MAKING THE CASE
FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

No.5 SPORT AND LEISURE
As social scientists we’re interested in the part sport, leisure and physical education play in society. For the most part these areas are marginalised by academia, but from time to time they attract more attention as sport piques the public interest, as with the hosting of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, or when another panic arises about obesity or some form of ‘deviant’ leisure (e.g. excessive drinking, gambling, drug-taking or violence) becomes the subject of moral anxiety. As everybody ‘does’ leisure they have a right to consider themselves ‘expert’, and those who hold opinions about sport are legion. In these circumstances it is not easy for social researchers to establish credibility: if findings fail to match people’s personal experiences researchers are clearly wrong; if research does accord with experience then this is merely common sense and hardly needs to be studied.

As social scientists, we are interested in revealing the complexities behind the kinds of topics people profess their expertise in around the country, in schools, pubs, church halls and social clubs.

While fundamentally interested in popular views, it is the job of social scientists to resist the cacophony and provide a critical analysis and dispassionate assessment. More and more social research is being conducted on sport-related issues and styles/purposes have waxed and waned. At times much attention has been directed at planning and forecasting, at others determining which levers to pull to secure social goods, or at others merely understanding the complexities of leisure, sport and physical education in society.
Sport is a field where ethical issues are paramount. This is the case whether we are researching ‘vulnerable’ people, such as schoolchildren, or the potential for funding from particular sources, like alcohol and tobacco companies, or the issues themselves, like the darker side of leisure in terms of gambling, drinking behaviour and drugs in sport.

While the researchers featured here often act as advocates of leisure, sport and physical education in policy environments, they typically do so with a critical perspective. Naïve endorsement of the social processes involved would serve little purpose; much better to be more challenging so that policymakers and practitioners are better equipped to deliver hoped-for social benefits, whether in terms of increasing wellbeing, promoting equality, reducing crime and deviance or any of the many other claimed outcomes of participation. And in some instances the goal has been to help policymakers and practitioners become better researchers themselves and to provide them with necessary tools.

The research presented here illustrates how just a small part of that body of work has had an impact on policy and practice, and thereby on people’s everyday lives.

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Helping athletes prepare for life after sport

The intensity of training and commitment that athletes often make to achieve success can have negative consequences. **Professor David Lavallee** of the University of Stirling studied the transitions Olympic and Paralympic athletes make to other careers after they retire from their sport in order to help young athletes plan for their future. Understanding how skills are developed and applied in different contexts over time can help individuals function successfully in a rapidly changing society.

Although retirement is one of the few certainties in athletes’ careers, the research showed that athletes were often unwilling to plan in advance for their careers after sport. The British Athletes Lifestyle Assessment Needs in Career and Education (BALANCE) project involved interviewing over 100 elite-level athletes following their retirement from sport. It found that high-level sporting competition plays an important role in developing transferable skills such as communication and time management, but that athletes who focus exclusively on their sport can become role restricted and be more at risk of finding it difficult to change career. The athletes who were better prepared for life after sport managed to balance their education and career development alongside training and competition. In recent years, career and education support programmes for athletes have been developed in countries around the world and this research has changed the way athletes are supported through these programmes. In Scotland, for example, Winning Students provides flexible institutional and educational support for student-athletes to help them balance competing in performance sport while studying for exams.

The findings have been used to train advisors to work with retiring athletes who...
demonstrate a variety of needs with regard to lifestyle support.

The research has also been used by the UK Government in the Performance Lifestyle Programme and Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme as well as by programmes around the world to assist active athletes to manage their lifestyle and enhance their ability to compete at the highest level while at the same time developing transferable skills that will benefit their careers in the future.

For example, athletes who develop transferable skills during their sporting careers – such as performing under pressure, problem solving and communication – are able to make a smoother transition into the world of work.

David Lavallee’s research also underpinned an athlete retirement support programme recently developed by the Irish Institute of Sport assisting over 200 athletes in Ireland.

www.uksport.gov.uk/performance-lifestyle
www.tass.gov.uk
www.winningstudents-scotland.ac.uk
How do we know if projects are working?

Since 2000 the Home Office had been funding an experimental national youth engagement and crime prevention programme called Positive Futures in over 100 locations in England and Wales and it needed to know how it was working.

Professor Tim Crabbe and his team ran a two year action research project with six of the delivery agencies and developed an evaluative framework to understand better the way the programme was delivered, the impact it was having and what effective practice looked like. They then developed an online reporting system to help all the agencies delivering the programme nationally to evaluate what they were doing themselves, using the same evaluative framework.

This helped the Home Office see what impact the Positive Futures programme was having and identify examples of what was working and what wasn’t.

As well as identifying the best ways to deliver the work – through locally respected agencies and staff using sport and the arts as a gateway to building long term mutually respectful relationships between participants and staff – the team discovered that the various individual projects would collect the necessary evidence if it was part of their normal working practice and if they could use the information they produced.

This approach also helped motivate staff because they could record and reflect upon small improvements as they took place – such as greater participation and gaining qualifications – rather than being frustrated by being unable instantly to realise distant goals such as reducing criminal convictions.

The Home Office was provided with concrete information all the way up the delivery chain which meant it could target public funds more effectively at those projects that work best. Learning from the research and use of the reporting system has also
informed the development of the new Views system tools that can be rolled out for use across the youth development and other sectors.

http://substance.coop/publications/positive-futures-national-case-study-research
www.views.coop
Sport as a remedy for youth disaffection: it’s complex!

Youth disaffection or disengagement is an enduring social concern and one where beliefs about the value of engagement in sport, particularly competitive team games and challenging outdoor education activities, are particularly strong. However, research evidence to back this up was surprisingly sparse.

Two corporate-funded physical activity programmes based in schools were developed by BSkyB (Living for Sport) and HSBC (Outward Bound) and Professor Kathy Armour AcSS, then at the University of Loughborough, and colleagues were commissioned to evaluate their impact. Both programmes aimed to engage and inspire young people who were disaffected or disengaged from one or more aspects of school life. Following the strategy used in evaluating the Positive Futures programme, the researchers sought to establish the ‘distance travelled’ by each young person.

Over the five year evaluation period, data were collected on over 7,000 young people. The picture that emerged was both encouraging and complex.

For example, the research team found that many young people showed positive improvements, which they maintained over time, but the reasons for the success of the programmes went far beyond the sport or physical activity component. For example, it was important to match pupils carefully with activities and for activities to take place outside the normal school context. Also, participants needed to set targets, establish positive relationships with adults, have opportunities to take responsibility for others, and have structured extension activities available.
Sport may be no panacea but – with careful planning – sport participation can offer a range of benefits for some disengaged or disaffected youth.

Although funding for both programmes was originally for short periods, one of the BSkyB programmes has continued and is now in its eighth year and available to virtually every secondary school in the country.
Dr David Carless of Leeds Metropolitan University and Dr Kitrina Douglas of the University of Bristol explored how physical activity and sport can aid recovery among people diagnosed with serious mental illness. They took a new approach, looking at people’s own stories to understand how physical activity and sport fit within the context of their lives and to build a more complete picture of the ways they can be helpful.

They found that, when previously athletic individuals participated in sport, they were often able to rebuild a sense of identity that had been lost or damaged through illness.

For others, the new ‘adventure’ of sport or shared activity helped them discover a new way of looking at themselves and their lives.

For some, sport or activity helped them achieve a personally meaningful goal, such as weight loss or increased fitness, that acted as a ‘stepping stone’ which helped them move on in their lives. The findings were published in an accessible book, *(Sport and Physical Activity for Mental Health, Wiley-Blackwell)*, to make the work widely available.

As a result of this work, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust hired specialised sport coaches with mental health training to deliver sport opportunities in mental health contexts. Additionally, through the Bristol Active Life Project, a full-time Physical Activity Development Officer for Mental Health was appointed within the Trust. Since this appointment, sport and physical activity provision in Bristol for people with mental health problems has expanded, especially into forms of activity more attractive to women.

www.bristol.gov.uk/page/bristol-active-life-project
Lifestyle sports

Participation in 'lifestyle sports' is rapidly increasing, faster than traditional sports. However, many policymakers and sports organisations have a very narrow definition of ‘sport’ that excludes informal sports like parkour, skateboarding and surfing and don’t recognise the role these non-traditional, non-institutionalised activities play as part of sport’s contribution to the health and wellbeing of society.

Dr Belinda Wheaton and colleagues at the University of Brighton looked closely at the emergence of the urban-based lifestyle sport parkour in the South of England. Despite being a relatively new and unknown activity, initiatives around parkour are burgeoning. They looked at how parkour is being used in England as part of the wider national policies for sport, the arts and education, exploring why people are involved in it and what benefits are perceived.

They found that the parkour participants are not the stereotypical irresponsible hedonists so often portrayed in the mass media; rather they regard parkour as an opportunity to develop managed risk-taking within a sporting philosophy that is inclusive, participant-driven, anticompetitive, and with fewer rules than most traditional sports.

The research team has been using the findings to challenge stereotypes and build the case for alternative sporting provision.

Six local authorities across the UK have already developed new sports provision as a result of seeing the positive benefits for youth development from parkour. Employment opportunities have arisen for local parkour crews in the fields of coaching, performance, facility design, fitness and the media. Other lifestyle sports including surfing have also acquired youth development officers and their potential to provide alternative sporting experiences to the traditional PE curriculum is being explored.
Safeguarding children in sport

Children can be very vulnerable when taking part in sporting activities: they may be taken advantage of sexually by adults, or they may be subject to bullying or unhealthy pressure from coaches, parents or even their peers. However, excessive caution has led to problems too, such as adults being unwilling to run sports clubs or unwilling to touch children even when it is necessary to remove them from potential or actual dangers. Professor Celia Brackenridge of Brunel University looked at this wide-ranging problem to see how best to help keep sporting activities running whilst keeping the children taking part in them both safe and happy.

By carrying out surveys, looking at existing documents and interviewing both adults and children involved with children’s sport, she examined what problems had arisen in the past, where they had come from and how they could be prevented. For example, poor understandings of children’s ability to cope with workloads, or the sense that pain during training is a sign of dedication and progress, have led to improper pressures being exerted on children to the detriment of their wellbeing and success.

She found that there were clear patterns of risk and helped to build methods for sport organisations to identify risky situations and avoid them.

She also produced a new method for monitoring change that help clubs and governing bodies of sport to plot their progress from inactive to proactive in abuse prevention.

Her work has had wide ranging effects, resulting in changes to sports policy, practice and regulation at local, national and international level, affecting not just sports clubs but leisure management, coaching and the arts.

For example, she wrote and delivered training courses, designed protection systems and codes of practice for coaches and helped dozens of sport organisations to develop and
implement child safeguarding policies. She helped set up the Child Protection in Sport Unit of the NSPCC, which works with sports clubs to provide advice on safe practices. She evaluated the Football Association’s child protection initiative and their behaviour improvement programme ‘Respect’. She worked with the International Olympic Committee to provide advice on abuse prevention to international sport bodies and with UNICEF to develop methods of preventing violence against children in sport, especially in developing countries.

www.thecpsu.org.uk

UNICEF: The Communication Initiative
Network: www.comminit.com
International Olympic Committee: www.olympic.org/medical-commission?tab=2
Concerns about racism in sport go back a long way, brought to a height by the monkey chants from football supporters throwing bananas on the pitch in the 1980s. A research team at Leeds Metropolitan University led by Professor Jonathan Long AcSS was approached by the Rugby Football League and the Commission for Racial Equality to study this issue. They were later asked to look at it in a variety of sports at both professional and grassroots level.

The research team spoke to chief executives, chairs, secretaries, managers/coaches, physiotherapists/trainers and match officials as well as players from different ethnic groups. They used a wide variety of methods – including site surveys, postal questionnaires, one-to-one interviews, focus groups, observation and case studies – to explore the views of those within sport and their experiences of racism. As social scientists they could depersonalise issues and focus on structures, processes and practices, rather than berate individuals in an area of high emotion, and they could also recommend direct action to be taken by sporting bodies.

The original work laid the foundations of the Tackle It campaign in the mid-1990s and, by maintaining the research relationship with the RFL, the researchers were able to assist its relaunch in 2010.

Together with studies of initiatives to promote racial equality, the team was able to highlight the internal variance of sporting organisations and their commitment to equality.

It was clear that, although there may be more members of minority ethnic communities taking part in sport than in the past, the sporting bodies are still essentially white and that racism in sport is not simply the mindless behaviour of a few hooligans.
Social scientists have an important role to play in challenging complacent commentators who argue that racism has been banished from sport in the UK.

The research had wide effects. The team helped implement the Sporting Equals Standard for achieving racial equality in sport.

Through his position on the Accreditation Panel for the Racial Equality Standard for Professional Football Clubs, Professor Long helped to develop it into a generic equality standard by drawing on further work at Leeds Metropolitan University in gender, sexuality and disability. Professor Karl Spracklen, also part of the team at Leeds Metropolitan University, played a similar role as a verifier for the Equality Standard for Sport. Similarly, Dr Jim Lusted of the University of Northampton and John Williams of the University of Leicester investigated sports equity initiatives in football and, in his role as a licensed Equality tutor for The FA, Dr Lusted presents the workshops that their research found to be the best way of educating people about these issues.

www.kickitout.org/298.php
www.equalitystandard.org
The value of sport participation for young people at school has attracted as much speculation and mythologizing as systematic research. The previous government established a network of School Sport Partnerships (SSPs), which eventually included all primary and secondary schools in the state sector. The Department for Communities Schools and Families asked Professor Barrie Houlihan AcSS and his team in the Institute of Youth Sport at Loughborough University to evaluate the Partnerships in relation to the series of objectives it had set. These ranged from those relating specifically to sports (for example increasing the participation of girls in competitive sport) to those that were associated with the whole school (such as improving school attendance).

The researchers looked at the SSPs over a six year period through a combination of annual national surveys of Partnership Managers, Coordinators, Link Teachers and head teachers and a series of over forty qualitative case studies.

The research found that, not only had Partnerships had a substantial impact on the levels of sport participation of pupils, but they had also improved overall school behaviour, attendance and achievement.

Within secondary schools participation levels for both boys and girls had increased by over 90% when compared to the levels that existed in the year prior to Partnership membership, partly because of the steady widening of the range of sports and sports-related activities that SSPs were able to make available to pupils.

As a result of this evaluation the Youth Sport Trust, which managed it, refined the Partnership programme to target under-participating groups more effectively and to demonstrate to the DCSF the impact of the Partnerships on the objectives the Department had set. When the Coalition
Government proposed to cut funding for School Sport Partnerships the research provided firm evidence of the impact that SSPs have had on the lives of young people. This challenged one government view that SSPs had not delivered competitive sport opportunities for pupils. Instead, the research showed that, since joining the SSP programme, schools had seen an increase of 27% in boys’ participation in competitive sport and of 60% in girls’ participation. Findings from the research were referred to in Parliamentary debates and in correspondence from the shadow Secretary of State for Education and the original proposal to cut funding to SSPs completely was partially reversed.

http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/ssehs/research/sport-science/youth-sport/research

“...since joining the SSP programme, schools had seen an increase of 27% in boys’ participation in competitive sport and of 60% in girls’ participation.”
Professor David Kirk AcSS with Dr Ashley Casey, Dr Stephen Harvey and Dr Toni O’Donovan of the University of Bedfordshire set out to tackle two problems in educational innovation. Firstly, that the many claims made for physical education – ranging from sporting excellence, to health, cognitive development, and the improvement of social skills and good citizenship – are rarely evidenced and, secondly, that physical education is not necessarily aimed at achieving such results so new approaches are often not sustained. They tried looking at a more integrated approach called Models Based Practice (MBP) where pedagogical models are used to bring together the intended learning outcomes with the subject matter and methods used.

In 2000 part of the team and others introduced a model called Sport Education (SE) to an English primary school. Over three years they worked with the Key Stage 2 teachers to develop and implement a programme based on SE and then studied the effect on what teachers did and how pupils learned. They returned in 2006 and 2011, when they looked to see what made the programme sustainable. Another part of the team studied the use of a model consisting of a combination of SE, Co-operative Learning, and Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) in a secondary school over seven years. Some of the researchers studied TGfU and how it affected what teachers and coaches did, and how players learned.

The research team found that MBP helps pupils learn in PE and improves their results. They also found that SE continued to receive enthusiastic endorsement from the school. Pupils learned and practised fair play, they developed affiliation within their team, learned about different roles, increased their motivation for physical education, and most of them felt valued as a team member. They showed that using high quality models for teaching PE could successfully bring together teaching, learning and content, while making physical education more effective.
a follow-up study showed that students retain rich memories of learning through a models-based approach.

They also established the importance of regular adaptation to new conditions and of support from within the school.

This team has now broadened the programme of work to involve networked ‘learning communities’ of schools and universities via the PE Practitioner Research Network (PEPRN) and are developing a new model for Health-Based Physical Education in collaboration with middle and secondary schools, and further developing school-based studies with existing forms of MBP in both school and community sport settings.

www.mountfieldslodge.leics.sch.uk
(Y 5 and 6 webpage)

www.peprn.com
Leisure centres play a big part in local life and over half of the public sector’s subsidy to sport is spent on these types of indoor facilities, but there was no secure way of assessing how well they were achieving their aims. So, in 1999, Sport England commissioned Professor Peter Taylor of the Sports Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University and a team of researchers to produce a list of appropriate performance indicators for public indoor sport and leisure centres. They also established benchmark levels for these indicators.

They looked at how sport and leisure centres are used by different groups in the population, how their finances work, how much they are used and how happy customers are with various aspects of the centres.

This research quickly became the basis for a National Benchmarking Service, endorsed by Sport England, for sport and leisure centres. The original research team at Sheffield Hallam University carry out the technical analysis. Over the last ten years, around 500 centres have bought into this service, meaning they can now get reliable, consistent, comparative information about how well they are performing. Centre managers can now identify strengths and weaknesses in their centre’s performance, relative to relevant national benchmarks, helping them see where and how to improve and also to set realistic targets. As a result sports centres around the country are improving what they do.

The data from the service also provides a detailed ‘big picture’ of performance in this important part of the sport industry enabling further research to take place. As the national benchmarks are updated annually, a dynamic picture of change is provided.

www.questnbs.org
Many sports have national governing bodies setting their rules and overseeing how clubs are run but there was some concern about how well they were functioning. Dr Geoff Walters, Dr Linda Trenberth and Richard Tacon of the Birkbeck Sport Business Centre looked at the governance of National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of Sport in the UK. They surveyed many national governing bodies to find out what they were doing.

They found that UK national governing bodies were adhering to best practice in some areas, but that many aspects could be improved.

As a result of their work and consultation with a wide range of governing bodies and county sports partnerships, a Voluntary Code of Governance for Sport was written and agreed, helping to improve the way that sports are run. The team are now working to provide the evidence required to monitor and improve sports policy.

www.sportbusinesscentre.com/images/NGBGovernanceReport
Over the last few years large areas of uncultivated land have been opened up to ramblers and nature lovers under the Government’s ‘right to roam’ legislation. The situation however, is different for our rivers and lakes, where public navigation rights often do not exist and uncertainty about who has the right to use them can lead to conflict, particularly between anglers and canoeists.

Some government departments and agencies asked Professor Neil Ravenscroft and Professor Andrew Church at the University of Brighton to assess the situation and find ways to improve access to waterways while still respecting landowners’ rights.

With colleagues they uncovered a tangle of laws, deeds, statutes, customs and covenants that often limit who can gain use of a river or lake. They discovered that, while organisations such as the Environment Agency, British Waterways and the British Canoe Union have cooperated to secure good access to most canals and a few major rivers, the majority of the rivers and lakes in England and Wales remain out of bounds to the public. So they made a series of recommendations for improving access.

The government then asked them to develop this approach by carrying out consultations and negotiation between land owners, councils, watersport enthusiasts and the public to get agreements on improved access.

As a result, a number of voluntary arrangements have now opened up long stretches of some of our rivers for anglers, canoeists, swimmers and many other watersports.

These arrangements include 30 miles of the River Waveney, on the Norfolk-Suffolk border and 25 miles of the River Mersey in Stockport and Manchester.

Using this experience, the research team wrote a guide to negotiating these types of agreements, which was added to the Environment Agency’s website. Others have been able to use this as a basis for

A new dawn for Britain’s waterways
their own negotiations. Following this, the research team has been working with the Environment Agency and other key stakeholders to develop a strategic approach to planning for water related sport and recreation in England and Wales. This approach has fed into the development of other initiatives including Natural England’s ‘Blue Gym’ and new access to waters in parts of England and Wales.

www.brighton.ac.uk/research/society/
Gardening and ‘grow your own’ are leisure pursuits enjoyed by many and allotments have played a significant role over the years. Concerns about healthy living and the mental health benefits of such activities have led to a resurgence of interest.

However, pressures on local authorities to cut costs and raise money led to councils asking to be able to sell off some of this land or reduce the amount of maintenance they carry out.

The Government was recently considering removing the 1908 legislation that requires councils to provide plots.

Professor David Crouch of the University of Derby has studied allotment use over 25 years by interviewing users in depth about the practicalities of obtaining and using allotments and about the benefits they thought having an allotment brought them. He combined this with the statistical evidence regarding health benefits, community usage and land use to complete the picture of the role allotments play in largely do-it-yourself leisure. In his 1997 survey of allotments in England and Wales he found that a strong waiting list remained, and yet plots were often allowed to remain unused, covered in weeds and discouraging others from using theirs so that there appeared to be no demand. As a result, the Government required councils to advertise vacant plots and encourage their take up before they were allowed to consider selling them off due to lack of demand. In order to provide practical policy and management advice for local councils and other land owners, he translated this evidence into a ‘best practice guide’.

In 2006 Professor Crouch published another report for the government.
This demonstrated clearly that providing allotments was a good, low cost way of encouraging healthy lifestyles and benefiting the environment, that they were valued highly by their users, and that it was worthwhile for councils to manage allotment sites more actively.

He also showed that there was actually a continuing and growing demand for allotments. It was this evidence that finally persuaded the government in May 2011 – during a period of intense pressure to cut costs – that they should keep the rules requiring councils to provide allotments. There continue to be some 300,000 plots in England and Wales.

How far is gambling a problem?

Gambling is a traditional part of British life but the Gambling Commission wanted to know more about just how popular it is and also how many people develop problems as a result of gambling. They asked Professor Mark Griffiths and the International Gaming Research Unit (IGRU) at Nottingham Trent University to work with the National Centre for Social Research on the British Gambling Prevalence Surveys in 2007 and 2010 in order to try to put together some concrete information about what was going on.

The research team contacted around 8000 people each time, asking them whether they had gambled in the past year and, if so, how often, in what way and how much money they spent.

They discovered that National Lottery gambling was declining and that internet gambling was still only used by a small minority of people. They were also able to estimate how many problem gamblers there are in the UK and what puts people at risk of developing problems.

Government used their research extensively in developing its policies on gambling. For example, Professor Griffiths’ report to the Gambling Commission on high stake, high jackpot slot machines was used by the then Government Sports Minister, Gerry Sutcliffe MP, to inform future slot machine policy. The IGRU was asked to go on to look at problem gambling across Europe and its findings were presented to the European Parliament in 2009. The team was also asked by the Responsibility in Gambling Trust to work with the charity TACADE to produce educational materials for use with young people within schools and in other settings. Over 10,000 packs of the ‘You Bet’ and ‘Just Another Game?’ materials have been sent out or downloaded. The IGRU is also working with the British Medical Association on its policy on gambling addiction and treatment within the NHS.

www.natcen.ac.uk
www.tacade.com
Although ‘having a flutter’ is part of everyday British life, the British Gambling Prevalence Survey findings suggest that there are around 300,000 problem gamblers in the UK, leading to a wide range of problems involving debt, family breakdown, mental ill health, and even suicide.

Charities GamCare and the Money Advice Trust asked Dr Carolyn Downs of the University of Salford to investigate the issues specific to gambling, so she compared the impacts of gambling debt with debt resulting from ill health or redundancy.

She worked with a number of agencies including the Insolvency Service, banks, Money Advice agencies, the Salvation Army, and gambling counsellors as well as problem gamblers and their families on the Gambling and Debt Pathfinder Study.

The research team established key issues surrounding problem gambling that could help both identify and treat problem gamblers and help support their families. For example, although many gamblers do seek help with their debts, they don’t admit the true cause; debt advice agencies are now advised to ask about gambling activity where debt is otherwise unexplained. Also, younger gamblers are often unable to use telephone helplines because of lack of credit on their mobiles and fear of discovery if they use household phones. Fear of temptation deters them from using online advice. Whilst willing to talk to GPs they have often received little or no help. As a result of revealing these problems, a new free telephone helpline is being established and special training for GPs in how to help problem gamblers is currently being developed by the Royal College of GPs.

www.gamcare.org.uk
The Academy of Social Sciences is the voice of social sciences in the United Kingdom for the public benefit. It promotes research, publishes learned material, distributes information, organises workshops and events, and contributes to public debates. Its focus is multidisciplinary and encompasses both theoretical and applied work. The Academy is composed of over 700 individual Academicians, who are distinguished scholars and practitioners from academia and the public and private sectors, and most of the UK’s Learned Societies in the social sciences plus individual and organisational affiliate members.

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The British Psychological Society is the representative body for psychology and psychologists in the UK. It was formed in 1901 and has more than 45,000 members. Through its Royal Charter, the Society is charged with overseeing psychology and psychologists. It has responsibility for the development, promotion and application of pure and applied psychology for the public good.

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