



**STOCKPORT**  
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Gambling Related Harms

Over half of the UK population has participated in some form of gambling in the past year. While for some this can be an enjoyable activity, it is a source of harm for many. Research has shown that harms associated with gambling are wide-ranging. These include not only harms to the individual gambler but their families, close associates and wider society.



# Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the nature of harmful gambling and gambling-related harms and their impact on health and wellbeing.
2. Learn what the indicators and signs of harmful gambling are.
3. Know how to provide help and support to an individual at risk of or affected by harmful gambling and gambling related harms (including concerned others).



# Legal Context

**The Gambling Commission license and regulate any individuals or businesses that offer gambling activities in the United Kingdom.**

Aims:

- Prevent gambling from becoming a source of crime
- Ensure gambling is conducted fairly
- Protect the young and vulnerable



# Legal Context

**The Gambling Act 2005 sets out how gambling in Great Britain is regulated. It covers arcades, betting, bingo, casinos, gaming machines, society lotteries, and remote gambling (including online gambling).**

There have been a number of changes over the years such as;

- April 2020, The Gambling Commission announced a ban on gambling businesses allowing consumers in Great Britain to use credit cards to gamble
- April 2022, The Committee for Advertising Practice (CAP) introduced new rules for gambling advertisements. The new rules state that gambling and lottery ads must not: “be likely to be of strong appeal to children or young persons, especially by reflecting or being associated with youth culture.” This means that people like Jack Wilshire (footballer) and Chris Hughes (ex-Love Island contestant) will no longer be able to promote gambling online, on television or in print media.
- In April 2023, the gambling white paper was published, which set out the government’s plan for reform of gambling regulation following the review of the Gambling Act 2005.
- This led to further changes such as, Premier League clubs ban gambling sponsors on front of shirts from 2026-27
- Plans to introduce a statutory levy on betting companies to fund public health initiatives, impose a stake limit of between £2 and £4 on online casino games for young adults and implement tighter financial affordability checks on problem gamblers



# Gambling VS Harmful Gambling

## Gambling

'To stake or risk money, or anything of value, on the outcome of something involving chance.'

## Harmful Gambling

'An urge to gamble continuously despite negative or harmful consequences or a desire to stop.'

*A Gambling Disorder is a behavioural addiction diagnosis introduced in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition or DSM-5.*

There are too many cases of addiction, catastrophic financial loss and, in some tragic cases, suicide.

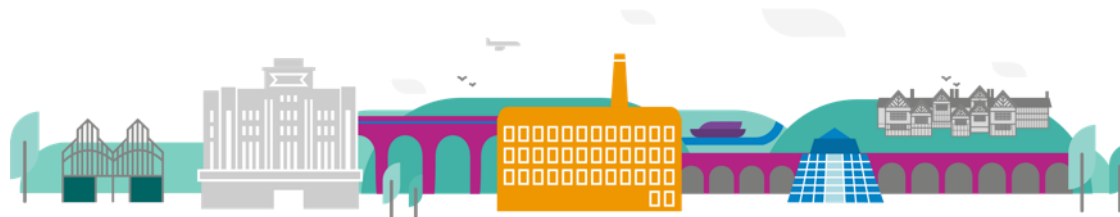
For example, one player was allowed to lose £70,000 over a 10-hour period, while one customer was allowed to place a £100,000 bet immediately, even though he had a £70,000 credit limit.

In March 2023, the Gambling Commission fined William Hill over £19 million for failures including allowing a customer to spend £23,000 in just 20 minutes.



# What Happens When We Gamble?

- The brain releases dopamine, making us feel pleasure
- This motivates us to participate in the activity again
- The more times this pathway is used, the more automatic the action becomes
- Risk taking also activates the brain's reward system



# The types of harms associated with gambling are varied and include:



- **financial** – not paying bills, getting in debt, and borrowing money. The cost of living crisis means that people in deprived areas may gamble to make money and see gambling as a way out of stresses which could cause more harm and more debt
- **relationship disruption, conflict or breakdown** – can include loss of trust, neglect of responsibilities, and domestic abuse
- **mental and physical health** - poor wellbeing and dependence on substances such as alcohol, drugs and tobacco as well as experiencing fear, stress, anxiety, feeling low, sleep problems, lack of self-care, suicide and social isolation
- **cultural** – it can be a taboo and against religious beliefs making it harder to seek help
- **employment and education (also referred to as reduced performance at work or study)** – could reduce productivity and increase absence and could lead to potential theft and fraud
- **criminal activity** – crimes associated with gambling include theft, damage to property in licensed premises, threats of violence, domestic abuse and fraud



# Gambling Licensing Premises

Stockport Council licenses the bricks and mortar of the actual premises, the Gambling Commission is responsible for the activity inside the premises.

Stockport Council Licensing Team responds to complaints from residents and works closely with the Gambling Commission to respond appropriately and resolve any complaints.

Locally, we have no control over online gambling, people can use multiple accounts which they can access 24 hours a day

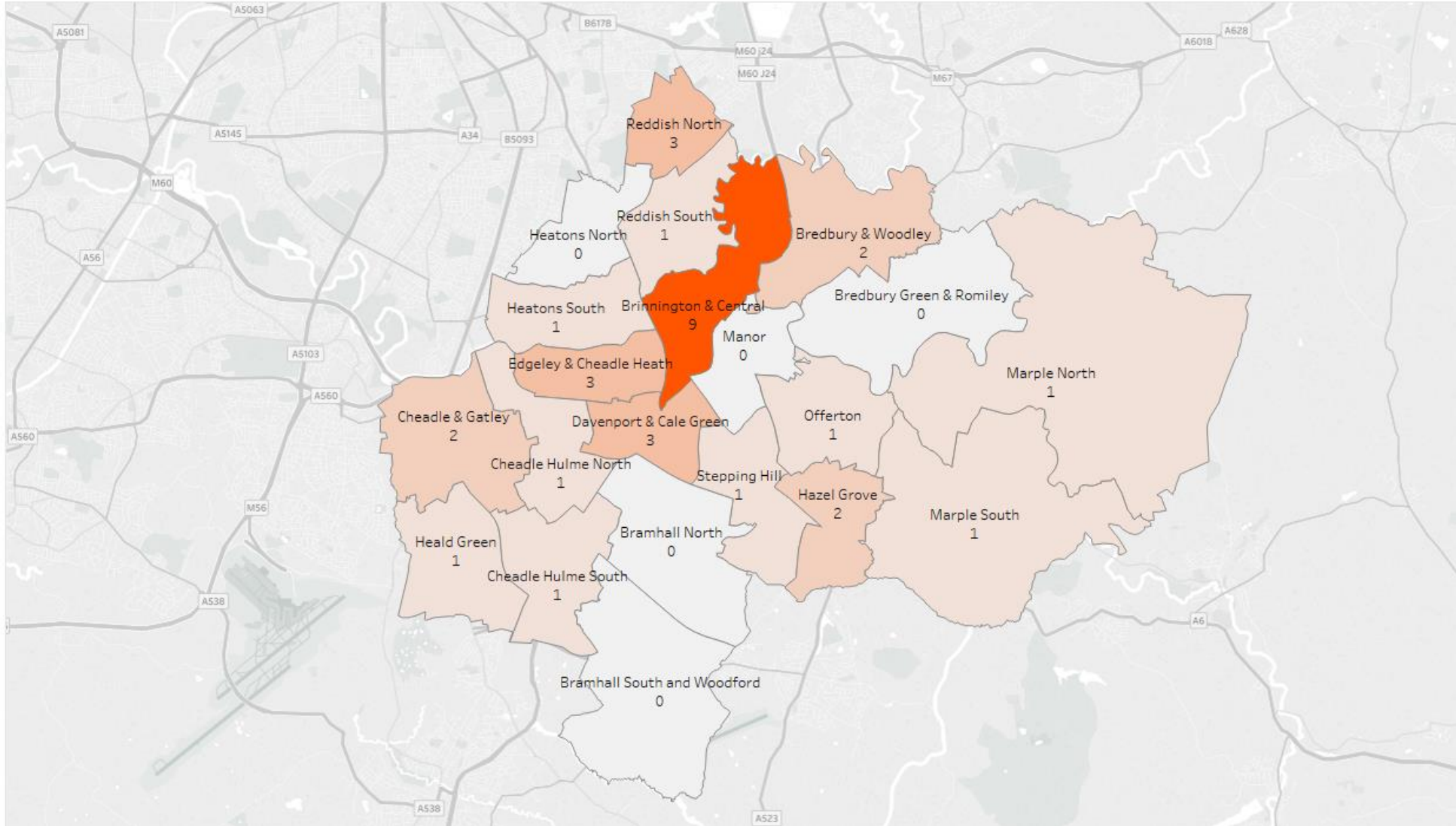
This can lead to isolation and all other gambling harms mentioned and highlights the need for support within our communities to raise awareness, break the stigma and train our front line staff on where to signpost residents for support.





# Number of gambling licenced premises by ward (May 2022)

Includes betting shops, bingo halls and casinos



# Online Gambling

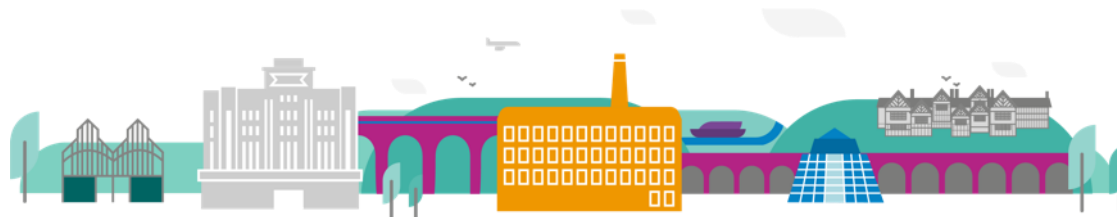
Online gambling websites have made it more accessible for people to gamble and, as a result, problem gambling is a major issue.

There is no longer the need to visit a casino or betting shop to gamble – it can be done from anywhere and at any time.

Higher risk and more harmful products are characterised by a high rate of play, unlimited stake amounts and a short time between wagering and the outcome with very limited social interaction.

People with a gambling addiction tend to be more motivated to gamble because of the need to relax or escape or modify their mood, and evidence suggests that faster, more continuous or repetitive games best accommodate that need.

Most harmful ↑	Online gambling	Least harmful ↓	Raffles or charity
	Electronic gaming and slot machines		Weekly lottery
	Casino games		All lottery games



# Young People Gambling & Gaming



## Are Loot Boxes gambling?

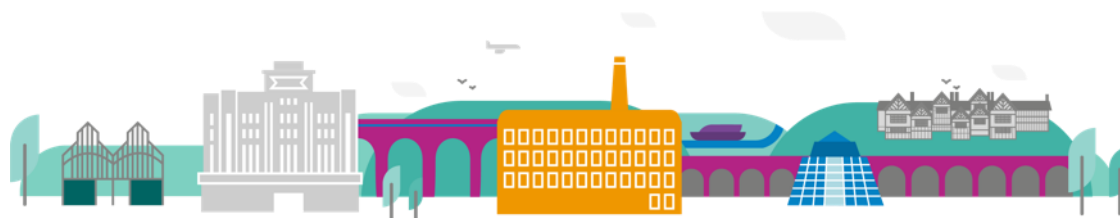


Players often spend **real world money** to open loot boxes

**“To stake or risk money, or anything of value, on the outcome of something involving chance”**

**GambleAware:**  
Any game-related **purchase** with a **chance-based** outcome

The items you receive in a loot box are **random**



# Skins Betting

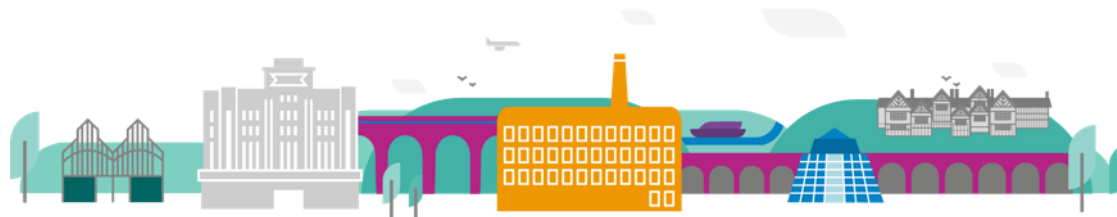


Open loot  
box and  
obtain virtual  
item

Exchange  
virtual item  
for virtual  
chips

Bet virtual  
chips in  
digital goods  
casino

Cash out  
virtual chips  
for real world  
money



# Is Skins betting dangerous?



## Safeguarding



Skins Betting is not **legally** classed as gambling in the UK so has no age restrictions

Can gain **extra chips** by **referring friends** to the sites

Allows **multiple** bets to be placed very **quickly**

Digital goods casinos often contain **chatrooms** where **random people** can converse

Participants can potentially win **large** sums of money



# Number of people experiencing gambling related harms

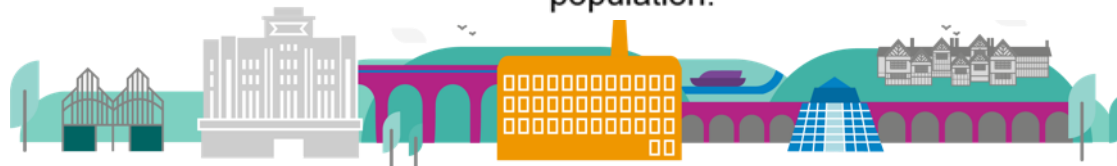
The estimated number of Stockport residents experiencing gambling related harms are shown to the right.

This figure is expected to increase due to the current cost of living crisis, more people may be relying on gambling to live and to pay bills and ultimately getting in more debt.

Locality	Harm prevention		Harm reduction	
	Total adult population	No. of people who gamble classified "at low or moderate risk" (4.3%)	No. of people experiencing problem gambling (0.8%)	No. of people experiencing gambling related harms, including affected others (1.7% + 5%)
Bolton	226,200	12,400	1,800	18,300
Bury	152,000	8,200	1,200	12,100
Manchester	443,200	23,900	3,500	35,300
Oldham	184,400	10,200	1,500	15,000
Rochdale	175,100	9,600	1,400	14,200
Salford	209,500	11,300	1,700	16,700
<b>Stockport</b>	<b>236,800</b>	<b>12,700</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>18,700</b>
Tameside	181,100	9,800	1,400	14,400
Trafford	186,900	10,200	1,500	15,100
Wigan	268,700	14,200	2,200	21,100
Greater Manchester	2,261,000	122,500	18,100	180,900

(Office for National Statistics, 2021; Wardle, Tipping and Deverill, 2022)

\*figures presented are rounded up to nearest 00's, but all calculations are based on the raw data. Adult population = 16yrs or older to match methodology of HSE survey population.



# What are the indicators / signs of harmful gambling?

The indicators that an individual's gambling behaviour is problematic and harmful include:

- **Preoccupation** – often thinking about or planning to gamble.
- **Tolerance** – needing to gamble with more money to get excitement.
- **Withdrawal** – negative emotions when trying to cut down on gambling.
- **Loss of control** – spending more than you plan to (time and money).
- **Escape** – the motivation for gambling being to escape negative elements of life.
- **Chasing losses** – gambling to try and win back money that has been lost.
- **Lying** – gambling leading to lying to friends/family.
- **Illegal acts** – taking money without permission, misusing money to fund gambling.
- **Risked relationships** – putting personal relationships at risk.



# Where To Get Support

There are multiple specialist gambling services (commissioned nationally by The Gambling Commission)

**National Gambling Help Line** – patients can self refer by calling 0808 8020 133

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

(including a young people's service for 11-18yr olds)

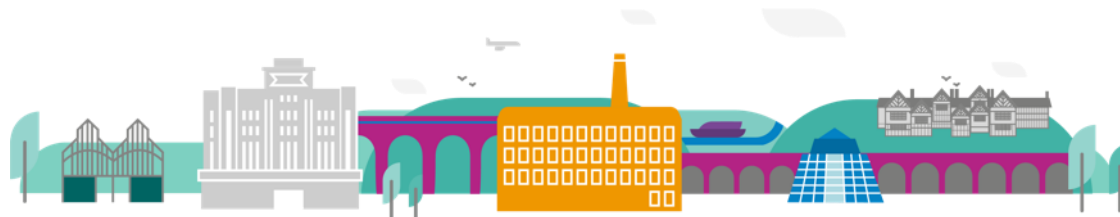
**NHS Northern Gambling Service** (based in central Manchester with remote services available for all Greater Manchester residents) this service provides specialist addiction therapy in the north of England.

For members of the public, carers and family members they can;

Email - [referral.ngs@nhs.net](mailto:referral.ngs@nhs.net) providing a contact number

Call - 0300 3001490 giving a contact number if leaving a message.

Professionals can complete an online form - **[Professional Referral form v2](#)**





# Support for concerned others

## **Gamblers Anonymous**

Stockport currently has two groups running each week, patients can present at-  
Cheadle Heath Community Centre, 20:00 - 21:30 Tuesday

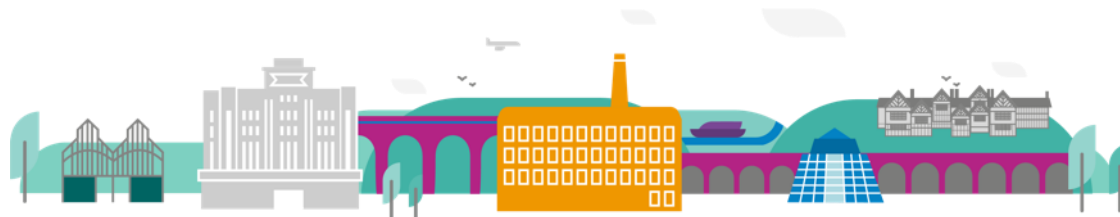
Woodbank Community Centre, 19:30 - 21:30 Sunday

[www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk](http://www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk) (use website for live updates)

## **GamFam**

Is a charity empowering individuals and families to reduce the impact of gambling harms and move towards a more positive future.

Patients can complete an online form for support - [www.gamfam.org.uk](http://www.gamfam.org.uk)



# What We Have Done In Stockport So Far

- Part of communities addressing gambling harms project, grant of £10,000 – leaflets, posters and pens created
- The Early Help and Prevention services (smoking cessation, weight management, alcohol and drug services) went out to tender last year, we referenced addressing gambling related harm and supporting residents to access advice and services in the service specifications
- Over 60 front line staff trained over 19 different services
- First in GM to have gambling harms questions embedded into substance misuse services assessments and follow up screening (START and Stockport Alcohol and Drug service)
- GMCA are currently working on a GM pilot - Chapter One. This is an online information and resource hub [www.chapter-one.org](http://www.chapter-one.org) (further details can be distributed once completed)



## Questions to ask patients –

Thinking about the last 12 months...

- Have you gambled more than you can afford to lose?
- Have people criticised your gambling or told you that you have a problem (regardless of whether you agreed)?
- Have you felt guilty about the way you gamble or what happens when you gamble?
- Have you been ‘affected’ by another person as a result of their gambling?

**GAMBLING SALE**  
Misery

Health issues

depression

# IS YOUR GAMBLING COSTING MORE THAN JUST MONEY?

Serious Debt

£00.00  
No Money left

Are you gambling until your last pound has gone?

Is your gambling causing health problems?  
For example, difficulty in sleeping, depression, irritability?

After gambling and losing do you feel the urge to return and get back your losses?

Do you gamble longer than you planned?

Is gambling making your home life unhappy?

If you answer yes to most or all of these questions then please

CALL FREE  
0808 8020 133

Helping you recover from the true cost of gambling  
[www.healthystockport.co.uk/gambling](http://www.healthystockport.co.uk/gambling)



Unhappy Home life.

EXTRA PRICE TO PAY

A high price to pay.

PRICE Sleepless nights

Recognising the warning signs can help you realise when it's time to seek help for yourself or others. There are a number of signs to look out for, these include:

- Spending more money and time on gambling than you can afford
- Finding it hard to manage or stop your gambling
- Having arguments with family or friends about money and gambling
- Losing interest in usual activities or and neglecting work, family and personal responsibilities
- Always thinking or talking about gambling
- Lying about your gambling or hiding it from other people
- Chasing losses or gambling to get out of financial trouble
- Gambling until all of your money is gone
- Borrowing money, selling possessions or not paying bills in order to pay for gambling
- Needing to gamble with more money or for a longer period of time to get the same feeling of excitement
- Feeling anxious, worried, guilty, depressed or irritable

[www.healthystockport.co.uk/gambling](http://www.healthystockport.co.uk/gambling)



Helping you recover from the true cost of gambling



# WORRIED ABOUT YOUR OWN OR SOMEONE ELSE'S GAMBLING?

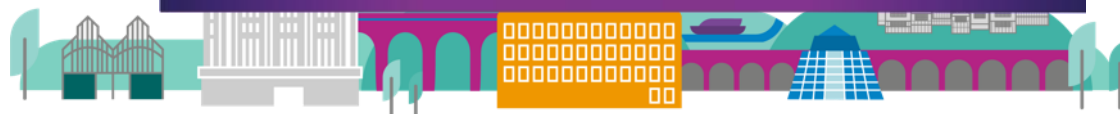


For some people gambling can be harmful, it can hurt relationships and cause serious debt. What starts as harmless fun can escalate into a problem quickly.

Call GamCare on **0808 8020 133**,  
7 days a week, 24 hours a day.  
[www.healthystockport.co.uk/gambling](http://www.healthystockport.co.uk/gambling)



Helping you recover from the true cost of gambling



# Contact

If you would like any further information in regards to

- Training
- Order resources / request a digital version of poster
- Anything else

Please contact –

[Fallon.slater@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:Fallon.slater@stockport.gov.uk)

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