tick: new message. [e] We planned to show a public health video produced in Australia about affected others and their support needs, but technical issues meant this was not possible. Some participants provided feedback after watching the video in their own time.

Table 4.2 gives the wording of the new and existing messages we tested in our discussion groups. Where there were several versions of an existing message (as with TalkBanStop), we used the version that seemed to best match the group's composition in terms of age and/or sex.

The mock adverts that we used to test the new messages with our discussion groups were created by the research team using stock images (unlike the existing adverts which have been professionally designed). All the messages we tested contained a 'call to action' in the form of contact information for the National Gambling Treatment Service.

Table 4.2 Message wording tested in the discussion groups

Preventative (new and existing)	Responsive (new and existing)	Contemplative (all new)
NEW: Wouldn't it be better to spend your time and money having fun with your friends and family rather than gambling? It might be time to make a change.	NEW: Every day in Britain, one person takes their own life because of gambling. Don't bet your life on gambling.	Bookmakers keep at least 10% of the money bet. Whether you win or lose, the betting companies are always the real winners. Find out about making a change.
NEW: Are you losing time and money on gambling? It's time to take a break.	NEW: Down on time and money? Recoup your losses by taking a break.	Is most of your money going on gambling? It might be time to make a change.
EXISTING: When the fun stops, stop ● Advert with calls to action e.g. 'never chase your losses'. ● Message strapline at the bottom of gambling operator adverts.	NEW: The fear of talking about gambling problems is often worse than the reality. Affected others version: If you are affected by someone else's gambling, the fear of talking about it is often worse than the reality.	Is gambling taking over your life? It might be time to make a change. Affected others version: Is someone else's gambling taking over your life? There is free expert help available.
	NEW: Affected others only: For each person with a gambling problem, on average six other people are negatively affected. If you are affected by someone else's gambling, there is help available.	
	EXISTING: TalkBanStop: ● 'I started my recovery when the only thing left to lose was my family'. ● 'I hid my gambling for so long, wish I'd reached out sooner'. ● 'I'd gamble at my desk, so I made the call to stop'. ● 'My recovery started after losing £2,000 in 35 minutes'.	

4.3.1 Key themes from the discussion groups

The messages provoked lively debate in our discussion groups, which provided rich insights and confirmed there is no 'one size fits all' message that works for everyone. Table 4.3 summarises the key themes from our thematic analysis of the discussion groups, including by age, gender, and gambling engagement.

Table 4.3 Key themes from the discussion groups

Narratives: All groups responded well to a relatable subject and storylines. The subject's experience could signal to the audience an appropriate time or situation to ask for help. **Concreteness and simplicity**: Clarity of messages and actions was essential. Language should be simple, specific, avoiding 'abstract' meanings. **Images:** Any images should reinforce, not contradict, the message's purpose.	
We found that younger audiences: ● Preferred actions that were presented as optional, while older audiences preferred more direct language. ● Felt targeted or personalised messages were more effective, while this resonated less with older audiences. ● Dismissed messages that implied social judgement. ● Wanted imagery to be fluent with message meaning.	We found that older audiences: ● Were receptive to positive messages that instilled hope. ● Wanted the message's design to aid legibility, e.g. avoiding garish colours and utilising heuristics to aid comprehension such as traffic lights/colour symbolism. ● Valued reassurances of confidentiality alongside a call to action, such as contacting a helpline.
We found that more engaged gamblers: ● Were receptive to messages that prompted perspective-taking e.g. showing the perspective of family members. ● Reacted negatively to messaging that used patronising or condescending language – the narrative should be authentic and sincere. ● Found gambling consequences framed as losses to be impactful.	We found that affected others: ● Reacted negatively to messaging that used patronising or condescending language – the narrative should be authentic and sincere. ● Needed particular reassurances of confidentiality when responding to a call to action such as phoning a helpline.
We found that men: ● Were less likely to want to reach out for help, so a call to action could include a less intimate means of contact e.g. text or online chat.	We found that preventative messages: ● Benefit from illustrating a call to action (e.g. take a break) with a relatable and easily attainable action (e.g. make a cup of tea).
We found that responsive messages: ● Have to be timely and their impact could be boosted with perspective-taking strategies, e.g. showing the perspective of family members. ● Should include reassurances e.g. around confidentiality.	We found that contemplative messages: ● Must have a clear and attainable 'how' e.g. how to make a change or get help.

4.4 Refine

Six messages from Table 4.2 were selected for further analysis and testing on the basis of the analysis of the group discussions. As a next step, each of the six messages were subject to a light-touch evaluation aimed at understanding potential pros and cons from the perspective of insights drawn from behavioural science. Behavioural science is the economic, and psychological study of how people make choices. It relies on an understanding of how internal individual-level factors (including emotions, cognitive capabilities, and incentives) and external situational factors (e.g. how a choice or request is presented to someone, including language used, and design elements) can often be at odds. A better understanding of these factors can aid in designing better interventions (such as campaigns, or messages) to affect behaviour change.

Note: Our light-touch evaluations of the safer gambling messages presented below should not be taken as judgements of the *quality* of these messages, nor should they be taken as endorsements. In many instances we point to elements of these messages that *could* be important design elements, but more detailed research would be necessary to determine their robustness.

Box 4.1 Behavioural science: A primer

Small and seemingly innocuous design choices can have huge impacts on the choices people make. Behavioural science understands this, and through applying expertise from psychology and economics seeks to understand how subtle changes can help promote better outcomes.

In a classic example, switching the default choice process from "opt-in" to "opt-out" for workplace pensions led to an increase from 36% to 71% in the proportion of people saving into their pensions. This simple change — predicated on the idea that a driving factor of human behaviour is inertia — aimed to counteract and leverage peoples' tendency to "stick to the default". Drop-out rates under the new default ranged from 8% - 14%, where 28% had been predicted.[15]

Increasing pension uptake through switching to an opt-out default has had similar success in countries such as the US (Beshears et al 2009).

Behavioural science can provide a useful lens through which to view how consumers interact and engage with gambling. Two frameworks used by behavioural scientists are the COM-B model of behaviour, and the EAST framework which together can be applied to understand a) the barriers to creating behaviour change, and b) solution "nudges" that can overcome these barriers. A brief overview of each framework is provided in Box 4.2, below.

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[15] https://www.bi.team/blogs/setting-smarter-defaults-for-workplace-pensions/

Box 4.2 Frameworks used in behavioural science to identify barriers, and solutions to behaviour change		
	EAST	The COM-B model of behaviour change
What is it?	A framework that pinpoints four ways in which a behaviour intervention can achieve success, based on a synopsis of the behavioural science academic literature.	A framework used to understand the *types* of barriers that may prohibit someone from achieving a target behaviour. Identifying which barriers are relevant can help direct how an intervention should be designed to successfully affect behaviour change.
What are the major components?	To achieve success, an intervention should make the desired behaviour: Easy: simplify the call to action, and reduce the number of necessary steps Attractive: draw attention, and incentivise the desired behaviour Social: people are often drawn to what others are doing, so leverage this Timely: prompt people to change at the most opportune times	Capability: is the person *physically* and/or *psychologically* capable of performing the behaviour? Opportunity: does the person's situation provide the necessary *physical* and *social* opportunities to perform the behaviour? Motivation: can the person clearly *reflect* on how they can change and are they *emotionally* motivated to do so?

4.4.1 Existing messages selected for further analysis

Three of the six messages chosen for further analysis comprised existing messages from current campaigns:

1. **When the fun stops, stop** (campaign from GambleAware)
2. **Tap Out to avoid Bet Regret** (campaign from GambleAware)
3. **TalkBanStop** (campaign from GamCare)

In Table 4.4, below, we take the specific instances of each campaign (see Figure 4.2) tested in the group discussions and describe key insights drawn from each of the EAST and COM-B frameworks. We apply the EAST framework to determine positive aspects of the existing instances, and the COM-B model to identify examples of the kinds of barriers that may undermine the effectiveness of these instances in affecting behaviour.

Table 4.4 Existing campaign messages: insights from EAST and COM-B

'Safer gambling' campaign message	Positive aspects (EAST)	Barriers (COM-B)
When the fun stops, stop	<u>Easy</u> - Some versions of the advert contain clear steps that individuals can take to reduce risk of gambling harm. <u>Attractive</u> - High contrast colours with simple design may focus attention on the simple steps, rather than other visual elements. However, strong emphasis on fun in block capitals may send wrong message. <u>Social</u> - Prompt to frame gambling decisions in terms of how it might affect friendships may be a strong cue to consider social impact of gambling. <u>Timely</u> - The advert potentially specifies timely moments to take action (e.g. setting limits "at start", avoiding betting "when angry").	<u>Capability barriers</u> - *Psychological:* it may be difficult for individuals experiencing gambling harm to pre-emptively recognise when the "fun" is stopping, and therefore prevent a spiral of harm. <u>Opportunity barriers</u> - *Physical:* unlike other examples, this advert does not expressly signpost those who are struggling towards a support service. <u>Motivation barriers</u> - *Reflective:* the advert relies on gamblers to know *how* they can stop, and to have in place a plan of action to achieve this, rather than offer any prompts around what someone might specifically do to "stop" in times of harm.
Tap Out to avoid Bet Regret	<u>Easy</u> - Simple call to action ("Tap Out") that may be framed in natural, everyday language synonymous with smartphone use. - Specifies characteristics of "bet regret", and when it could happen. <u>Attractive</u> - The advert may create an emotional incentive: impulsive betting is linked with regret, which is a highly-aversive emotion. <u>Timely</u> - Specifies multiple touchpoints to consider one's behaviour: "before you bet", and frames taking a pause in a relatable context (making a cup of tea). - Could help individuals to understand *when* bet regret may occur, such as betting when "drunk, bored, or chasing losses."	<u>Capability barriers</u> - *Psychological:* Those experiencing harm may not be aware of what to "tap out" to. Providing a concrete steer towards an alternative behaviour to "tap out" towards would improve awareness. <u>Motivation barriers</u> - *Reflective:* the advert could help individuals understand a potential *consequence* associated with the bet regret concept, such as increased losses.
TalkBanStop	<u>Easy</u> - Fluency of simple "TalkBanStop" slogan will aid memory. <u>Attractive</u> - Use of high contrast colours, and a reversing palette could draw visual attention towards the three key elements of the message: quote, slogan, support service contact number. <u>Social</u> - May frame a signal of harm in a relatable social context (e.g. gambling at work).	<u>Capability barriers</u> - *Psychological:* the advert signposts to five different supports, which may make it difficult for readers to parse which support they should seek and when/why. <u>Opportunity barriers</u> - *Physical*: people will often feel they cannot spare the time to consider options. This advert signals to several forms of support, which may overload people. <u>Motivation barriers</u> - *Reflective:* A further related barrier is that the advert only implicitly signals calling the National Gambling Helpline as a useful first step, which could be more clearly stated.

4.4.2 Novel alternative messages created for pilot study

In addition to the existing messages described above, we generated three alternative messages for the pilot study which comprised novel or adapted slogans based on insights from the initial evidence review:

4. The fear of talking about gambling problems is often worse than the reality
5. Whether you win or lose, the betting companies are always the real winners
6. I started my recovery when the only thing left to lose was my family.[16]

As for the existing campaign messages, Table 4.5, below, describes the key insights garnered for each novel message from an application of EAST and COM-B. In this instance, we consider any example(s) of how the novel messages may overcome some of the kinds of barriers identified as potential shortfalls in the already-existing campaign messages.

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[16] Adapted from the 'TalkBanStop' campaign and presented with different framing.

Table 4.5 Novel campaign messages: insights from EAST, and COM-B

Novel campaign message	Positive aspects (EAST)	Barrier(s) this message may help overcome (COM-B)
Fear of talking	**Easy** - The advert contains a clear and simple step that individuals can take to get help. **Attractive** - The advert could make the desired behaviour more attractive by attempting to alleviate the anxiety someone might have about speaking up about their gambling. **Social** - The advert suggests others have performed the desired behaviour. **Timely** - The advert specifies taking action immediately (i.e. today) and provides a freephone number.	**Motivation** - *Reflective:* Presents a consequence of non-action by prompting someone to consider how feelings of self-consciousness may not be borne out in the reality of seeking support.
Bookies always win	**Attractive** - The advert may make gambling behaviour less attractive through framing the betting company as the real winner. - The advert may confirm what individuals who gamble already know and so could be more salient.	**Capability** - *Psychological:* Call to action ("Find out about making a change") sends cue that there are likely several options for changing one's gambling behaviour. **Motivation** - *Automatic:* Prompts someone to consider how, in overall terms, gambling operators make more profit from gambling than most customers.
Losing family	**Easy** - The advert contains a simple and concrete call to action and provides a freephone number. **Attractive** - The framing and seriousness of tone could help to make it salient and more memorable. - The advert depicts a positive story of recovery from gambling harm. **Social** - The advert frames the signs of negative impacts of harmful gambling through the impact on others/ relationships. **Timely** - The advert specifies that you can call the national gambling helpline anytime.	**Capability** - *Physical / Psychological:* Offers consideration that support and guidance is available for those who may be considered an "affected other" and/or those who may wish to want to assist someone else affected by harmful gambling. **Motivation** - *Reflective:* Cues someone to consider how the impact of gambling harms can extend beyond the individual in question.

4.5 Pilot

To gauge their comparative effectiveness, the three novel and three existing messages were piloted in a short survey with a nationally representative sample of UK adults in July 2021, via the online platform Prolific. The messages that were tested are shown in Figure 4.2 below. As noted above, the mock adverts used to test the new messages were created by the research team using stock images (unlike the existing adverts which have been professionally designed). A total of 987 people completed the survey. Table 4.5 shows a breakdown of the sample by the level of their gambling engagement.[17]

Table 4.5 Survey respondents by their gambling engagement (column %)

	Including lotteries and scratch cards	Excluding lotteries and scratch cards
Rarely or never: Never gambled, only in the past or less often than monthly	57%	77%
Occasional: Takes part in at least one gambling activity every month (but not more frequently)	16%	10%
Regular: Takes part in at least one gambling activity weekly or daily	27%	13%

Consistent with other research, we see differences by sex and age among our survey respondents:

- **Sex**: People who gambled regularly were more likely to be men (whether including or excluding lotteries and scratch cards). For example, 20% of men in our survey gambled regularly (excluding lotteries and scratch cards) compared with 6% of women.
- **Age**: Including lotteries and scratch cards, older respondents in our survey were more likely to gamble regularly. This effect vanished when lotteries and scratch cards were excluded, which showed that only the 40-49 year old age group were more likely to gamble regularly (20%, compared with 13% overall).

The survey questions were designed to gauge message effectiveness from five perspectives:
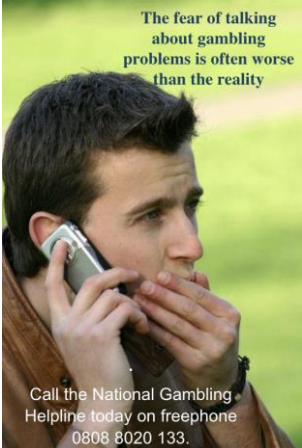
A. **Appropriateness of tone**, by asking respondents how the messages made them feel.
B. **Intent to carry out the call to action**, by asking respondents whether the message would make them (or someone they know) take the action indicated by the message.
C. **Message relevance**, by asking respondents if they feel the message is in any way personally relevant to them.
D. **Comprehension of purpose,** by asking respondents who they felt the message was for.
E. **Message recall**, by asking respondents at the end of the survey which message they felt was most memorable and using a short recall test.

We describe the survey results for each of these five perspectives below. More details about the survey and analysis are provided in the Appendix.

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[17] There were too few respondents in the survey who identified as 'affected others' (n.27) to present their responses separately.

Figure 4.2 The six messages piloted in the online survey

1. Existing message – preventative	2. Existing message - preventative[18]	3. Existing message – responsive
4. Novel message – responsive	5. Novel message - contemplative	6. Novel message – responsive (affected others)[19]

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[18] This is only the text for the Tap Out/Bet Regret campaign. The full advert which played across media platforms can be viewed at www.begambleaware.org/betregret
[19] Adapted from the 'TalkBanStop' campaign and presented with different framing.

4.5.1 Appropriateness of tone

The survey asked respondents how each of the six messages made them feel, to gauge their perceptions about message tone. Figure 4.3 shows the extent to which different messages made respondents feel positive or negative, which is indicative of the message's emotional impact. This suggests that more respondents felt positive about the two preventative messages (Fun Stops; Tap Out) than other message types. Conversely, two-fifths of respondents (40%) felt negative about the responsive message for affected others (Lose Family), which is more than any other message by quite some way.

Figure 4.3 'How does this advert make you feel?'
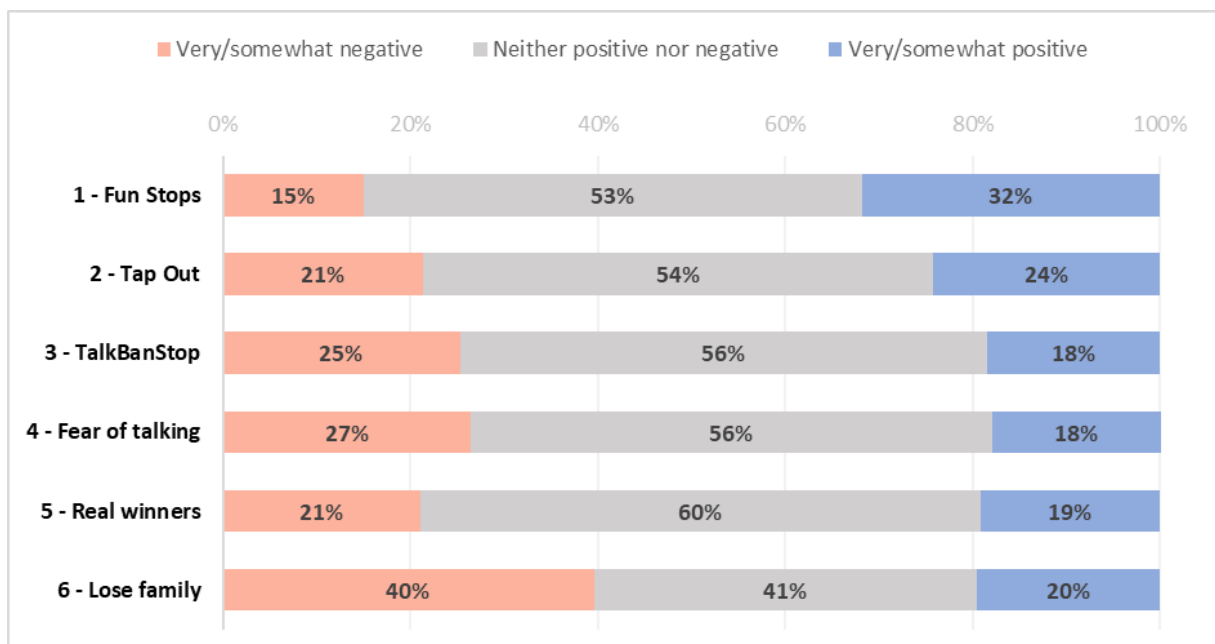
In addition, we asked respondents about *specific* emotions that the messages might evoke for them. Figure 4.4 shows the results, where higher values indicate the message evoked stronger emotions. We see that Message 6 (Lose Family) - which is aimed at people affected by someone else's gambling - evoked stronger emotions than the other messages, across the spectrum of emotions asked about. It triggered comparatively high levels of guilt and shame among respondents, which can be barriers to seeking help (Gunstone et al, 2021), however further testing is needed to show if the same is true for the intended target audience of people affected by someone else's gambling.

Figure 4.4 'Does this advert make you feel any of the following?'
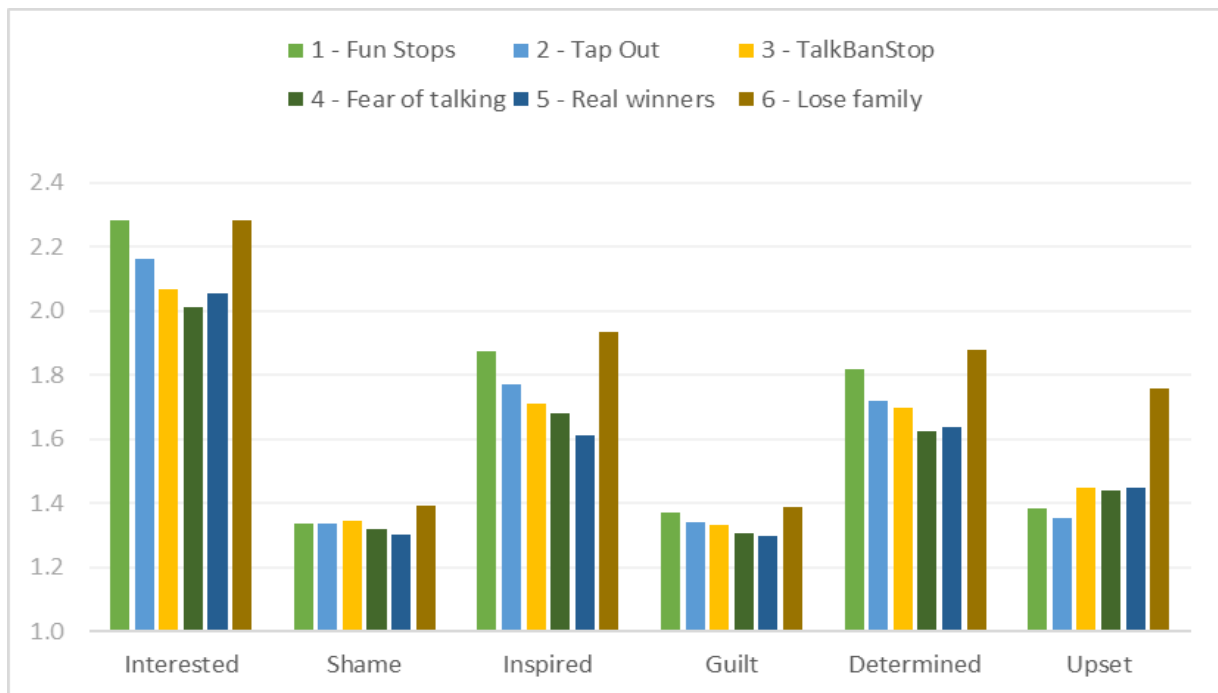
Average on scale from 1 to 4, where 1 = 'not at all' and 4 = 'a lot'.

We used regression analysis[20] to explore significant variations in people's emotional responses to the messages by the level of their gambling engagement[21] and by age, sex, and ethnicity. This showed:

- **A strong relationship between gambling engagement and emotional response.** Respondents who gambled regularly displayed significantly stronger emotional responses to the messages, particularly shame and guilt, which were especially pronounced for Message 2 (Tap Out), Message 5 (Real Winners) and Message 6 (Lose Family - which is aimed at people affected by someone else's gambling). For example, respondents who gambled regularly had six times the odds of feeling guilt in response to Message 2 (Tap Out).
- **Some relationship between age and emotional response.** Younger respondents generally had stronger emotional responses to the messages than older respondents. For example, 18–20-year-olds had four times the odds of feeling inspired by Message 2 (Tap Out) than other age groups; and two to three times the odds of feeling shame, inspired or upset by Message 6 (Lose Family, aimed at people affected by someone else's gambling).
- **Some relationship between ethnicity and emotional response**. Respondents from white ethnic groups tended to show less strong emotions to the messages. For example, compared to respondents from White ethnic groups, those from Asian backgrounds had around three times the odds of feeling shame in relation to Message 4 (Fear of Talking); and those from Black, Mixed or Other backgrounds were similarly more likely to feel shame regarding Message 5 (Real Winners).

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[20] Regression analysis allows us to examine relationships between variables while controlling for all other characteristics included in the analysis. For example, our regression models show how gambling engagement affects someone's intent to act, independent of age, gender and ethnic background.
[21] Unless otherwise stated, gambling engagement excludes lotteries and scratch cards.

- **A weak relationship between sex and emotional response.** The only significant findings were that women were more likely to be interested in, and upset by, Message 6 (Lose Family, aimed at people affected by someone else's gambling) than men; and upset by Message 4 (Fear of Talking).

4.5.2 Intent to carry out the call to action

One of the gaps in knowledge highlighted by our evidence review is the extent to which 'safer gambling' messages result in people taking positive action.

Our pilot provides some insight based on whether respondents felt any of the messages would encourage them (or someone they knew) to act, for example by contacting the helpline or website shown on the advert; and whether they would show the advert to a friend or family member if they felt that person was struggling with gambling.

As Figure 4.5 shows, Message 1 (Fun Stops) and Message 6 (Lose Family, aimed at people affected by someone else's gambling) were the most likely to encourage respondents to take action, with Message 5 (Real Winners) having the lowest reported 'call to action'.

Figure 4.5 'Would the adverts encourage you to take action?'
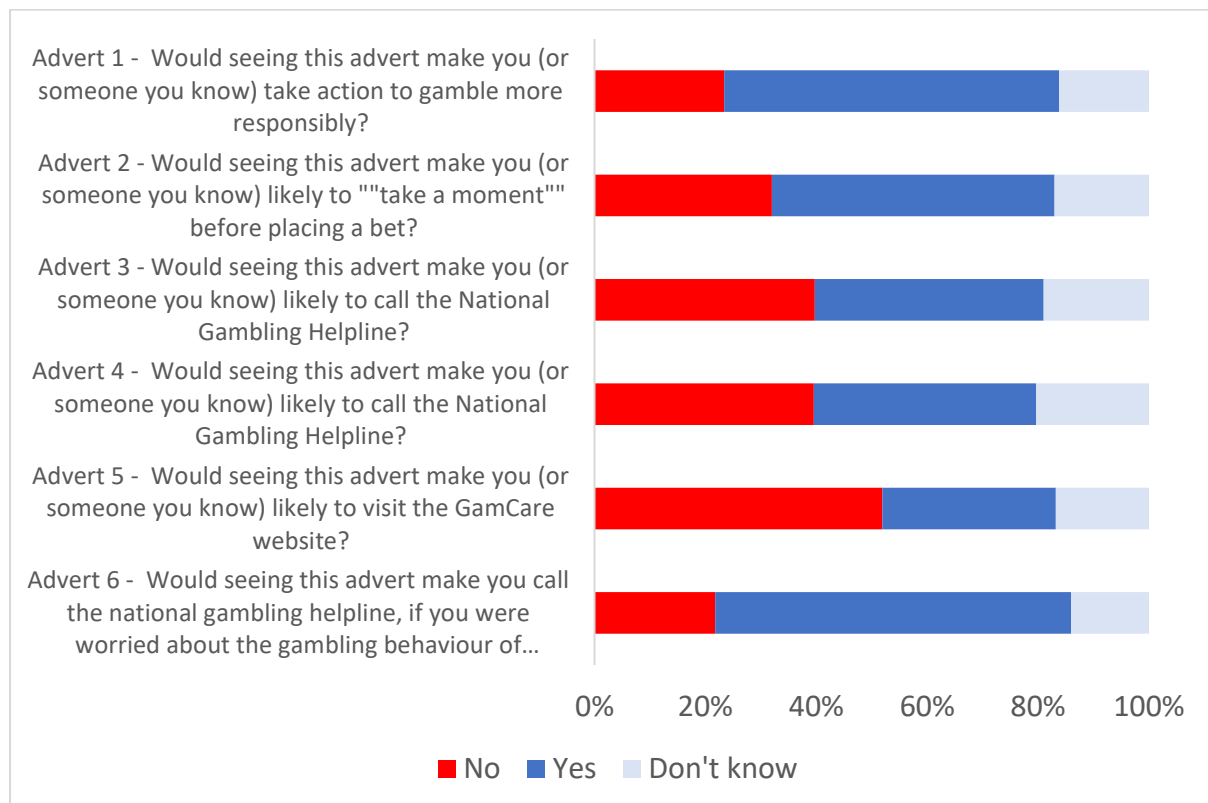
We used regression analysis to explore variations in people's intention to act by their gambling engagement and by age, sex, and ethnicity (while controlling for other factors). This shows:

- **A strong relationship between age and intent to act.** There was a significantly higher likelihood of all age groups showing intent to act in response to Message 2 (Tap Out), but especially 18–20-year-olds (who had ten times the odds of showing intent to act). This age group was also more likely to show intent to act in response to Message 1 (Fun Stops) and

Message 6 (Lose Family, aimed at people affected by someone else's gambling). In contrast, respondents aged between 18 and 40 were significantly less likely to show intent to act in response to Message 4 (Fear of Talking).

- **Some relationship between sex and intent to act.** Men were significantly less likely to show intent to act than women in response to Messages 3 (TalkBanStop), Message 4 (Fear of Talking) and Message 6 (Lose family, aimed at people affected by someone else's gambling).
- **A weak relationship between ethnicity and intent to act**. The only significant findings were that respondents from a Black, Mixed or Other background were more likely to show intent to act in response to Message 2 (Tap Out) and Message 4 (Fear of Talking).
- **A weak relationship between level of gambling engagement and intent to act**. The only significant findings were that regular gamblers had a lower likelihood of acting in relation to Message 6 (Lose Family which is targeted at people affected by someone else's gambling) compared to occasional or non-gamblers; and a lower likelihood of showing Messages 4, 5 and 6 (Fear of talking; Real Winners; Lose Family) to a friend or family member if they felt that person was struggling with gambling. This resonates with the evidence review findings, that individuals who are more at risk of gambling harm feel that 'safer gambling' messages are not relevant to them; and supports the idea of messages that signal how individuals at risk of gambling harm can identify the signs (which we did not test in this study).

4.5.3 Message relevance

To gauge message relevance, for each advert respondents were asked if they felt the advert was in any way personally relevant to them. As Figure 4.6 shows, the more frequently someone gambled, the more the messages resonated with them. Messages 1 (Fun Stops) and 2 (Tap Out) – both existing preventative messages that might be familiar to respondents – were most resonant with people who gambled occasionally or regularly.

In contrast, responsive and contemplative messages were less personally relevant to these two groups than preventative messages. Out of the responsive and contemplative messages, Message 5 (Real Winners) - a counter-marketing message focusing on the gambling industry - resonated the most, although as noted above it scored lowest as a 'call to action'. One possible explanation is that the call to action of contacting a helpline was incongruous with the knowledge that gambling operators were always the real winners.

Figure 4.6 'Do you feel this advert is in any way personally relevant to you?
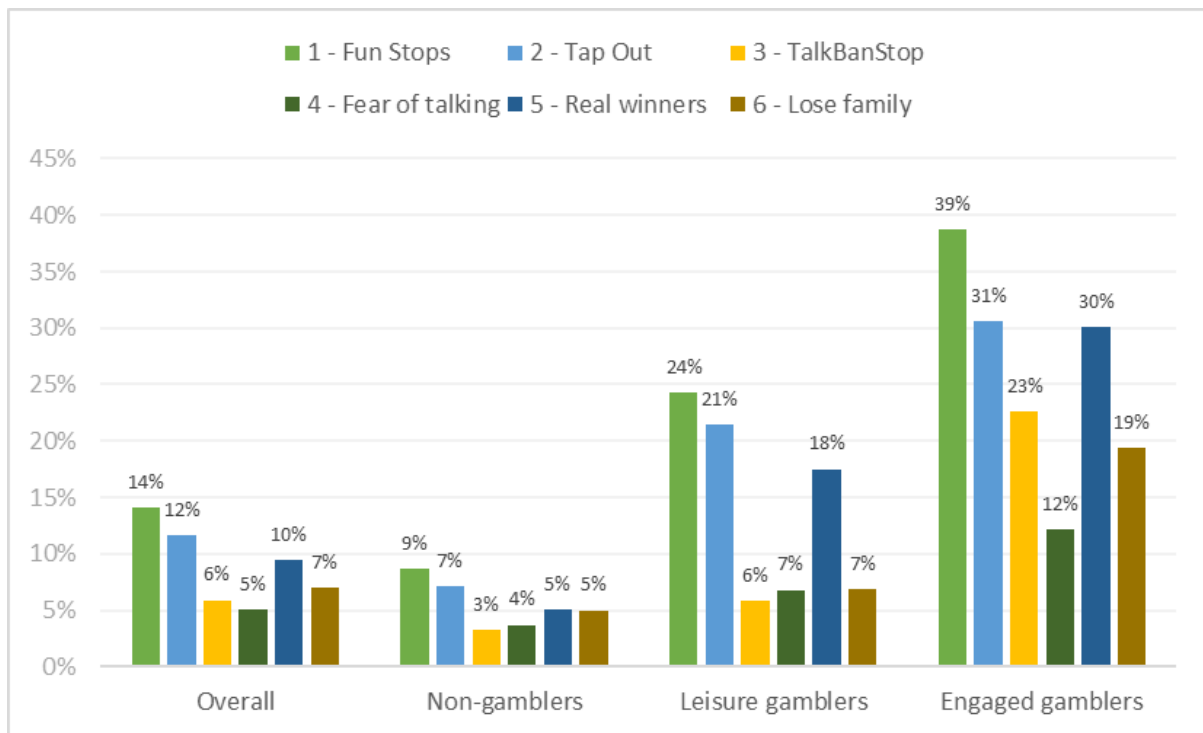
We used regression analysis to explore variations in message relevance by respondents' gambling engagement and by age, sex, and ethnicity (while controlling for other factors). This shows:

● **A very strong relationship between gambling engagement and message relevance.** Echoing the findings reported above, respondents who gambled regularly were significantly more likely to feel that all the messages were personally relevant to them. When we control for the effects of age, sex and ethnicity, we see that respondents who gambled regularly had eight times the odds of feeling feel that Message 3 (TalkBanStop) and Message 5 (Real Winners) were personally relevant to them compared to those who never or rarely gambled. Despite finding the messages personally relevant, as we saw earlier this did not translate into intention to act among respondents who gambled regularly.

● **Some relationship between age and message relevance.** There was a significantly higher likelihood of respondents aged under 50 feeling that Message 2 (Tap Out) was relevant to them. This relationship was strongest for 18-20 years and then declined with age. The only other significant relationship was a higher likelihood of Message 1 (Fun Stops) resonating with respondents in their 30s.

● **A weak relationship between sex and message relevance.** Men were significantly more likely that women to feel that Message 1 (Fun Stops) and Message 4 (Fear of Talking) were personally relevant to them – although as we saw earlier, men were less likely to show intent to act in relation to Message 4 (Fear of Talking).

● **No relationship between ethnicity and message relevance.** The regression analysis showed no significant relationship between ethnicity and message relevance. This suggests that other factors such as level of gambling engagement are more important in determining whether a message is felt to be personally relevant.

4.5.4 Comprehension of purpose

The survey asked respondents who they thought each of the six the messages was for, to gauge their perceptions about the purpose of the message. In other words, is the message targeted at people who gamble occasionally or rarely where the focus is likely to be preventing harm from gambling; is it targeted at people who gamble regularly or heavily, where the focus is likely to be deterring behaviours that cause harm; or is it targeted at people affected by someone else's gambling?

The results shown in Figure 4.7 below suggest that:

● Respondents had a good sense of message purpose, given the low proportions that said they didn't know who the adverts were for.
● All six messages were generally perceived to be more for people who either show signs of problems with gambling or are already experiencing problems. This was particularly the case for Message 3 (TalkBanStop) and Message 4 (Fear of Talking), which we categorise as 'responsive' messages that may help deter gambling behaviours that cause harm. In other words, respondents seemed to have good comprehension of purpose for both messages.
● Messages 1 (Fun Stops) and 5 (Real Winners) were the messages that respondents were most likely to feel were for everyone.
● Message 6 (Lose Family) was rightly perceived by the majority of respondents as a message targeted at people affected by someone else's gambling; but also felt to be aimed at people who have a problem with gambling. This might indicate some confusion of purpose or alternatively the potential for messages to serve more than one purpose.

Figure 4.7 'Who is the advert for?' (respondents could choose multiple responses)

Who is the advert for?	1 - Fun Stops	2 - Tap Out	3 - TalkBanStop	4 - Fear of talking	5 - Real winners	6 - Lose family
Everyone	41%	29%	16%	18%	42%	19%
People who gamble occasionally, without it causing them problems	24%	20%	9%	8%	20%	6%
People who gamble regularly, without it causing them any problems	34%	31%	18%	13%	29%	11%
People who gamble and show some signs of problem gambling behaviour	57%	64%	69%	67%	53%	49%
People who have a gambling problem	50%	59%	76%	79%	51%	64%
People who are affected by someone else's gambling problem	28%	29%	38%	51%	32%	68%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	1%

4.5.5 Message recall

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked which of the six adverts they felt was most memorable; and completed a short recall test which involved filling in missing words from part of the message (see the survey questionnaire in the Appendix for full details).

As Table 4.6 shows, the largest vote was for Message 6 (Lose Family), which is a new message targeted at people affected by someone else's gambling, with four in ten respondents (37%) feeling this was the most memorable of the six messages. The second most memorable was Message 1 (Fun Stops), which may reflect its prominence on gambling adverts across multiple platforms. The third most memorable was Message 5 (Real Winners), which like Message 6 encourages people to take a different perspective and think beyond the self when it comes to their own gambling.

Table 4.6 'Which of the six messages you saw do you feel was the most memorable?'

6 - Lose family	37%
1 - Fun Stops	34%
5 - Real winners	17%
2 - Tap Out	6%
4 - Fear of talking	5%
3 - TalkBanStop	1%

These findings were mirrored in the recall test, where the highest scores for correctly completing the missing words in a message were for Message 1 (Fun Stops; 71% of respondents filled in the missing words correctly) and Message 6 (Lose Family; 67% of respondents filled in the missing words correctly). The third highest score was for Message 2 (Tap Out; 29%).

5 Conclusions

In theory, 'safer gambling' messages engage players with information about 'safer gambling' behaviours and strategies, with the aim of increasing their awareness and knowledge, shifting their attitudes towards gambling and ultimately changing what they do in ways that prevent or reduce gambling harms. There are questions about the effectiveness of these messages, especially in the face of pervasive and sophisticated gambling industry marketing and the high speed and easy availability of online gambling products (House of Lords, 2020). The available evidence indicates that campaigns can have an impact on awareness of 'safer gambling' messages; but the evidence on the effect of such messages is mixed, and the evidence base is weak.

Our study designed and tested possible alternative messages to gauge their potential effectiveness. The messages that we selected to pilot test were reviewed through a behavioural science lens to understand the potential barriers to their effectiveness in ultimately creating behaviour change; and the solution 'nudges' that can help overcome these barriers.

The results of our pilot confirm what previous evidence has shown, that responses to 'safer gambling' messages are complicated and individualised; different messages resonated with different types of people, and in different ways. By exploring the impact of different messages against specific criteria (such as appropriateness of tone, intention to act and message relevance) and conducting regression analysis based on demographic factors and gambling engagement we have gained new insight into how 'safer gambling' messages are received. As Britain moves towards a multi-faceted, population-level public health approach, these insights can help inform social marketing campaigns to change public attitudes to gambling to reduce the stigma associated with gambling-related harm and allow those needing help to come forward (Faculty of Public Health, 2018).

Below we summarise key insights from the pilot study and consider their implications.

5.1 Emotional resonance and intention to act

Both the discussion group data and existing evidence make clear that **'safer gambling' messages need to resonate with the emotional drivers of gambling**. However, they need to do so in a way that will produce a positive and active response, and not evoke emotions that may be counterproductive. The novel message of 'Losing family' (aimed at people affected by someone else's gambling) evoked stronger emotions than any other message. Notably, one in four survey respondents reported that it made them feel negative, and far more respondents felt upset by the message than any other. It was also the message most likely to provoke shame and guilt, particularly among those who gambled regularly. There is evidence that different negative emotional responses can result in different behaviours. For example, shame has been shown to reduce people's tendency to behave in socially constructive ways, whereas guilt can promote more positive socially adaptive behaviours (Kämmerer, 2019). Moreover, **further testing is needed to understand the effect of this message on the intended audience of people affected by someone else's gambling**.

The 'Tap Out' message was six times as likely to evoke guilt in those respondents that gambled regularly, but also was likely to encourage people to take action as a consequence. **The clear and simple call to action for the Tap Out message appears to be a good signal for people who might feel guilty about their gambling and is an unequivocal simple step they can take**.

The longest running and most recognisable message we tested - **'When the Fun Stops, Stop' – evoked the most positive feelings, and was rated highly for making the audience feel interested, inspired and determined when it was shown as a standalone message (i.e. not at the bottom of a gambling advert) with tangible calls to action. It was also one of the most likely to encourage**

respondents to take action. However, our pilot study findings suggest that the **message** might be too broad reaching **and fail to overcome the motivational barriers identified in our behavioural science review (Table 4.4)**. More than most messages, it was perceived to be aimed at 'everyone', or people who gamble without it causing them problems. So, while the version of 'When the Fun Stops, Stop' **that we tested had** some tangible calls to action **for people (e.g. "Don't gamble when angry")**, individuals may not personally relate to them.

5.2 Aligning relevance with intention to act

The existing evidence suggests that **personal recognition is important for an effective 'safer gambling' message, but it is not sufficient on its own to encourage action**. Survey respondents who gambled regularly had eight times the odds of feeling that the novel counter-marketing message 'Real Winners' was personally relevant to them compared to those who never or rarely gambled. Even so, there was little intent to act on the message.

This misalignment between relevance and intention to act might be explained by the perceived **incongruency** between the contemplative message (which was designed to encourage reflective thinking) and the call to action of contacting a gambling helpline. A different call to action might be more effective. Similarly, **'Lose family'** (another contemplative message) also resonated strongly with survey respondents as a memorable message but performed less well than other message in terms of encouraging action.

5.3 Insights about differentiated approaches

In terms of developing differentiated approaches to 'safer gambling' messages, the pilot study found that **respondents' reactions to the different messages were strongly shaped by their age and levels of gambling engagement; and less so by their sex and ethnicity**. Younger people generally had stronger emotional responses to the messages than older respondents. The 'Tap out' message in particular resonated strongly with its intended target audience of younger adults: survey respondents aged 18-20 **had ten times the odds of showing intent to act on the message**.

Regular gamblers are known to be at higher risk of gambling harm, making them an important target audience for harm reduction messages. Broadly speaking, **survey respondents who gambled regularly had stronger emotional responses to messages; were significantly more likely to feel that the messages were personally relevant to them; yet** had a lower likelihood of acting on them.

As discussed above, the emotional responses provoked by these messages could be negative and therefore potentially counterproductive in terms of intention to act (for example, feelings of shame creating a barrier to act). Alternatively, respondents might have engaged in motivated reasoning,[22] a form of reasoning in which people access, construct, and evaluate arguments in a biased fashion to arrive at or endorse their preferred conclusion (e.g. to continue to gamble).

While we did test contemplative messages (designed to help people at risk of harmful gambling reflect on their gambling), **these messages may need to focus more strongly on signalling how people who gamble regularly can identify signs of risky or harmful gambling**.

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[22] https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/psychology/motivated-reasoning

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Appendices

Group discussions

Six group discussions were conducted in June 2021 by videoconference with participants who were recruited by a professional market research agency using a recruitment screener. The discussions were recorded and fully transcribed for thematic analysis. The groups were structured as follows:

Group	No. participants	Gambling type	Frequency of gambling	Age	Sex
1	8	More engaged	3 or more gambling activities in last 4 weeks	Younger 18- 30	Mixed
2	8	More engaged	3 or more gambling activities in last 4 weeks	Older 31 - 65	Mixed
3	6	Less engaged	1-2 gambling activity in the last 4 weeks (max of 3 who only play National Lottery/lotteries and/or scratchcards)	Younger 18- 30	Mixed
4	8	Less engaged	1-2 gambling activity in the last 4 weeks (max of 3 who only play National Lottery/lotteries and/or scratchcards)	Older 31 - 65	Mixed
5	8	All	Mix of more and less engaged	18-65	Women only
6	7	Affected others	Agrees with 'I am currently affected by someone else's gambling'.	18-65	Mixed

Discussion guide

WELCOME AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH (5 mins)

- We are interested to explore what people think about 'safer gambling' messages and how effective they are.
- We are holding discussion groups to do two things:
  o Get people's views about the existing 'safer gambling' messages
  o Think about some alternative messages – what they say, what they look like, how they are distributed etc.
- There are no right or wrong answers, we're just looking for your views.
- PFRC operates under strict ethical and legal codes, including those of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Everything you tell us is treated in strict confidence.

INTRODUCTIONS (10 mins)

- World Cup advertising quiz

GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF GAMBLING/ POSITIVE ASSOCIATIONS (10 mins)
Aim to understand the drivers/emotional connections/ positive associations with gambling

- Thinking about the terms gambling and betting, what springs to mind?
- What do you think are some of the reasons that people start gambling or betting?
- What do you think is appealing about gambling or betting?
  o Probe for details e.g. why do you say that?
- What are the different positives or benefits to different types of gambling or betting?

GENERAL RISK PERCEPTIONS (15 mins)
Aim to explore a) the range of risks people associate with gambling (which could form the target of messaging), and b) identifying misconceptions (which could identify gaps in knowledge that messaging could aim to mitigate).

- What do you think are the risks linked to gambling or betting? Probe for different risks if not mentioned:
  o Financial
  o Psychological
  o Social
  o Relationships
  o Work/study
  o Crime
- *Referring to the risk image, ask for each risk:* How likely do you think that risk is to happen, and would it have a big or small impact on someone?

PERSONAL SENSE OF RISK (10 mins)
Aim to understand the extent to which peoples' perceptions are in-line with, or divergent from, what's known about prevalence of risk.

- Do you feel that you personally are at-risk from any of the issues that we've just discussed?
- Do you feel that people that you know, like friends or family members, are at-risk from any of the issues? [either as people who gamble or affected others].
- If someone is at risk from these sorts of issues, what might the signs be (if any)?

VIEWS ABOUT GAMBLING 'HEALTH WARNINGS' (10 mins)

Aim to understand injunctive/prescriptive norms among people who gamble, which are defined as "any of various socially determined consensual standards (social norms) that describe how people should act, feel, and think in a given situation, irrespective of how people typically respond in the setting. Individuals who violate these standards are often judged negatively."[23] Also provide insight into the extent to which safer gambling messages should be prescriptive.

- What sorts of things have health information or warnings? (*e.g. food, smoking, alcohol*)
  - Views about these?
- Do you feel that gambling/betting should come with 'health warnings'?
  - Why/why not?
  - Any examples of gambling 'health warnings' they can think of?
- If we were starting from scratch to design these health warnings*:*
  - What should these health warnings say? Most important thing?
  - Who do you think should deliver them e.g. gambling operators; government; charities that help people with gambling issues?
  - When would you expect to see these health warnings?
  - Who should they be targeting? E.g. general public vs specific groups.

TESTING GAMBLING HEALTH WARNINGS (20 mins)

Aim to understand people's views about different 'health warnings' and how they make people feel.

For each message, ask:

- What are your top-of-head thoughts about this message?
- What do you like/dislike about this message? (words, visuals, tone, format/style etc.)
- What is this message trying to do e.g. get people to think about their gambling; provide information; encourage people to take action.
  - Is it effective at doing this or not?
  - Why/why not?
- Where would you expect to see this message? *e.g. TV, online, billboards*
- How does this message make you feel?
- Do you feel it is relevant to you?
  - Why/why not?
  - If not, who is it meant for?
- Is there anything that would make this message more effective? (words, visuals, tone, format/style etc.).

At the end: (5 mins)

- Which do you think is the most effective message?
  - Why do you think that?
  - *Probe for e.g. purpose, audience*
- Which do you think is the least effective message?
  - Why do you think that?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

- Any thoughts about what we've discussed today?
- Is there one thing that sticks in your head from what we've discussed?
- Quiz answer

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[23] https://dictionary.apa.org/injunctive-norm

Pilot study

An online pilot study was conducted in July 2021 with a nationally representative sample of UK adults using Prolific. The study asked about participation in gambling activities and views about six different 'safer gambling' messages. A total of 987 respondents completed the study:

- 51% female, 49% male.
- 84% white, 8% Asian/Asian British, and 8% 'other' (inc. Black, Mixed, but these had too few respondents to be their own category).
- 6% aged 18-20, 15% aged 21-29, 19% aged 30-39, 19% aged 40-49, 21% aged 50-59 and 21% aged 60 or older.

Survey questionnaire
1. Introduction

Thanks for your interest in our survey on safer gambling!
We estimate that this survey will take no more than 15 minute to complete.

Before we begin, please take time to read the following information.

What is this about?
In this survey, the University of Bristol's Personal Finance Research Centre and the Behavioural Insights Team will ask about your participation in gambling activities and your views about several different safer gambling messages. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

What about my data?
Your answers to the survey will be anonymous. All survey data will be stored securely on password-protected IT systems, and will be accessible only by the research team for the duration of the project. The data you provide will not be shared with anyone outside the research team. The data will be stored securely for up to five years and then securely deleted. Data will not be used for future research, and will not be archived – in other words, your anonymous data will not be stored any longer than five years after the project has ended.

What about the research outputs?
The survey will be written up in a report that will be freely available. We will use the report to inform the work of organisations seeking to reduce gambling harm, including regulators, policymakers, campaigners and gambling treatment and support services.

I need some more information before I consent, where can I find it?
Answers to many other questions about the purpose of this research, and data protection, can be found in this document (click to view).

Who can I contact if I have any questions or concerns?
If you have any concerns, please use Prolific's anonymised internal messaging service to message the research team. The study has received ethical approval from the University of Bristol.

1. Please check the box below to confirm that you have read and understood the information above *

☐   I have read the information and I am happy to take part in the study

2. Prolific ID

2. Please enter your Prolific ID to continue. This is so we can be sure you receive payment for completing the survey. *

[   ]

3. Demographic questions

Before we begin, please provide the following basic details so we know what kinds of people have completed the survey.

3. Do you identify as...

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Prefer to use my own term

☐ Prefer not to say

4. Are you...?

☐ 18-20

☐ 21-29

☐ 30-39

☐ 40-49

☐ 50-59

☐ 60 or older

☐ Prefer not to say

5. Your racial/ethnic background...?

☐ White

☐ Black or Black British

☐ Asian or Asian British

☐ Mixed

☐ Other

☐ Prefer not to say

4. Survey overview

The main survey will now begin

On the following pages you will be presented with a series of safer gambling messages, presented as "adverts" that you might see on TV, online, or on billboards. A total of five adverts will be presented, some of which are actual real-world examples, while others have been created for this survey.

For each advert we will ask you a short series of questions to gauge how the advert makes you think and feel, and how it might make you act.

Please take a moment to look at the safer gambling advert below, and read the text
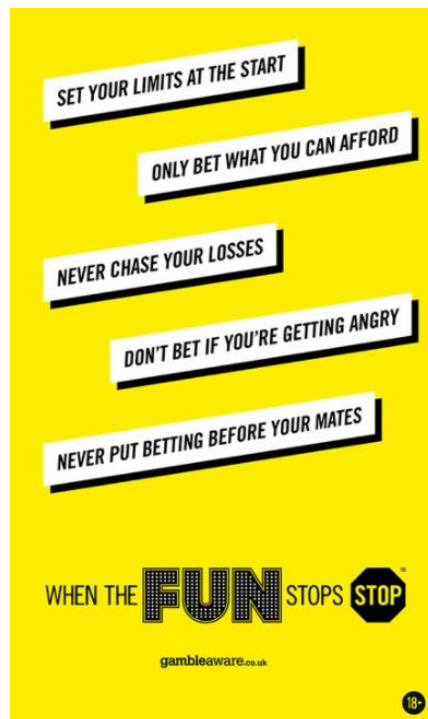
6. Would seeing this advert make you (or someone you know) take action to gamble more responsibly?
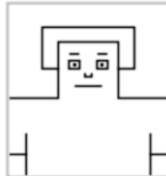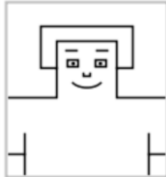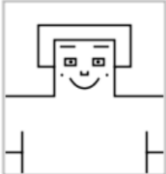
☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know
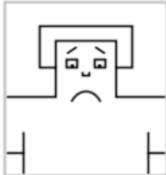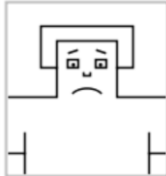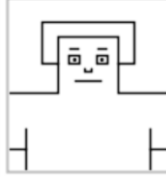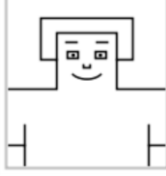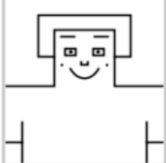
7. If you felt that a friend or family member was struggling with a gambling problem, would you show them this advert?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

8. Do you feel this advert is in any way personally relevant to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

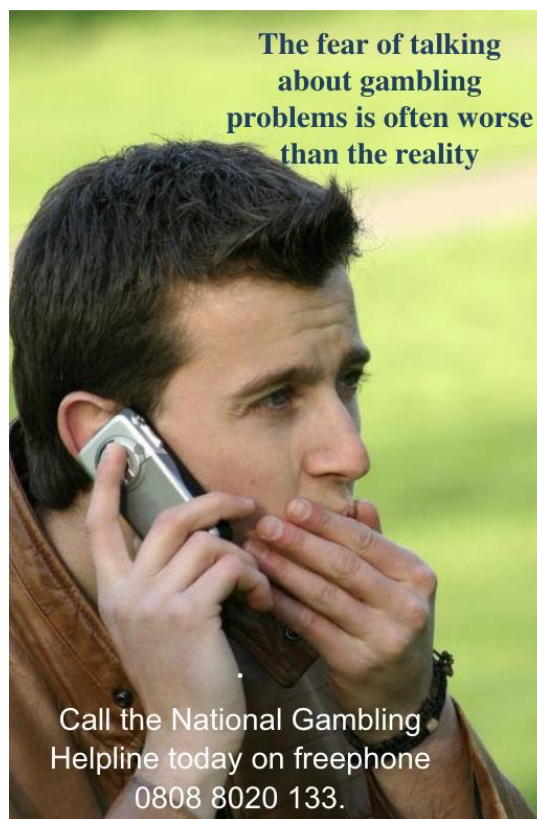9. How does this advert make you feel? Please choose an image below that best reflects how you feel.

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

10. Does this advert make you feel any of the following?

	Not at all	Not very much	A fair amount	A lot
Interested	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shame	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inspired	☐	☐	☐	☐
Guilt	☐	☐	☐	☐
Determined	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. Who do you think this advert is aimed at? You can select multiple options below.

☐ Everyone

☐ People who gamble occasionally, without it causing them problems

☐ People who gamble regularly, without it causing them any problems

☐ People who gamble and show some signs of problem gambling behaviour

☐ People who have a gambling problem

☐ People who are affected by someone else's gambling problem

☐ Don't know

Please take a moment to look at the safer gambling advert below, and read the text.

Tap Out, take a moment. Avoid Bet Regret

Before you place any bet, tap out of your betting app and take a moment to think things through. It can be for just a moment, a minute, or perhaps as long as it takes to make a cup of tea. Whatever you go on to do, making this pause a habit will help you avoid Bet Regret.

Bet Regret is that sinking feeling you get the minute you make an impulsive bet, often when drunk, bored or chasing losses.

12. Would seeing this advert make you (or someone you know) likely to "take a moment" before placing a bet?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know
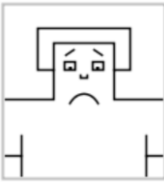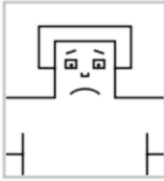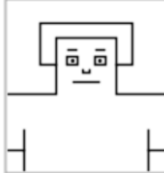
13. If you felt that a friend or family member was struggling with a gambling problem, would you show them this advert?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

14. Do you feel this advert is in any way personally relevant to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

15. How does this advert make you feel? Please choose an image below that best reflects how you feel.

☐

☐

☐

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16. Does this advert make you feel any of the following?

	Not at all	Not very much	A fair amount	A lot
Interested	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shame	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inspired	☐	☐	☐	☐
Guilt	☐	☐	☐	☐
Determined	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. Who do you think this advert is aimed at? You can select multiple options below.

☐ Everyone

☐ People who gamble occasionally, without it causing them problems

☐ People who gamble regularly, without it causing them any problems

☐ People who gamble and and show some signs of problem gambling behaviour

☐ People who have a gambling problem

☐ People who are affected by someone else's gambling problem

☐ Don't know

Please take a moment to look at the safer gambling advert below, and read the text

18. Would seeing this advert make you (or someone you know) likely to call the National Gambling Helpline?
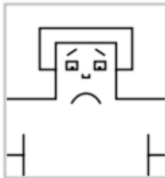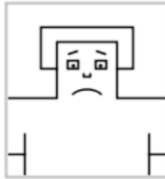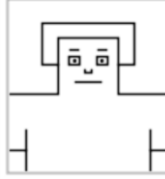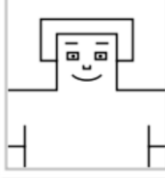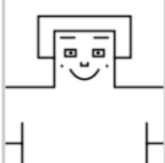
☐ Yes

☐ No
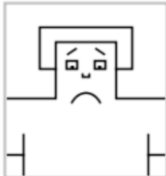
☐ Don't know

19. If you felt that a friend or family member was struggling with a gambling problem, would you show them this advert?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

20. Do you feel this advert is in any way personally relevant to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

21. How does this advert make you feel? Please choose an image below that best reflects how you feel.

22. Does this advert make you feel any of the following?

	Not at all	Not very much	A fair amount	A lot
Interested	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shame	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inspired	☐	☐	☐	☐
Guilt	☐	☐	☐	☐
Determined	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐

23. Who do you think this advert is aimed at? You can select multiple options below.

- [ ] Everyone

- [ ] People who gamble occasionally, without it causing them problems

- [ ] People who gamble regularly, without it causing them any problems

- [ ] People who gamble and and show some signs of problem gambling behaviour

- [ ] People who have a gambling problem

- [ ] People who are affected by someone else's gambling problem

- [ ] Don't know

Please take a moment to look at the safer gambling advert below, and read the text

24. Would seeing this advert make you (or someone you know) likely to call the National Gambling Helpline?

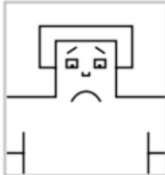- [ ] Yes

- [ ] No

- [ ] Don't know

25. If you felt that a friend or family member was struggling with a gambling problem, would you show them this advert?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

26. Do you feel this advert is in any way personally relevant to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

27. How does this advert make you feel? Please choose an image below that best reflects how you feel.

28. Does this advert make you feel any of the following?

	Not at all	Not very much	A fair amount	A lot
Interested	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shame	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inspired	☐	☐	☐	☐
Guilt	☐	☐	☐	☐
Determined	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐

29. Who do you think this advert is aimed at? You can select multiple options below.

☐ Everyone

☐ People who gamble occasionally, without it causing them problems

☐ People who gamble regularly, without it causing them any problems

☐ People who gamble and show some signs of problem gambling behaviour

☐ People who have a gambling problem

☐ People who are affected by someone else's gambling problem

☐ Don't know

Please take a moment to look at the safer gambling advert below, and read the text

Whether you win or lose, the betting companies are always the real winners

Find out about making a change at www.gamcare.org.uk/self-help/

30. Would seeing this advert make you (or someone you know) likely to visit the GamCare website?
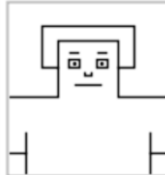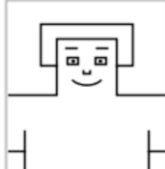
☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

31. If you felt that a friend or family member was struggling with a gambling problem, would you show them this advert?
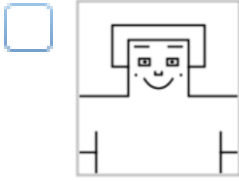
☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

32. Do you feel this advert is in any way personally relevant to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

33. How does this advert make you feel? Please choose an image below that best reflects how you feel.

☐

☐

☐

☐

34. Does this advert make you feel any of the following?

	Not at all	Not very much	A fair amount	A lot
Interested	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shame	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inspired	☐	☐	☐	☐
Guilt	☐	☐	☐	☐
Determined	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐

35. Who do you think this advert is aimed at? You can select multiple options below.

☐ Everyone

☐ People who gamble occasionally, without it causing them problems

☐ People who gamble regularly, without it causing them any problems

☐ People who gamble and and show some signs of problem gambling behaviour

☐ People who have a gambling problem

☐ People who are affected by someone else's gambling problem

☐ Don't know

Please take a moment to look at the safer gambling advert below, and read the text

'I started my recovery when the only thing left to lose was my family'

If you are worried that someone close to you is gambling too much, call the **National Gambling Helpline** anytime on freephone 0808 8020 133

36. Would seeing this advert make you call the national gambling helpline, if you were worried about the gambling behaviour of someone close to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

37. If you felt that a friend or family member knew someone who was struggling with a gambling problem, would you show them this advert?
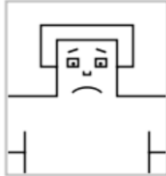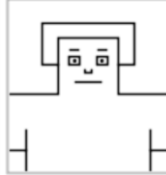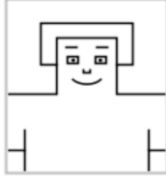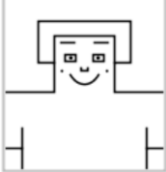
☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

38. Do you feel this advert is in any way personally relevant to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

39. How does this advert make you feel? Please choose an image below that best reflects how you feel.

☐

40. Does this advert make you feel any of the following?

	Not at all	Not very much	A fair amount	A lot
Interested	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shame	☐	☐	☐	☐
Guilt	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inspired	☐	☐	☐	☐
Determined	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upset	☐	☐	☐	☐

41. Who do you think this advert is aimed at? You can select multiple options below

☐ Everyone

☐ People who gamble occasionally, without it causing them problems

☐ People who gamble regularly, without it causing them any problems

☐ People who gamble and and show some signs of problem gambling behaviour

☐ People who have a gambling problem

☐ People who are affected by someone else's gambling problem

☐ Don't know

42. Which of the following activities do you tend to do and how often?

	Every day or most days	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less often, from time to time	Have done in the past but not recently	Never do this
National Lottery (including scratchcards)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online slots / instant wins	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fruit or slot machines in a venue (e.g. pub, arcade)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Virtual gaming machine (in a betting shop)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bingo (online, or in a bingo hall)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Horse or dog racing (online, or at a betting shop)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sports betting (online, or in a betting shop)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Betting on other events (e.g. politics) (online or in a betting shop)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If you chose "Other", what other type(s) of gambling do you do?

[   ]

43. Are you currently affected by someone else's gambling, such as a partner, family member, or friend?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to say

Thinking back on the adverts you saw...

Complete the missing words from the messages you saw.
Use the textbox under each message to type in the missing words. Leave the textbox blank if you do not know the answer.

44. When the ___ Stops, ___ (2 words missing)

[ ]

45. Talk. ____, Stop (1 word missing)

[ ]

46. The ___ ___ ___ about gambling problems is often worse than the reality (3 words missing)

[ ]

47. Whether you win or lose, the ___ ___ are the real winners (2 words missing)

[ ]

48. ___ out to avoid bet ___ (2 words missing)

[ ]

49. I started my recovery when the only thing left to ___ was my ___ (2 words missing)

[ ]

50. FINAL QUESTION Which of the six messages you saw do you feel was the most memorable?

[ ] Whether you win or lose, the betting companies are always the real winners

[ ] When the fun stops, stop

[ ] I started my recovery when the only thing left to lose was my family

[ ] Talk, ban, stop

[ ] The fear of talking about gambling problems is often worse than the reality

[ ] Tap out to avoid bet regret

Regression analysis tables

How did the adverts make respondents feel?

Advert	Emotion	Leisure	Engaged	Asian	Black/ Mixed/ Other	Male	18-20	21-29	30-39	40-49	50-59
1	Interested	**1.6**	1.1	1.1	**1.7**	0.9	1.3	1.1	**1.9**	1.4	1.3
	Shame	1.0	**2.8**	**2.2**	1.0	1.0	**0.7**	1.5	2.0	1.5	0.9
	Inspired	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.6	1.3	**2.2**	1.2	1.0
	Guilt	1.3	**2.7**	1.3	1.1	1.5	**2.9**	**3.5**	**2.6**	1.8	1.1
	Determined	0.8	**1.6**	**1.7**	1.6	1.2	1.3	1.5	**2.3**	1.6	1.2
	Upset	0.6	1.7	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.8	1.4	1.7	0.9
2	Interested	1.1	**1.5**	1.2	**2.1**	1.0	**2.1**	1.4	**1.5**	**1.6**	1.4
	Shame	**2.4**	**4.6**	1.5	1.0	1.1	2.8	**3.2**	2.4	2.0	1.5
	Inspired	1.5	1.4	1.5	**1.7**	0.9	**3.9**	1.8	**1.9**	**1.7**	1.4
	Guilt	1.8	**6.0**	1.7	1.7	0.9	2.5	**2.8**	1.7	**0.9**	1.2
	Determined	1.3	**1.6**	**1.8**	**2.1**	1.3	**2.8**	**2.0**	**2.2**	1.7	**1.7**
	Upset	0.8	**2.5**	0.9	1.1	**0.7**	2.3	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.1
3	Interested	0.9	1.4	1.2	1.4	0.8	0.9	0.9	**2.0**	1.2	1.1
	Shame	0.6	**2.4**	1.3	1.4	1.5	0.7	**3.3**	2.0	1.5	1.2
	Inspired	1.0	**1.7**	1.3	1.6	0.8	1.7	**1.7**	**1.9**	1.3	1.0
	Guilt	0.8	**2.9**	**2.1**	1.5	1.0	1.3	**2.3**	1.6	1.4	1.3
	Determined	0.8	**1.9**	**2.0**	**1.9**	0.9	0.8	1.0	**1.7**	1.1	1.1
	Upset	0.6	1.7	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.7	**0.5**
4	Interested	1.4	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.1	**0.4**	**0.4**	0.7	0.9	1.1
	Shame	0.7	1.7	**2.9**	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.9	1.7	2.1	1.2
	Inspired	1.4	**1.8**	1.5	1.2	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.6
	Guilt	0.7	1.9	2.1	0.8	0.9	1.8	1.5	1.4	1.7	0.9
	Determined	1.3	1.2	1.5	**2.2**	1.1	0.8	**0.5**	1.1	1.0	1.0
	Upset	0.7	1.7	1.5	0.9	**0.6**	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.6
5	Interested	1.5	1.4	1.2	**1.7**	1.2	1.3	0.9	1.4	1.3	1.0
	Shame	1.6	**2.6**	0.8	**2.5**	1.2	2.3	**2.4**	1.3	0.8	0.6
	Inspired	**2.0**	1.4	1.7	1.5	1.0	1.1	0.9	1.2	0.9	0.7
	Guilt	**2.5**	**4.0**	1.3	1.1	1.1	2.4	2.3	2.4	1.5	1.0
	Determined	**1.8**	**1.9**	**2.3**	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.3	1.5
	Upset	1.1	**1.7**	1.2	0.9	1.0	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.1
6	Interested	**1.6**	1.3	1.1	1.5	**0.7**	1.5	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.4
	Shame	1.2	**2.4**	**2.1**	0.8	1.0	**3.2**	**2.8**	2.1	2.1	1.3
	Inspired	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.6	0.8	**2.5**	1.3	1.4	1.2	0.9
	Guilt	0.9	**3.1**	1.9	1.0	0.9	**3.0**	1.7	1.6	1.2	0.8
	Determined	0.9	**1.5**	1.4	1.6	1.0	1.8	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.3
	Upset	1.1	1.2	1.0	0.9	**0.6**	**2.5**	1.4	1.1	1.2	0.9

Notes: each row represents a single regression model. Values represent odds ratios, where values greater than 1 indicate higher likelihood of the outcome variable equalling 1 and values below 1 indicate a lower likelihood. For example, the value of 1.6 in the top-left corner indicates 60% higher odds among 'leisure gamblers' of feeling 'interested' when seeing advert 1 than among non-gamblers etc. Figures in bold indicate statistically significant values (at p<0.05).

Would you take action or show someone the advert? And is it personally relevant to you?

		Leisure	Engaged	Asian	Black/ Mixed/ Other	Male	18-20	21-29	30-39	40-49	50-59
You take action?	1	1.6	0.8	0.8	1.2	0.9	**4.3**	1.7	**1.8**	1.3	1.3
	2	0.9	0.8	1.2	**2.3**	0.8	**10.3**	**2.9**	**1.7**	**2.0**	**2.1**
	3	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.2	**0.7**	0.9	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4
	4	1.2	0.9	1.3	**2.0**	0.8	**0.4**	**0.3**	**0.4**	0.7	0.9
	5	1.0	0.8	1.0	1.7	1.0	1.1	0.8	0.9	1.6	1.0
	6	0.7	**0.6**	0.8	1.0	**0.7**	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.5
Show someone?	1	1.2	1.0	1.4	1.6	0.9	1.1	**0.6**	1.0	0.9	1.2
	2	0.9	0.7	1.3	1.8	0.9	**2.6**	1.3	1.0	1.0	1.4
	3	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.1	**0.7**	0.5	0.7	0.9	1.0	1.4
	4	1.4	**0.6**	0.8	1.4	**0.6**	**0.2**	**0.2**	**0.3**	0.7	0.9
	5	1.0	**0.6**	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.4	**0.5**	**0.6**	1.0	1.0
	6	1.1	**0.6**	0.8	1.2	**0.5**	1.3	**0.6**	0.8	1.0	1.5
Personally relevant?	1	**3.2**	**6.0**	1.8	1.0	**1.6**	2.1	1.9	**2.6**	1.7	1.6
	2	**3.3**	**5.3**	1.7	1.1	1.5	**4.3**	**3.3**	**2.7**	**2.3**	1.7
	3	1.8	**8.0**	2.0	1.1	1.4	1.9	1.3	1.7	1.6	1.3
	4	1.7	**3.0**	1.1	1.3	**2.1**	0.9	1.6	1.8	1.1	1.2
	5	**3.7**	**7.6**	1.1	1.7	1.5	1.7	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.1
	6	1.3	**4.5**	1.2	1.9	1.1	1.1	1.9	1.7	1.2	1.3

Notes: each row represents a single regression model. Values represent odds ratios, where values greater than 1 indicate higher likelihood of the outcome variable equalling 1 and values below 1 indicate a lower likelihood. For example, the value of 1.6 in the top-left corner indicates 60% higher odds among 'leisure gamblers' of taking action when seeing advert 1 than among non-gamblers etc. Figures in bold indicate statistically significant values (at $p<0.05$).