



CHILDREN AND SMALL SOCIETY LOTTERIES: Reminder/Advice leaflet for registered societies

- Organisers of small society lotteries should ensure that they comply with the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 and that in particular **children should not be involved in the sale or purchase of small society lottery tickets**. A child is defined by the 2005 Act as *"an individual who is less than 16 years old"*.
- Small society lotteries, often run by schools and other community organisations, are caught by the provisions in the Gambling Act 2005 relating to children. **Small society lottery organisers and promoters will commit offences if they sell tickets to under 16s**.
- Under section 56 of the Gambling Act 2005 it is an offence to invite, cause or permit a child to participate in a lottery. Small society lotteries are not exempt from this provision.
- The penalties for these offences are listed under section 62 of the 2005 Act:
 - imprisonment for a term not exceeding 51 weeks
 - a fine not exceeding Level 5 (£5,000) on the standard scale
 - or both

What should registered societies be doing in order to comply?

The Gambling Commission's Guidance to Local Authorities states that *"participation in a lottery is a form of gambling and as such Licensing Authorities must be aware that the societies they register are required to conduct their lotteries in a socially responsible manner and in accordance with the Act"*.

Small society lotteries should therefore:

- avoid selling tickets to children, or giving tickets to children to sell.
- implement effective procedures to minimise the risk of lottery tickets being sold to children, including procedures for:
 - checking the age of potentially underage purchasers of lottery tickets; and
 - taking action where there are unlawful attempts to purchase tickets.

Reports of sales of lottery tickets to/by under 16s would give a Licensing Authority a reason to investigate the specific circumstances of a small society lottery and consider feeding them into their local risk-based inspection regime.

Further information:

"Lotteries and the law" - available on the Gambling Commission website www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk