

# Andrew Rhodes speaks at Bingo Association AGM

13 May 2022

CEO of the Gambling Commission, Andrew Rhodes addressed the annual Bingo Association Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Wednesday 11 May.

Whilst acknowledging the unique nature of Bingo as a popular gambling product – especially in person – he underlined that proper measures still need to be in place to protect Bingo customers from gambling harms.

Andrew highlighted statistics about the Bingo sector that built on [industry statistics recently published](https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/publication/statistics-on-participation-and-problem-gambling-for-the-year-to-march-2022) (<https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/publication/statistics-on-participation-and-problem-gambling-for-the-year-to-march-2022>) by the Gambling Commission. He explained that Bingo participation is highest for women as opposed to men, with the greatest number of players coming from the 65+ and 25–34-year-old age groups. Two thirds of Bingo players are still playing in person as well, not online, further underlining the strength of the traditional form of the game. He also was able to reflect on a recent visit to Castle Bingo in Neath, where these differences - and the opportunities Bingo operators have to conduct 'know your customer' assessments - were highlighted.

Commenting further Andrew said: “Bingo for many people then is a happy pastime and a social experience. We get that. But that doesn't mean there aren't risks and issues we need to think about. It can lead to harm for some people.”

Andrew also discussed the Commission's work to tackle gambling harms and our ongoing Prevalence and Participation Methodology pilot:

“We want to drive down the number of people who suffer harm or are put at risk by gambling and we're doing more work now on a participation and prevalence piece of research that will help us have a more detailed view of who is experiencing harms.”

Going into the Gambling Commission's forward plans, Andrew highlighted the [Commission's Business Plan](https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/about-us/guide/interim-business-plan-2022-to-2023) (<https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/about-us/guide/interim-business-plan-2022-to-2023>), which whilst interim, ahead of the government's Gambling Act Review White Paper, still sets out some clear objectives for the year ahead.

The Gambling Commission has committed to:

- Increasing the effective use of data by the Commission and the gambling industry to provide the information and insight necessary to meet our regulatory goals.
  - Improving how the Commission measures participation in gambling and the prevalence of gambling harms. We will be publishing the results of that trial in the near future and if successful will look to build the new methodology into a new gold standard set of official statistics going forwards from next year.
  - And continuing cracking down on poor practice and operator failings.
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