

# GambleAware

7 Henrietta St • London • WC2E 8PS  
T: +44 (0)20 7287 1994  
info@gambleaware.org  
about.gambleaware.org

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## PRESS RELEASE

### GambleAware launches #CanWeHaveOurBallBack

- *Social media awareness initiative asks whether betting is taking away our love of football*
- *New analysis shows 80% of marketing spend by gambling companies is now online*

**London, 26 November:** Today, GambleAware has launched #CanWeHaveOurBallBack, a new social media initiative that seeks to raise awareness and encourage discussion about the relationship between football and betting. The film-led initiative is designed to generate conversation and prompt reflection about the impact of betting on football.

Today's launch comes off the back of recent financial analysis by GambleAware and gambling industry specialists Regulus Partners which shows that 80% of marketing spend by gambling companies is now online.

The surge in online spending coincides with growing public concern about the nature of gambling-related marketing in general, and in particular, whether gambling-related marketing around football is increasingly contributing to the normalisation of gambling for children. Figures released last week by the Gambling Commission show that 450,000 children spend their own money on gambling, and that 55,000 children are problem gamblers. 59% of 11 -16 year olds have also seen a gambling-related advertisement online, and one in eight follow gambling companies on social media.

GambleAware has commissioned research into the impacts of gambling-related marketing, which will report in 2019. In the meantime, GambleAware hopes this initiative stimulates a public debate among football fans.

**Marc Etches, GambleAware's Chief Executive,** comments:

"We recognise that gambling-related sponsorship and advertising are important sources of funding for both professional football and grass-roots community participation in the sport. However, there is growing public concern about the nature and extent of the relationship between football and betting. In particular, whether the extent of betting-related marketing around football is contributing to the normalisation of gambling for children.

This film-led initiative is intended to appeal to anyone who loves football. We hope it will encourage them to reflect on why they love the game, and whether the current relationship between football and betting is undermining what it means to be an authentic fan.

We are not advocating any specific solutions, but we do want to invite anyone interested to take part in the conversation, thereby helping us to raise awareness of gambling as a public health issue, and to reduce the harms that arise. You can help to do this simply by sharing the film across your social media channels and use the **#CanWeHaveOurBallBack.**”

**Paul Goodwin, Co-Founder of the Scottish Football Supporters Association,** comments:

“There’s nothing wrong with a flutter and lots of our members enjoy a bet. But for too many, it’s a slippery slope towards addiction. We need checks and balances and more controls, as well as more information on the help and support that is there for players and fans. Clubs and leagues are in great position to take a lead on this, and I think that’s a responsibility they have for as long as they insist on taking money from the gambling industry.”

The #CanWeHaveOurBallBack online video is directed by BAFTA nominee Scott Lyon, and can be viewed here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8lXR AeHYDg&feature=youtu.be>.

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**Contact:**

Sarah Evans

+447523 609413

[gambleaware@atlas-partners.co.uk](mailto:gambleaware@atlas-partners.co.uk)

**NOTES**

\*Research was conducted by GambleAware and Regulus Partners in 2018.

- Please note that this is **not** the public health campaign announced by ministers as part of the recent gambling policy review. It is a separate initiative, but complementary to, the *Safer Gambling Campaign* which GambleAware was invited to deliver, and will be launched later this year.
- Guided by the [National Responsible Gambling Strategy](#), GambleAware is an independent charity tasked to fund research, education and treatment services to help to reduce gambling-related harms in Great Britain.
- GambleAware is a commissioning and grant-making body, not a provider of services. The charity’s strategic aims are to: broaden public understanding of gambling-related harms, in particular as a public health issue; advance the cause of harm-prevention so as to help build resilience, in particular in relation to the

young and those most vulnerable to gambling-related harms; and help those who do develop gambling-related harms get the support that they need quickly and effectively. For more information, please go to: <http://about.gambleaware.org/>

- GambleAware's programme of treatment, education, harm prevention and research is guided by the National Responsible Gambling Strategy, which is defined by the independent Responsible Gambling Strategy Board (RGSB) and endorsed by the Gambling Commission. The RGSB, the Gambling Commission and GambleAware work together under the terms of an agreement in place since 2012: <http://about.gambleaware.org/media/1216/statementofintent.pdf>. Research is conducted under the terms of a 'Research Commissioning and Governance Procedure' agreed in 2016 by the RGSB, the Gambling Commission and GambleAware: <http://about.gambleaware.org/media/1270/research-commissioning-and-governance-procedure-may-2016-final.pdf>.
- GambleAware requires a minimum of £10 million annually to deliver its current responsibilities, and looks to all those that profit from commercial gambling to support the charity. This donation-based system was proposed after the Gambling Act 2005 and is prescribed by the Gambling Commission's Social Responsibility Code Provision 3.1.1.(2). The RGSB endorsed GambleAware's £10m funding goal in January 2017: <http://www.rgsb.org.uk/press-releases/responsible-gambling-strategy-board-publishes-assessment-of-the-quantum-of-funding-required-to-deliver-the-national-responsible-gambling-strategy.html>
- GambleAware funds the *Gordon Moody Association*, the *NHS National Problem Gambling Clinic*, *GamCare* and a network of charities across Great Britain to provide a full range of free treatment for problem gamblers and support for those affected by them. GambleAware also runs the website **BeGambleAware.org** which helps 2.7 million visitors a year, and supports the **National Gambling Helpline – 0808 8020 133**.