



# THRIVE LDN UPDATE

## REGIONAL COLLABORATION FOR THE 2026 WORLD CUP GAMBLING HARMS CAMPAIGN

### Briefing paper

**Date:** 8 May 2026

**To:** Public Health Directors and gambling harms leads

Dear colleagues,

As we prepare for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, partners in North Central London are launching a disruptive public health campaign to counteract the expected surge in gambling advertising. With 104 matches and many late night kick offs, our residents face a unique risk environment for solitary, mobile betting or betting in licensed premises.

We are inviting other London boroughs and local authorities across the country to join this initiative. Further details below.

By contributing a minimum of £2,000 to a localised digital "bolt on", you can ensure your residents receive targeted, non-judgmental support messaging – which by the time of launch will have been tested with the support of Chapter One – ahead of the tournament. This paid spend is managed directly with CAN Digital, with Thrive LDN (London's public mental health partnership) providing the central coordination and creative framework.

The campaign adapts the evidence based "Odds Are: They Win" model, focusing on industry tactics rather than individual blame. Participation provides you with a ready to use comms toolkit and access to regional evaluation data.

We are finalising the digital ad strategy over the coming week. If you would like to commit your borough to the paid campaign or wish to see the draft assets for your owned channels, please get in touch.

Best regards,

James Ludley

Communications and campaigns lead, Thrive LDN

### 1. Overview

[The North Central London Gambling Harms Alliance](#) is a collaboration led by Mind in Haringey, involving five local authorities, Thrive LDN, and Progress Health Partnerships. Supported by a two-year funding commitment from the Gambling Research Exchange Ontario (GREO), the programme aims to develop a cross borough approach to prevent and reduce gambling related harms. A core deliverable is a targeted public awareness campaign during the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

## 2. Strategic context

The 2026 World Cup features 104 matches and is predicted to generate unprecedented gambling advertising exposure. With the tournament being hosted in North America, many matches kick off late at night in the UK (6:00pm to 3:00am), increasing the risk of solitary betting. This campaign adapts the evidence based "[Odds Are: They Win](#)" model which uses a public health approach [to disrupt predatory industry narratives](#) and shift the focus toward commercial determinants of harm.

## 3. Participation options

London local authorities can engage through two routes:

- **Free comms toolkit (zero cost):** A resource for use on owned channels at zero cost, including adapted materials for organic reach.

[Note: During the tournament it's likely that organic content on social media will have less traction during a period in which the platforms and their algorithms favour paid ads. However, a supportive, localised wrap around approach is still helpful and the toolkit can also be adapted by local partners/ organisations also.]

- **Paid digital participation (min £2,000):** Authorities can participate in a "bolt on" paid advertising spend to target residents within their specific locality. This would see authorities joining the NCL partners with paid ads.

## 4. Resource requirements

**Financial:** Participating boroughs must commit a minimum of £2,000 for digital ad spend (there's no upper limit). While Thrive LDN coordinates the regional campaign, this financial commitment is made direct to the media agency, CAN Digital. No prior or current engagement with CAN Digital is necessary, they can work with any local authority.

**Benefits of investment:** By joining the paid campaign, this allows boroughs and local authorities to deploy a high intensity "burst" approach designed to maximise impact during the tournament. This approach exposes industry tactics and addictive product design to build community resilience. Participation in the paid ads also provides access to collective engagement metrics, helping to build a clear blueprint for future regional interventions and campaigns.

**Time:** Much of work is being managed by Thrive LDN; however, authorities should allocate capacity at the end of May 2026 to review materials, schedule organic content across relevant channels (social and digital), and some time will be needed to confirm with CAN Digital the participation in paid ads. Procurement liaison with CAN Digital will also be required for the paid option.

## 5. Contact and Deadlines

Campaign mobilisation is currently underway with the launch scheduled for early June 2026 to coincide with the start of the tournament.

**Online sign up:** To ensure inclusion in the digital advertising phase, please [complete this online MS Form](#).

**Primary Contact:** Please contact James Ludley, [james.ludley@nhs.net](mailto:james.ludley@nhs.net) with any further questions.

# **North Central London Gambling Harms Alliance:**

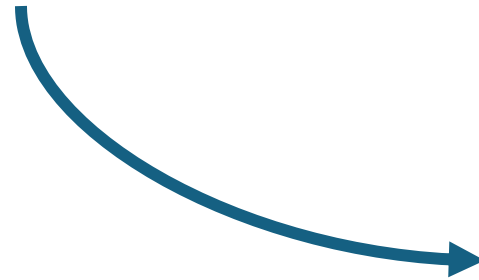
## **World Cup Gambling Awareness Communications Campaign**

5 May 2026

# What is the NCL Gambling Harms Alliance?



The **Network to Reduce Gambling Harm** is a collaborative initiative supported by **GREO** (Gambling Research Exchange Ontario) that engages international partners to define, measure, and minimize gambling-related harms.



Funding from GREO has been committed for a 2-year programme to develop a cross-borough approach to preventing and reducing gambling harms.

The **North Central Alliance** is headed up by **Mind in Haringey**, in collaboration with **5 Local Authorities, Thrive LDN** and **Progress Health Partnerships**



# What are the aims of the NCL Gambling Harms Alliance?



**Awarded £250,000 over two years (2026-2028) with deliverables including:**

- **Early identification:** Rolling out validated screening tools across local authority, NHS, and voluntary sector partners.
- **Community support:** Engaging with groups most affected, including those experiencing health inequalities and those living in areas of high deprivation.
- **Public awareness:** Launching a targeted and co-developed campaign during the 2026 FIFA World Cup to highlight gambling risks and industry tactics.
- **Evidence and evaluation:** Developing a clear, proven blueprint for other regions by rigorously evaluating what works.

# The NCL Gambling Harms Alliance 2026 FIFA World Cup campaign



The **2026 World Cup is the largest World Cup ever**, both in terms of number of matches (104), but also investment and predicted revenue generation (\$13bn).

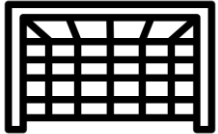
The World Cup will be a period **of intense gambling advertising**.

The French gambling regulator has already **observed a 25% rise in gambling operators' marketing budgets** ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, a country with less liberal gambling advertising and marketing regulations than the UK.

The gambling industry uses these "gateway events" to promote addictive products as a social norm.

This campaign **aims to counteract these commercial pressures by exposing the reality of industry tactics** while building wider community resilience through education and storytelling.

# World Cup Campaign: Objectives



Protect NCL residents by **disrupting predatory industry narratives** and building a compassionate, informed support network through education and storytelling.

The campaign will use **digital advertising to reach residents**. Below is our estimates for exposure of the campaign...

Platform	Interest	Reach	Impressions	Interactions
Meta	Recent Gambling Interaction	460,000	1,100,000	28,000
Google word search	Poor Mental Health / Looking for Support	TBC	42,000	850

N.B Representative of a £7,500 - £10,000 ad spend for the campaign period 11 June – 19 July 2026.

# World Cup Campaign: Ad Concepts and Draft Copy

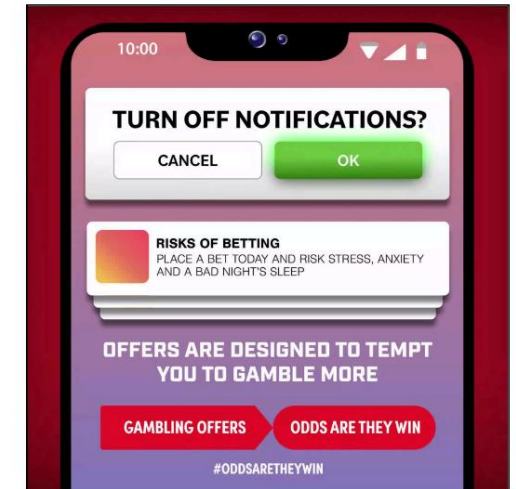
- ✓ Adaption of the proven '**Odds Are: They Win**' **framework** to shift the conversation away from individual blame.
- ✓ Re-testing with lived experience and affected others in partnership with [Chapter One](#).



- ✓ We are moving beyond the narrative of personal responsibility to **focus on the commercial determinants of harm**.
- ✓ By **highlighting industry tactics and addictive product design**, we aim to expose how profit is generated through customer losses.
- ✓ **Designed to be disruptive to the industry, but supportive of individuals.**



Example asset



Example asset



Example asset

# Campaign Mobilisation

MAY

## Finalise materials

Carry out user testing, channels, and asset validation with residents.

Agree final copy of materials.

JUNE

## Activation

Launch paid ads to coincide with the 104 matches of the tournament. “Burst” approach to maximise budget. Boroughs to use owned channels for organic reach and impact.



JULY

## Evaluation

Review all engagement metrics and service impact data to understand the regional reach and effectiveness of the intervention.

# Are you interested in joining the campaign?

The 5 NCL boroughs (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, and Islington) will be committing ~£2,000 each into the digital paid ads for the campaign, however boroughs are able to 'top-up' this figure to increase exposure in their locality. **While this started as a North Central London campaign, we are keen to expand and increase awareness.**

## How can my local authority get involved?



- We are designing a comms toolkit, LAs can use and adapt this for owned channels at zero-cost.
- To increase exposure and targeting, LAs can 'bolt on' paid ads - will need to **commit a minimum of £2,000 for the digital ad spend.**
- For authorities at the beginning of their gambling harms journey, this could be a prudent early use of the funding levy.
- If you are interested or have further questions, please do reach out: [james.ludley@nhs.net](mailto:james.ludley@nhs.net).

## **Contact**

**Marlene D'Aguilar** (Haringey Lead, Partnerships, Co-production):

[Marlene.DAguilar@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:Marlene.DAguilar@haringey.gov.uk)

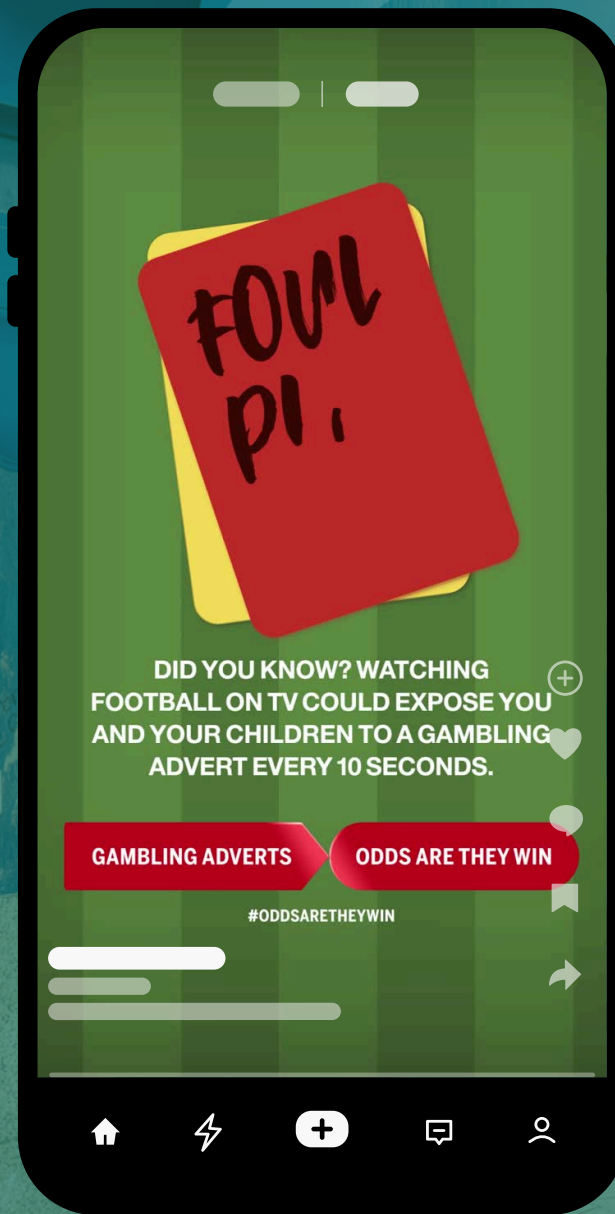
**James Ludley** (Thrive LDN, Communications and campaigns lead):

[james.ludley@nhs.net](mailto:james.ludley@nhs.net)

# NCL TACKLING GAMBLING HARMS COALITION

## 2026 World Cup draft messaging

1 April 2024



# Contents

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# Background

This communications plan is specifically for the NCL Gambling Harms Coalition's 2026 FIFA World Cup campaign.

It integrates a public mental health approach with a focus on equity, shifting the narrative from individual blame to systemic commercial drivers.

The plan is benchmarked against the successful Manchester "Odds Are: They Win" pilot to ensure maximum impact for North Central London's 1.8 million residents.

# Context

The 2026 FIFA World Cup is a major event for the 1.8 million residents of North Central London (NCL). Our region's immense diversity is an asset. It will mean there is a high level of vested interest in almost every fixture of the 104-match tournament. Residents will face unprecedented exposure to gambling advertising during this period.

Given the tournament is hosted in North America, many matches will kick off late at night in the UK, between 6:00pm and 3:00am. This creates a high risk for solitary, real time betting on mobile devices at home or within licensed premises.

The gambling industry uses these "gateway events" to promote addictive products as a social norm. This campaign counteracts these commercial pressures by exposing the reality of industry tactics while building wider community resilience through education and storytelling.

# Aims

The 2026 FIFA World Cup represents a significant public health moment for the 1.8 million residents across North Central London. As matches kick off during the late evening and early morning hours, the tournament creates a high-risk environment for solitary betting on mobile devices.

The goal is to protect NCL residents from gambling harms during the 2026 World Cup by disrupting predatory industry narratives and building a compassionate, informed support network through community led education and storytelling.

# Objectives / Benchmark data

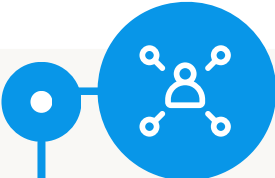
Platform	Interest	Reach	Impressions	Interactions
<b>Meta</b>	Recent gambling interaction	460,000	1,100,000	28,000
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*Representative of a £7,500-10,000 ad spend for the campaign period between 11 June and 19 July 2026.*

# Campaign mobilisation

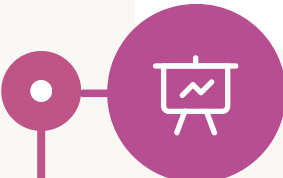
## March

Identify and audit available council advertising estate to ensure public health messaging takes priority over commercial promotions.



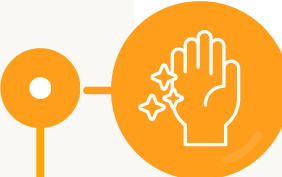
## April

Carry out user testing and asset validation with local residents to ensure all campaign materials are culturally and linguistically relevant.



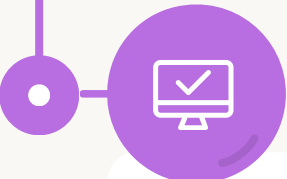
## June

Launch the high-intensity advertising phase across all digital and physical channels to coincide with the 104 matches of the tournament.



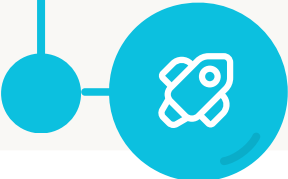
## February

Establish the project foundations and begin refining core creative assets to align with a systemic public health approach.



## May

Deliver webinar series to upskill residents and professionals in spotting the hidden signs of harm.



## Post Event

Review all engagement metrics and service impact data to understand the regional reach and effectiveness of the intervention.



# Ad concepts

These ten ad concepts adapt the proven 'Odds Are: They Win' framework to shift the conversation away from individual blame.

**We are moving beyond the narrative of personal responsibility to focus on the commercial determinants of harm.**

By highlighting industry tactics and addictive product design, we aim to expose how profit is generated through customer losses.

This messaging is designed to be disruptive yet deeply supportive, offering a relatable and non-judgmental voice that empowers residents to recognise systemic traps and access independent support pathways within our local community.

We have categorised the ad concepts across the following themes:

## *Systemic Awareness*

*Exposing industry tactics and commercial determinants.*

## *Support & Action*

*Empathetic messaging and pathways for those experiencing harm.*

## *Education & Prevention*

*Educational content and toolkits for the wider community.*

# Concept 1: The Rigged Logic

**Hook: Free bets are rarely as straightforward as they seem.**

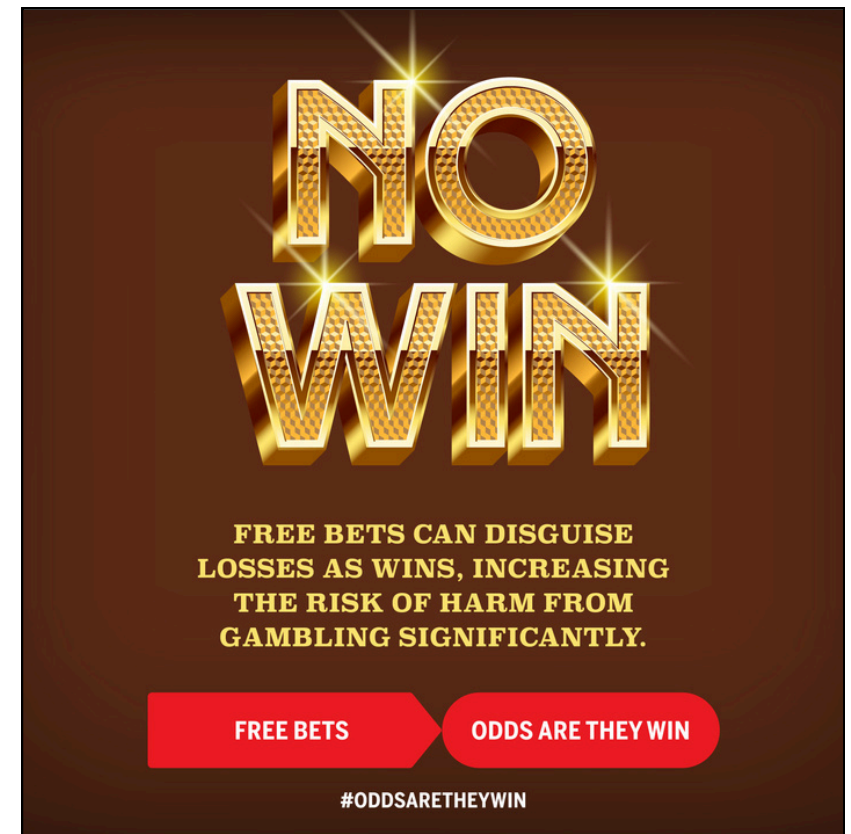
**Primary copy:**

Free bets are designed to create an itch that only your own money can scratch. The industry has spent millions perfecting the algorithms that keep you betting between matches. While you are looking for a win, they are calculating your next loss.

This World Cup, the adverts will be relentless, but remember: you are not failing a system – the system is working exactly as it was built to. We are here to help you understand these tactics and protect your finances. It is okay to take a step back and see the products for what they really are.

**Short form copy:**

Free offers are a tactic designed to keep you playing with your own money. These products are engineered for profit, often at the expense of your wellbeing. You aren't to blame for how these systems work. Take a moment to understand the logic behind the 'free' bet and protect your peace of mind.



*Example asset*

## Concept 2: The 1 AM Trap

**Hook: The 1 AM match is their payday.**

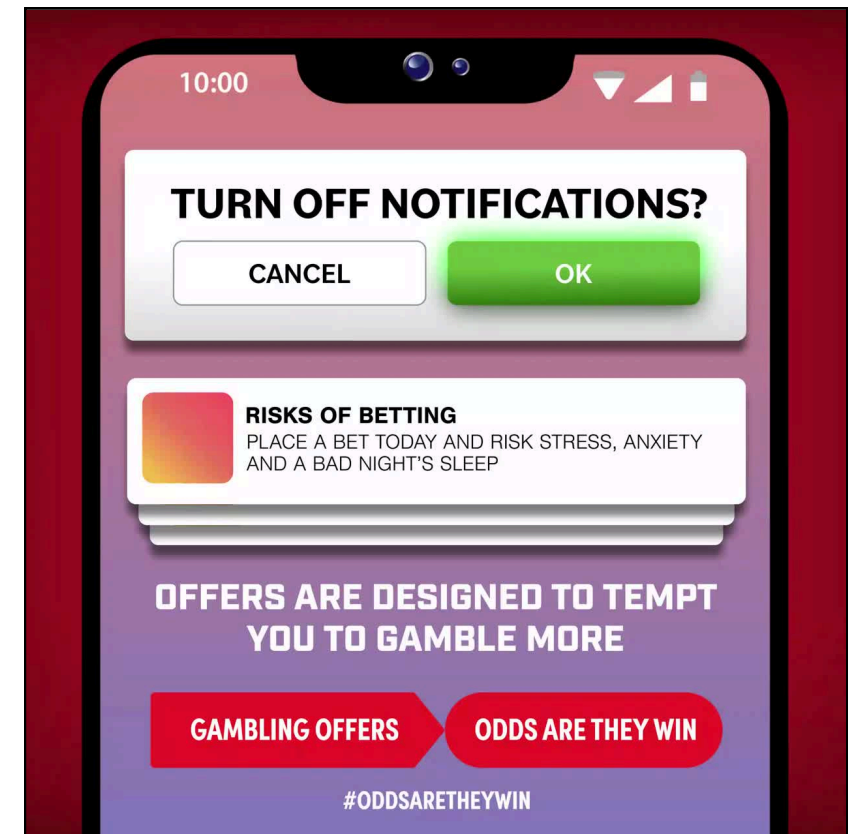
### Primary copy:

With World Cup matches kicking off late at night, the risk of solitary betting increases. When the house is quiet, the impulse to chase a loss can feel overwhelming.

Gambling companies rely on this window to maximise their profit through your losses. It is important to know that these products are designed to be addictive, especially when you are tired or alone. We want to provide you with the tools to recognise these triggers. You don't have to navigate this pressure by yourself—there is support available across North London whenever you need it.

### Short form copy:

Late-night fixtures create a high-risk environment for solitary betting. These products are designed to be harder to resist when you're tired and the house is quiet. Recognising these patterns is the first step toward taking control. We're here to help you spot the traps before the next kick-off.



Example asset

## Concept 3: The Industry Math

### Hook: The math they never show you.

#### Primary copy:

The gambling industry generates billions from customer losses. While the adverts show celebration, the statistics tell a different story of harm.

In North London, the annual cost of gambling harm is estimated at £54.5 million. We have analysed the tactics used during major tournaments to help you identify these commercial drivers.

Knowledge is your best defence against addictive product design. Access our regional guide to see the numbers and find independent paths to support that are free from industry influence.

#### Short form copy:

The gambling industry relies on customer losses to fuel their billion-pound profits. In north London alone, the cost of gambling harm reaches millions every year. Understanding the numbers helps you see the products for what they truly are. Access our independent guide to protect your finances and wellbeing this World Cup.



Example asset

## Concept 4: The Empty Win

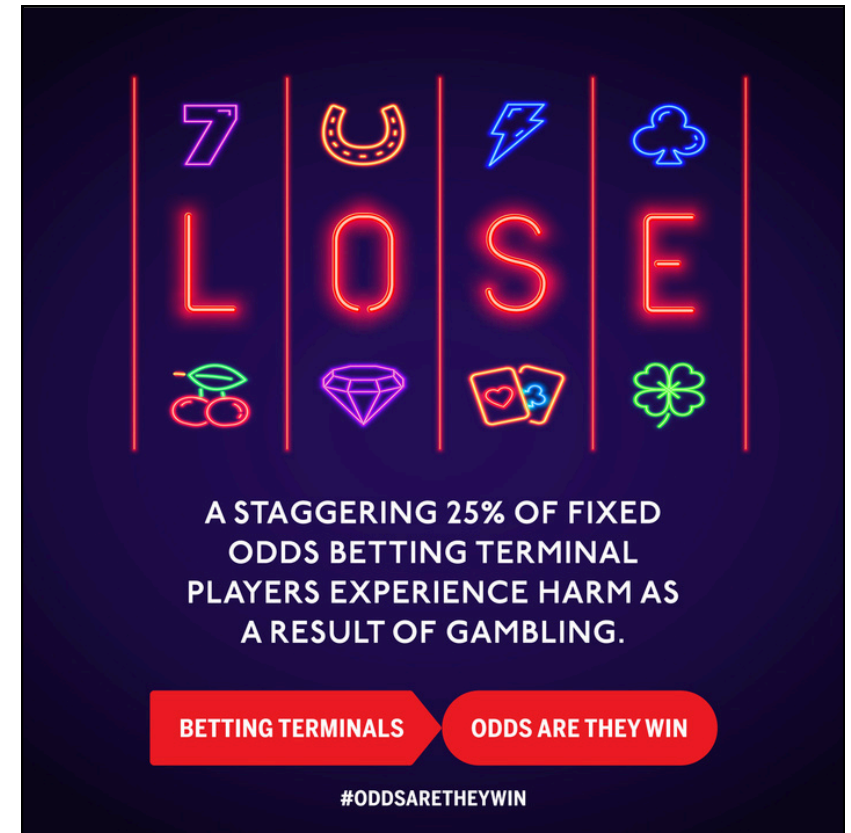
**Hook: A near miss is just a loss with better marketing.**

### Primary copy:

The industry uses ‘near misses’ and immersive features to trick your brain into thinking you almost won. In reality, a near miss is a loss designed to keep you playing. These products are built to maximise the time you spend on the app, not the money you keep in your pocket. It is exhausting to chase a win that isn't built to be caught. We are here to help you recognise when a game has become a trap. You deserve a break from the constant pressure of the next bet. Let's look at the patterns together and find a better way forward. The Odds Are: They Win.

### Short form copy:

A ‘near miss’ is just a loss with better marketing. These products are engineered to keep you in a loop of chasing your losses. It's an exhausting cycle, but it isn't your fault. Recognise the patterns and reclaim your time from addictive apps.



Example asset

## Concept 5: The Indentity Check

### Hook: For the person betting in secret.

#### Primary copy:

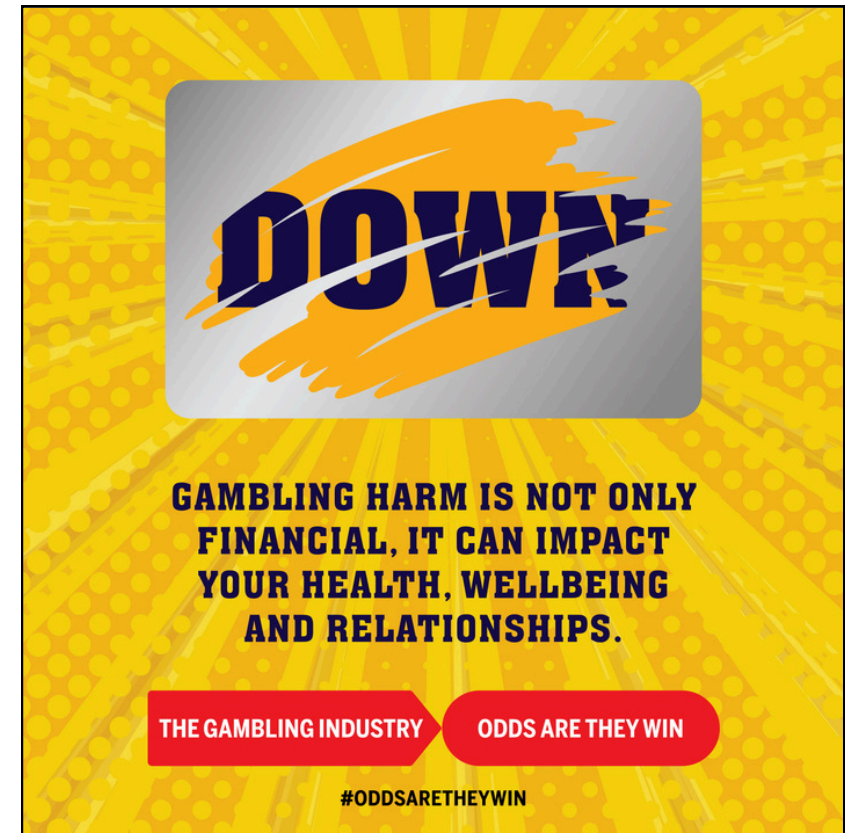
You might be the person who feels the weight of your bets only when you are alone. Perhaps you have started hiding your phone or feeling a sense of shame about losses.

Please know that this is not a lack of willpower – it is the result of products designed to be addictive.

We are a community in North Central London who understand this pressure and want to support you. You don't have to carry this burden in secret. Reaching out for a confidential chat could be the first step in feeling like yourself again.

#### Short form copy:

If you're hiding your betting from loved ones, you aren't alone. These products are designed to create a cycle that can feel impossible to break. It isn't your fault, and you don't have to carry this burden in secret. Talk to someone who understands the pressure you're under.



Example asset

## Concept 6: The Vulnerable Dad

Hook: “I nearly lost my family to gambling.”

### Primary copy:

“I thought it was just part of the game until I started checking scores during dinner. I was in the room, but my mind was elsewhere, burdened by a secret I couldn't share. Admitting that these products were designed to keep me hooked was the first step to coming back to my family.”

You aren't alone if you feel the same way. This World Cup, you can enjoy the sport without the hidden stress of gambling harm. We are a community of residents in North London who support each other. Your wellbeing is worth more than any bet.

### Short form copy:

Betting can quickly move from a social activity to a secret burden. If you're checking your phone more than you're talking to your family, help is available. These products are designed to pull you away, but you don't have to carry the stress alone. Talk to us about reclaiming your time.

**Gambling products are often designed to look childlike, disguising that they're often  
NO FUN AT ALL  
and responsible for gambling harms.**

**GAMBLING COMPANIES**

**ODDS ARE THEY WIN**

*Example asset*

## Concept 7: The High Interest Trap

**Hook: It is not a bet. It is a high interest loan.**

### Primary copy:

The industry sells a dream of a quick fix, especially during a cost of living crisis. But when you bet with money you cannot afford to lose, it is a commercial trap, not an opportunity. These products are designed to move money from your pocket to theirs.

Gambling is never the answer to financial stress – it is a designed harm that targets our anxieties. We provide independent, confidential advice for residents across North London. You don't have to face financial pressure alone. Let us help you find support that puts your family first.

### Short form copy:

Betting with money you can't afford is a trap, not a financial solution. The industry targets our anxieties during the cost of living crisis to sell a 'quick fix' that doesn't exist. It's okay to ask for help with the stress. Reach out for independent, confidential advice today.



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
**Gambling promotions are often designed to increase the amount of time and money you spend on gambling.**

**GAMBLING COMPANIES** → **ODDS ARE THEY WIN**

*Example asset*

## Concept 8: The Final Whistle

**Hook: The game ends. The stress stays.**

**Primary copy:**

When the final whistle blows, the industry moves on to the next match, but the harm can last much longer. If you have spent the tournament feeling stressed or checking your phone instead of enjoying the moment, please know that help is here.

These products are engineered to keep you hooked, but you are more than a customer to a betting app. You are a valued part of our community. Support is available that is entirely independent of the gambling industry. Let's talk about how to stop the game before it takes more from you. You deserve peace of mind.

**Short form copy:**

The gambling industry moves on the moment the game ends, but the stress of gambling harm remains. If the World Cup has left you feeling anxious or in debt, you're not alone. These products are designed to be addictive, but support is available. Reach out to someone who cares about your wellbeing, not your bets.



The graphic features a light blue background with a large, faint circular graphic behind the text. The text is centered and reads: "DID YOU KNOW 1 IN 15 GREATER MANCHESTER RESIDENTS ARE EXPERIENCING THE HARMFUL IMPACTS OF GAMBLING RIGHT NOW?". At the bottom, there are two red arrow-shaped buttons pointing right, containing the text "GAMBLING COMPANIES" and "ODDS ARE THEY WIN".

*Example asset*

## Concept 9: The Advert Flood

**Hook: 8 ads per break. Every game.**

### Primary copy:

During major tournaments, we are exposed to a gambling advert every ten seconds. This constant pressure is designed to make addictive products seem like a normal part of life. It can feel impossible to escape, but you have the right to a digital environment free from predatory marketing.

We are here to help you filter out the noise and protect your household. Join our community webinars to understand how to manage this exposure. Together, we can focus on the sport and keep the industry's tactics out of our homes.

### Short form copy:

Gambling adverts will flood our screens this summer, appearing every ten seconds. This constant exposure is designed to normalise risky products. You have the right to protect your home from this pressure. Join our webinars to learn how to filter out the noise and focus on the game.



*Example asset*

## Concept 10: The Professional Hub

### Hook: Spot the signs of harm early.

#### Primary copy:

If you work in housing, health, or advice in North London, you likely see the hidden impacts of gambling harm every day.

During the World Cup, the pressure on our residents will be unprecedented. We have developed an independent toolkit to help you have supportive, informed conversations with those who need it most. We need to focus on the commercial drivers of harm rather than individual blame. Join fellow residents building a more resilient, compassionate community. Download your partner pack today and help us provide the support North London deserves.

#### Short form copy:

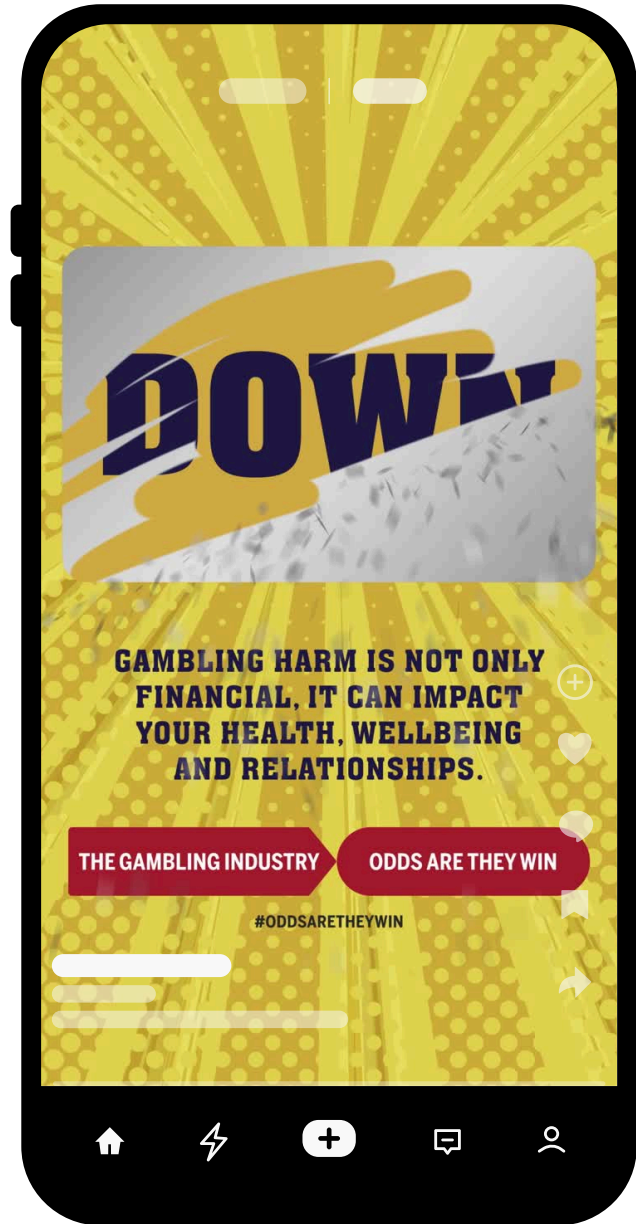
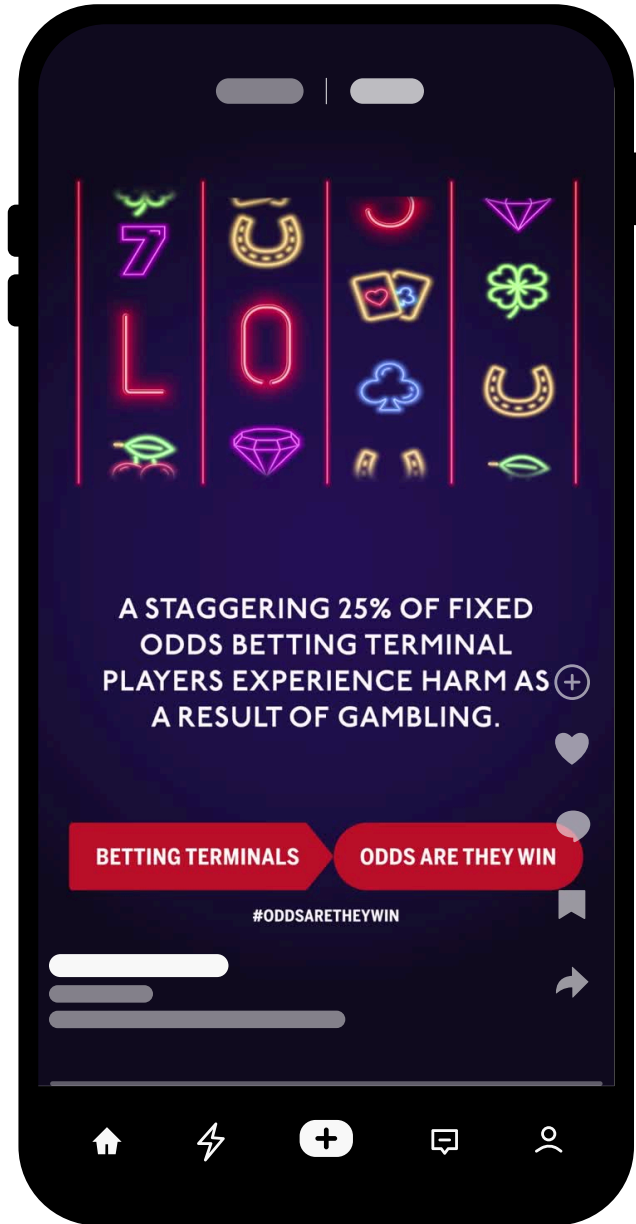
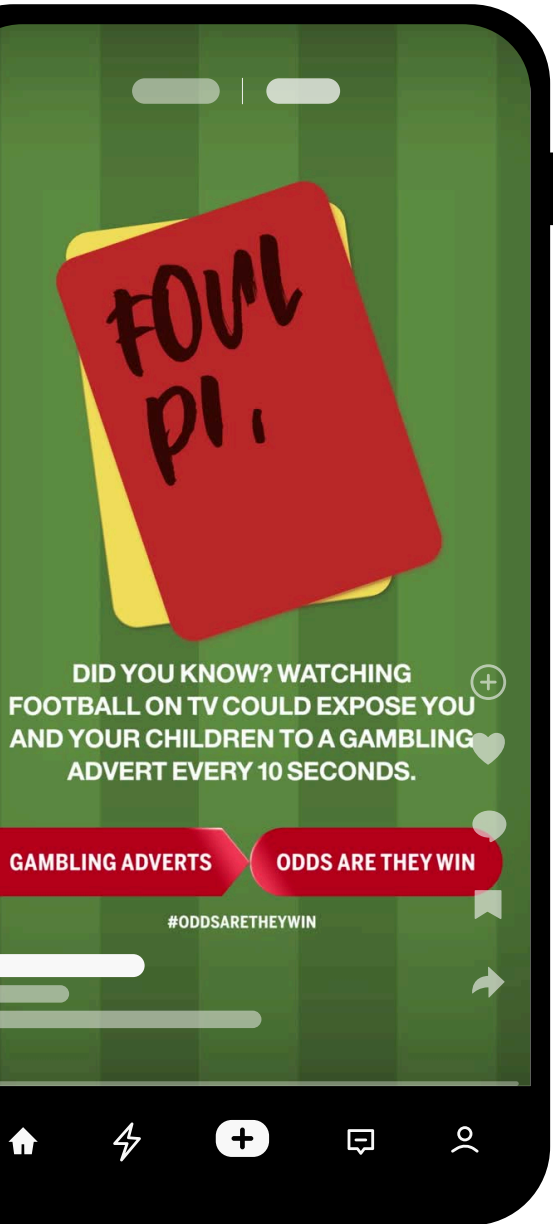
Gambling harm is a hidden public health issue affecting thousands in North London. Professionals need independent tools to support residents during high-risk events like the World Cup. Our toolkit focuses on industry tactics and systemic drivers. Download your free pack and help us build a more resilient community.

**Did you know that over half of the population of Greater Manchester have participated in some form of gambling in the past year?**

**GAMBLING COMPANIES**

**ODDS ARE THEY WIN**

*Example asset*



“Mind in Haringey is proud to lead this coalition. Our deep roots in the community show us that mental health and gambling harm are closely linked. This funding allows us to move beyond individual borough boundaries. By working together, we can ensure that anyone in North Central London who is struggling has a clear path to the right support at the right time.”

**Lynette Charles, CEO of Mind in Haringey**

“Gambling harm is often a hidden driver of financial crisis. This partnership will help our frontline teams identify people who are struggling with gambling-related debt much earlier, allowing us to offer the financial and emotional support they need to rebuild their lives.”

**Cllr Barry Rawlings, Leader of Barnet Council**

“Our high streets should be safe spaces for everyone. By sharing expertise across the five boroughs, we can better use our licensing powers to protect our residents and challenge the high density of gambling venues in our most vulnerable areas.”

**Cllr Camron Aref-Adib, Camden Council**

“In Haringey, we are focused on the link between mental health and the impact of harmful gambling products. This coalition enables us to co-produce support directly with our residents. By working together across North Central London, we can better protect those at risk and ensure that help is available long before a person reaches a point of crisis.”

**Cllr Lucia das Neves, Haringey Council**

“Early intervention is vital. We are excited to explore how we can roll out the screening tools piloted in Enfield across North London. This means more professionals will have the confidence to start a conversation about gambling and provide a bridge to help.”

**Cllr Alev Cazimoglu, Enfield Council**

“The 2026 World Cup will be a period of intense gambling advertising. Through this coalition, Thrive LDN is looking forward to working with partners to launch a disruptive campaign to counteract those pressures. We want to reduce the stigma of asking for help and remind Londoners that reaching out is a sign of strength.”

**Dan Barrett, Thrive LDN director**

“To tackle this issue effectively, we must understand the true scale of the challenge. Our ongoing work continues to build a strong evidence base to show exactly where support is needed most, ensuring our services are designed around the real experiences of our residents.”

**Cllr Dr Sara Hyde, Islington Council**