

Op-Can Do area licencing

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To: Licensing Policy Consultation <lpc@peterborough.gov.uk>

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to voice my concern about the number of licence premises in the Op-Can Do area. This is having an adverse affect on the local community with continued increase in number of people Street drinking. Large groups of mainly men can be seen at the Rock Park and an immense amount of cans and bottles have been collected by our volunteers during litter picks at the park.

We have also seen many urinating in the Rock park area and where I work in the evenings we have to chase off at least two people every evening for coming into the rear of our property at 389 Lincoln Road to drink alcohol and urinate. This is a growing and troublesome problem. We have turned up to work on some occasions and human faeces has been left on our property along with beer cans and needles.

Along the Lincoln Road groups of men can be found drinking near to off licence locations especially on the corner of Windmill Street and Lincoln Road, there is a small bush on this corner that gets used as an open toilet. All the parks from Russell Street, Connect park, land in between Hankey Street and Bamber Street, underpasses along the Bourges Boulevard, Park on Bourges Boulevard opposite the Seargeant Street junction, Alma Road park, the corner of Alma Road and Lincoln Road are just some of the places that are adversely affected due to the amount of street drinking prevalent at these locations.

I would also like to bring to your attention to the fact that along the Lincoln Road from St Martins Street junction to the Triangle we have SIX gambling outlets in under a half mile distance with the latest addition being a 24hr slot machine operator, Merkur Slots. This again is a grave concern for local residents. Many studies have shown that these establishments target working class communities especially in difficult times. Since austerity was introduced we have been seeing an increase in gambling outlets opening on Lincoln Road area.

There are currently 2 Ladbrokes, 2 Paddy Power, Ace Electra (Slot machines) and Merkur Slots. This is a deliberate attack on our local communities which is being facilitated by the local planning department of the Peterborough City Council. The Op-Can Do project was setup to enhance the local area. It seems that rather than Can-Do it has become CAN'T BE BOTHERED!

This is a quotation from a paper produced by the Gambling Commission '***Gambling-related harm as a public health issue. Briefing paper for Local Authorities and local Public Health providers February 2018***'

"It is estimated that there are around 373,000 problem gamblers in England, 30,000 in Scotland and around 27,000 in Wales. These estimates are likely to be conservative as the surveys do not include certain population groups more likely to be more vulnerable to harm. (In comparison we know that research by the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse estimates that, for the year 2011/12, there were around 293,000 opiate and/or crack cocaine users in England)"

The situation for ethnic minorities is much more exorable;

- ethnicity: **problem gambling is more prevalent among some ethnic minority groups** – it is higher among those of Asian/Asian British origin (2.8 per cent) and Black/Black British origin (1.5 per cent) compared with those who identify as White/White British (0.8 per cent).


Data from www.ippr.org

The situation on the streets is very worrying we have in the recent year seen many more requests from residents with problem gambling in the family. Most of the time people are reluctant to ask for help and are not able to find the right type of help for a gambling addiction. We know of a young mother who has to follow her husband around when he leaves the home other than for work. Just so she can drag him out of the bookies as he will blow all his earnings on slot machines and horses.

These are the experiences we are having with decision that local government are making on our behalf, we are being let down time and time again. The Op-Can Do was supposed to be a partnership between the local community and the agencies that work for us. We have seen over the past years that there is no engagement with the local community and the situation as I have described above is proof to that affect.

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