

Gambling Act 2005 - Local Area Profile - South Oxfordshire

South Oxfordshire is a predominantly rural district bordered by the towns of Oxford, Aylesbury and Reading. There are four main towns: Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford which together account for 45% of the population. An estimated 139,767 people live in South Oxfordshire (mid-2017, Source: Office for National Statistics). An extrapolation of national data indicates that approximately 980 residents may have a problem with gambling (defined as gambling that disrupts or damages personal, family or recreational pursuits).

Despite the population being older than the national average, health is generally better although levels of depression are higher. Population growth is slower than the adjoining districts possibly due to high property values. Employment and educational attainment are both above the national average. There is a bias towards the public and science based employment sectors as well as commuting.

The crime rate is 29% lower than the median for England and Wales. There are however small pockets of deprivation, mental illness and drug dependency in each of the main towns with associated crime and anti-social behaviour issues. The district council does not have any information to suggest there are any specific issues around gambling at present.

Any operators preparing local risk assessments would be expected to be aware of the social and physical makeup of the immediate vicinity of their proposed or existing location and take these circumstances into account. Reference would be expected to:

- a) current local crime patterns (see https://www.ukcrimestats.com/Police_Force/Thames_Valley_Police)
- b) current population and health data (see <http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/>)
- c) location of any educational establishments within 300 metres
- d) any location that vulnerable adults or children are likely to frequent within 300 metres
- e) religious establishments
- f) any existing premises licensed for activities controlled by the Gambling Act 2005 or the Licensing Act 2003.

Risk assessments would be expected to include relevant control measures to counteract issues identified from the local area profile.

Risk assessments for existing premises must reference regulatory return data including problem and underage customers.

If a local risk assessment identifies any particular area of concerns they should contact the most appropriate Responsible Authority before submitting an application for a new licence or variation.

In a similar manner the Local Authority will inform any operator if they become aware a substantial change to local circumstances with an expectation that the operator update their risk assessment.