

# GAMBLING COMMISSION



**Facilitating betting in pubs  
and clubs is illegal**

## Facilitating betting in pubs and clubs is illegal

No commercial betting at all, regardless of the level of stakes, is allowed in pubs and clubs. It is not socially responsible and those who facilitate such betting in pubs and clubs – whether publicans, designated premises supervisors or club officials – are providing illegal facilities for gambling and are breaking the law.



Even where publicans, designated premises supervisors or club officials accept bets on behalf of licensed bookmakers, or just facilitate betting through their own telephone accounts, they are acting as betting intermediaries and could be prosecuted.



Licensed bookmakers who knowingly accept bets from pub customers through a single account are encouraging illegal gambling. They may be in breach of the Gambling Act 2005 and could risk losing their licence.

Licensed bookmakers with a remote or ancillary licence may accept telephone bets from a customer watching an event in a pub or club, as long as that customer has an individual account with them.





It is illegal for bookmakers or their agents to sit in the pub taking bets themselves.

Similarly, it is also illegal for operators to put their agent in clubs, for example, in a working men's club on a Saturday, to take bets.

Licensed bookmakers should be vigilant. Where they suspect an individual telephone account is being used to transact business for a number of pub customers they should be alert to the possibility that it is being used to facilitate betting and where appropriate take steps to close the account.

**Individuals who engage in the facilitation of illegal betting risk up to 51 weeks imprisonment (six months in Scotland) and/or up to a £5,000 fine.**

Anyone betting and drinking alcohol at the same time may lose their inhibitions and place more than they can afford on a bet.

It is the responsibility of all licensed bookmakers to ensure gambling is carried out in a socially responsible manner.



## Frequently asked questions and answers on betting in pubs and clubs

**Q** I am a designated premises supervisor. Can my customers watch sport on the television and engage in betting activities?

**A** Yes, as long as they place the bet using their own telephone account or take a betting slip to the bookmaker themselves.

**Q** Is it illegal to have betting slips/coupons in a pub or club?

**A** No, as long as when the customer completes the slip they take it to the bookmaker themselves.

**Q** I am a club official. Can I take all the betting slips that my members have completed along with the stake money to the bookmakers before the event?

**A** No. You are acting as a betting intermediary and risk prosecution.

**Q** How about if I phone all the bets through to the bookmaker on my own telephone account?

**A** No. You are acting as a betting intermediary by providing illegal facilities for gambling and risk prosecution.

**Q** I am a licensed bookmaker. Can I, or my employee/agent, take bets in a working men's club?

**A** No. You can only take bets in your licensed premises or over the telephone (if you have an ancillary remote or full remote licence).

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**keeping gambling fair and safe for all**

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