THE RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING CODE 2015

Stay in Control

Think about how much time and money you have spent on the machine today

www.abb.uk.com
The Association of British Bookmakers (ABB) published its Code of Conduct for Responsible Gambling in September 2013. The ABB represents over 80% of the high street betting industry and our members include William Hill, Ladbrokes, Coral, and Paddy Power, as well as almost 100 smaller independent operators.

The introduction of the Code represented a step change in approach towards responsible gambling by the industry and led to the successful roll out of world leading consumer protection measures, based on the principle of informed player choice, across all our members’ collective estate of over 8000 betting shops UK wide by March 2014.

Responsible gambling is now at the heart of our operations and through regular monitoring of the measures already in place the ABB has been able to identify and introduce numerous additional measure and improvements since the Code was first introduced.

This 2015 Responsible Gambling Code incorporates and makes mandatory these additional measures. It also sets out industry commitments on issues such as multi-operator self-exclusion and behavioural analytics that are still in the development process and which will improve both the early identification of those who might be at-risk and to better support those who have developed a problem in controlling their gambling.

As an industry we are committed to ensuring the continued development of these measures, which provide our 8 million customers with the tools to stay in control of their gambling whilst improving the ability of staff to detect customers at risk and ensure they have the information to access support services if they need to. This Code will be implemented from November 1st 2015.
IMPLICATIONS OF NON-COMPLIANCE

- Any complaint against an ABB member for non-compliance with any aspect of this Code of Conduct will be subject to review by the independently chaired Responsible Gambling Committee.
- Complaints will be able to be submitted by any member of the public or any ABB member with a procedure for doing so clearly set out on the ABB website.
- All complaints and subsequent decisions will be published on the ABB website.
- Under the review process the ABB Council will have the power to revoke membership of the ABB if an operator is found to be wilfully in contravention of the Code.

ENFORCABLE COMMITMENTS

The requirements necessary in order to meet the industry commitment to responsible gambling, which all ABB members must adhere to under the ABB Code, are below.

ABB members are also required and committed to upholding the Gambling Commission Licensing Conditions and Codes of Practice (LCCP), and as such some ABB Code measures also build on and re-inforce some of these LCCP requirements.

 OUR COMMITMENT: Providing customers with the tools to stay in control of their gambling

LIMIT SETTING ON GAMING MACHINES

The ability to set limits on gaming machines was introduced by the ABB with the first Code in 2014. In January 2015, in response to evidence which showed that over 75% of those setting a limit stuck to it, the ABB made it mandatory for players to have to decide whether or not to set a limit before they can start to play.

The ability to set limits on gaming machines and this mandatory requirement are unique to high street betting shops and the ABB is committed to ensuring the industry continues to lead the way in developing this tool.

This, and the other measures required of ABB members to help support player control on gaming machines, are set out below.

- All customers are required to choose whether or not to set a voluntary spend or time limit (or both) before they can start playing.
- Players reaching their limit must be presented with the options to stop or to set new limits and continue playing.
- Staff must be alerted behind the counter for every mandatory alert triggered or voluntary limit set, in order to provide staff with an overview of that player’s behaviour and encourage interaction where appropriate.
- Players must be able to request a player statement (if participating in account based play) showing a detailed record of the time and money spend history.
- Staff must be trained in how and when to interact with customers triggering behind the counter alerts.
- All players must be subject to mandatory reminders for every 30 mins played or £250 added to the machine.
- Customers must remain able to set a custom voluntary limit at any stage during play if they do not choose to do so before.
- In order to give customers the opportunity to think about whether they want to continue or not, on reaching a voluntary limit there must be a mandatory 30 second break in play before the player can start playing again.
SELF-EXCLUSION

Self-exclusion agreements between a customer and betting shop operator allow the customer to voluntarily ban themselves from the betting shop(s).

Since December 2014 the ABB has been trialling an enhanced self-exclusion process allowing customers to exclude from multiple shops across different operators at one time, so as to ensure the continued effectiveness of self-exclusion as a tool to help those who may be at risk to remain in control of their gambling. This scheme will be fully operational ahead of the new Gambling Commission LCCP requirement for such a scheme in April 2016.

- ABB members must strictly adhere to the requirements for self-exclusion as set out in the Gambling Commission’s Licensing Conditions and Codes of Practice (LCCP) and the requirements of the ABB scheme set up to achieve this, once in place.

- Members must maintain a central self-exclusion register, monitor the number of self-exclusions in each of their shops, have processes to make sure that shop staff are properly implementing self-exclusion, and conduct regular audits of their scheme’s effectiveness.

- Self-excluded customers must be removed from the operator’s marketing databases and customers must be signposted to support services such as the National Gambling Helpline, at the point of self-exclusion.

- ABB members must encourage customers to enter into wider self-exclusion from other gambling premises such as arcades, bingo halls and casinos in the immediate local area, where appropriate.

OUR COMMITMENT:
To promote information and responsible gambling messages in order to allow customers to make informed decisions about their gambling

ADVERTISING

Like all advertising, gambling advertising is strictly regulated and operators must adhere to the Advertising Standards Authority administered Codes of Practice. The industry has committed to going above and beyond these requirements through implementation of the below ABB Code measures and the additional Gambling Industry Code on Socially Responsible Advertising.

- There must be no gaming machine advertising in shop windows.

- All ABB members must adhere to the cross-industry Gambling Industry Code on Socially Responsible Advertising.

- As of January 1st 2015 no ABB member will advertise free bets as sign up incentives on TV before the 9pm watershed.

- The Responsible Gambling Committee will address any concerns about advertising and will have regular discussions with the relevant responsible authorities on the issue.

RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING INFORMATION

- Members must pro-actively promote Responsible Gambling messages such as the gambleaware.co.uk website and the National Gambling Helpline in all shops, and operators with corporate websites must provide a click through to the Gamble Aware website.

- Leaflets with responsible gambling information must be available in gaming machine areas.

- The top screen of any gaming machines must display responsible gambling information for at least 25% of the time.

- Responsible gambling information pages on gaming machines must be regularly reviewed and updated.

- Customer help pages on gaming machines, containing information explaining concepts such as ‘Return to Player’, must be maintained and updated so as to be as clear and relevant as possible.

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OUR COMMITMENT: Ensuring earlier and more targeted interactions with customers who may be at risk

BEHAVIOURAL ANALYTICS
Behavioral analytics is the application of data algorithms by operators to customer data usually gathered from account-based play, based on identifiable markers of harm, allowing them to identify customers who may be at risk at an earlier stage and intervene.

- Members must comply with the agreed ABB minimum standards on behavioural analytics relating to both use of data algorithms and follow up interactions with customers when they are produced.

STAFF TRAINING
- Staff must be trained to recognise a wider range of problem gambling indicators in order to identify those customers at risk of developing a gambling problem and interact with them.
- All staff will be actively encouraged to ‘walk the shop floor’, in order to allow them to initiate customer interaction in response to specific customer behaviour.
- In line with LCCP requirements, operators must ensure at least induction and annual refresher training in all areas of social responsibility, including responsible gambling interactions.
- ABB members without their own social responsibility training system must ensure staff have completed the ABB online social responsibility induction training course.

OUR COMMITMENT: Preventing any access to gambling in betting shops by children and young people under 18

AGE VERIFICATION POLICIES
- Major operators must continue to conduct regular third party age verification testing to check the implementation of the Think 21 policy in shops.
- The ABB will fund a similar programme of age verification testing for independent ABB members.
- All members must maintain a standard within AV testing with a clear focus on challenge on entry.
- Major operators, and the ABB on behalf of independent members, will enter into primary authority relationships on age verification, with a chosen local authority, in order to ensure consistency in operator led test-purchasing and support the continued development of policies to prevent underage gambling on any LBO premises.
- Members will ensure that staff receive specific training to prevent under age access to machines and encourage the use of the behind the counter functionality to disable the machine where required.
- All machines must be sited where they can be adequately supervised from the counter.
- All staff must be encouraged to ‘walk the shop floor’ and implement the Think 21 policy amongst machine players.

SECURITY POLICIES
Launched in 2010, the Safe Bet Alliance (SBA) has played a key role in making the UK’s betting shops safer for our staff and customers. The document outlines agreed voluntary standards of workplace safety and security for the betting industry in England, Scotland and Wales with a view to reducing the risk of robbery and any violence in the betting shop environment.

The guidelines were developed in partnership with the Metropolitan Police, Crimestoppers, the Institute of Conflict Management and Community Union. The initiative was recognised by winning a Home Office Tilley Award in 2011. In 2014, the Association of Chief Police Officers formally endorsed the Safe Bet Alliance.

- All members must abide by the standards set out in the Safe Bet Alliance.
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING
As the high street betting industry has developed, following legalisation in 1961, the industry has concurrently developed robust and effective anti-money laundering processes.

The industry continues to develop best-practice and information sharing in collaboration with the UK government and local and national security forces to combat the comparatively few attempts that do occur to launder money in betting shops in the UK. The ABB provides regularly updated guidance on anti-money laundering policies to our members.

• All ABB members must adhere to the ABB guidance on anti-money laundering.

OUR COMMITMENT: To ensure the continued financial support of the industry to tackling problem gambling research, education, and treatment of problem gambling

• All members must fully support and co-operate with the work of the Responsible Gambling Trust and will make an annual financial contribution to the research, education and treatment of problem gambling.

OUR COMMITMENT: To work in partnership with local stakeholders to ensure betting shops play an active role in their local community

WORKING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES
In recognition of the importance of the relationship between operators and local authorities in ensuring a successful and responsible betting industry at a local level, in January 2015 the ABB signed a partnership agreement with the Local Government Association (LGA) to encourage more joint working between the industry and local authorities.

The published framework was developed over a period of months by a specially formed Betting Commission consisting of councillors and betting shop firms.

• The ABB and members must respond proactively to any concerns raised by local authorities and will continue to promote the agreements made under the LGA-ABB betting partnerships agreement.

COMPLIANCE AND EVALUATION
• The ABB Responsible Gambling Committee will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing compliance with the ABB Code, and the detail of the Code itself – making new recommendations where necessary.

• Data monitoring the effectiveness of the measures in place will be collected on at least a quarterly basis.

• The Committee will meet at least quarterly and have an independent (non-industry) chairman.

• The panel will include membership from gambling and harm prevention experts, such as GamCare and the RGT, as well as operators.