



Against the Odds

Briefing document – 28/09/2022

Project name:	Against the Odds
Project sponsor:	Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)
About the sponsor:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) awarded £300,000 to 13 community projects across the city-region to help those adversely affected by gambling.• GMCA awarded the money as part of its Communities Addressing Gambling Harms (CAGH) programme to support place-based and community-led initiatives to tackle gambling harms across Greater Manchester.• This work is backed by the Gambling Commission as part of the National Strategy to Reduce Gambling Harms and funded by a regulatory settlement with an industry operator.• You can learn more about GMCA’s work on gambling harm reduction here: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/health/gambling/
Client:	Healthy Stadia
Project manager:	Michael Viggars
About the client	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthy Stadia is part of the North-West charity Health Equalities Group (Charity Number: 1110067). Health Equalities Group, or HEG, is a health and wellbeing alliance that designs, develops, and evaluates evidence-based programmes and policies that seek to tackle public health priorities including but not limited to non-communicable diseases and health inequalities.• Healthy Stadia has been operating for almost 15 years in the crossover areas of public health, professional and amateur sport, facilities management, and academic research and has a long-track record of engaging sports stakeholders in public health advocacy and campaigns, as well as building their capacity to deliver bespoke behaviour change interventions in support public health outcomes.• You can learn more about Healthy Stadia here: www.healthystadia.eu
Partner organisations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater Sport• Manchester FA• GamHive – Lived experience group in GM
Project description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Against the Odds project aims to catalyse a movement across the sporting pyramid in Greater Manchester in support of phasing out gambling

	<p>sponsorship and advertising in sport and de-normalising at-risk betting amongst individuals and communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By supporting the campaign organisations will realise the leadership role they can play in their communities to raise awareness of gambling harms and to protect individuals with elevated levels of risk. • Through committing to the charter, a range of sports organisations including community sports organisations (CSOs); club community organisations (CCOs); national and regional governing bodies of sport; grassroots clubs, leagues, and competitions; as well as professional sports clubs, will accept a shared responsibility for advocating for change, and ultimately removing gambling sponsorship and advertising in sport on public health grounds and to protect vulnerable communities.
Why is the project needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One in 15 Greater Manchester residents are experiencing the harmful impacts of gambling, when harms experienced by children, friends, family, and communities are considered. • People living in the most deprived communities are nearly twice as likely to participate in gambling compared with those living in the least deprived communities. • There is an increasing normalisation of gambling behaviours in non-gambling environments – particularly in relation to sport – with a strong personal responsibility narrative perpetuated by industry sponsorship and advertising which does not highlight the risks associated with gambling. • There has been a proliferation of gambling sponsorship in sport in recent years. Many Premier League and EFL teams feature gambling brands on their shirt, and many have other significant partnership deals. The EFL and Rugby Super League also feature gambling brands as their title sponsors. • Gambling is often considered a hidden problem and source of harm and as a public health issue, receives comparatively less attention than other risk behaviours such as alcohol dependence and substance misuse.
Project objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine and communicate the evidence-base demonstrating the health and wellbeing harms associated with gambling and the gambling industry • Gain support for phasing out gambling sponsorship and marketing in sport amongst professional, grassroots and community sports organisations in Greater Manchester • Reduce exposure of young people to gambling promotions and activities and counter the normalisation of gambling in sport • Support sports organisations to help prevent or reduce gambling harm through safeguarding individuals, priority populations, and communities with elevated or disproportionate levels of risk
Key project activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a charter that will commit clubs to phasing out partnerships with gambling companies and introducing new policies to support staff, fans, and participants alike. • Direct engagement with sports organisations across Greater Manchester about support for the charter • Design and delivery of a training programme for community sports coaches focusing on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and gambling harms • Development of new safeguarding principles for sports organisations around gambling harms awareness