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**PRESS STATEMENT**

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Images available	Bingo Association's "GambleAware Bingo Ticket" RGT logo available on request

**Responsible Gambling Trust (RGT) calls for bingo players to seek support as new study of regulars shows one in ten at risk of developing a problem.**

**London, July 28:** Ipsos MORI figures released today show one in 40 (2.5%) of regular bingo club patrons are classified as having a gambling problem.

Although the main motivations for going to the bingo club are fun (96%), an opportunity to socialise (85%), excitement (79%), to win money (76%), is somewhere where they can go and feel safe, even on their own (76%) and to get out of the house (74%), the study does find that in addition to the small percentage of regular bingo club patrons with a problem, a further 9% could be at moderate risk of developing one.

Among those bingo players who have tried to stop or cut down because of a problem, there seems to be little desire to ask for help, with the Ipsos MORI research showing two thirds (66%) of bingo regulars having tried to cut back on their gambling but more than half (57%) not seeking any help to do so. A third (36%) sought help from family and friends and fewer than one in ten (7%) accessed a formal source of support, despite this being freely available via GambleAware.

In response to the study, the Responsible Gambling Trust and The Bingo Association are calling for bingo players to know the signs and know where to go if they feel their bingo is becoming a problem. GambleAware is distributing specially designed in-club 'paper tickets' to provide information for anyone who is concerned that their gambling is becoming a problem.

**Marc Etches, Chief Executive of the Responsible Gambling Trust,** said:

"Despite the fact that the vast majority of bingo players have a lot of fun and experience no ill effects, gambling is a risky activity wherever it is played. That's why it is regulated and that's why the Responsible Gambling Trust looks at supporting potentially vulnerable players in all gambling environments.

We commissioned Ipsos MORI and Dr Heather Wardle to give us a clearer picture of regular bingo players and the extent of problem gambling within clubs. Today's findings help us understand the

risks and inform the best means of supporting the one in forty bingo regulars, as many as 14,000 across the UK, who are experiencing gambling-related harm.

Bingo clubs are a hugely important social hub for a certain section of the community. We need to make sure that this sharing, caring environment extends to seeking help if and when members start to feel their gambling has become a problem. Friends and family who are worried about gambling-related harm can go to [www.GambleAware.co.uk](http://www.GambleAware.co.uk) for help and information.”

**Miles Baron, Chief Executive of The Bingo Association,** said:

“The Bingo Association has always taken its commitment to social responsibility very seriously and we felt it was important to support this new research.

This Ipsos MORI study finds that levels of problem gambling are in line with previous analysis and it confirms that bingo offers social benefits for most of its patrons, providing an opportunity for members to socialise in a safe environment.

However, for The Bingo Association and our members, any individual with a problem is an individual too many. As such, we are pleased to be working with the Responsible Gambling Trust and GambleAware to support the distribution of specially designed in-club ‘paper tickets’ to provide information for anyone who is concerned that their gambling is becoming a problem.”

The research also highlighted:

- Most bingo regulars (83%) go to the club with someone else with 35% taking a family member, 32% taking a friend and 25% taking a partner or spouse.
- Older patrons (82% of 75+ players), the unemployed (14%) and those with a disability (73%) are also likely to cite being around other people.
- It is a place where bingo regulars can feel safe even when they are on their own (76% overall said this).
- Some (15%), particularly older (32% 75+) and disabled patrons (23%), are likely to feel that bingo saves them money, because it’s warm with cheap food and tea.
- Most patrons (86%) look forward to going to the bingo and for a quarter of regulars (25%) it is the highlight of their week. Around one in ten (11%) cannot imagine life without bingo.

**-ENDS-**

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

The Responsible Gambling Trust commissioned Ipsos MORI and Dr Heather Wardle to “identify the nature and extent of ‘problem gambling’ behaviour in licensed bingo retail operations in Great Britain.” Ipsos MORI undertook 1,448 telephone interviews with patrons who attended licensed bingo clubs at least once a month. Fieldwork took place between 18 February and 26 March 2016. Problem gambling in this study was measured using the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI), which identifies both problem gambling and those who may be ‘at-risk’.

This report presents and estimates current problem gambling among regular bingo club patrons. However, any survey estimate is subject to sampling error and should be considered with reference to the confidence

intervals, survey design and sample size. Where possible the report methodology attempted to overcome some of these factors; results were weighted to take account of non-response bias, there was careful consideration of the choice of gambling screen and appropriate thresholds for problem gambling. That said, it is not possible to account for all potential biases and caveats, and we therefore caution against population-level correlations being made.

The study revealed patterns of play amongst bingo regulars:

- The most popular activities in the past 12 months amongst regulars were playing bingo with paper tickets (83%), cash bingo during session intervals (72%), bingo and other games on electronic terminals (53%) and playing fruit/slot machines (28%).
- Most bingo players also participated in other forms of gambling outside their club in the past month including the National Lottery (70%), scratchcards (49%), other lotteries (26%), on horse or dog races in a bookmaker, by phone or at the track (21%) and bingo online (18%).
- More than three quarters (79%) of patrons spent between two and four hours at the bingo club on their most recent visit, which coincides with the average main bingo session length. One in ten spent more than four hours and 11% spent less than two hours.
- On average bingo regulars spent £33 on their most recent visit. Men spent more than women and those aged 35-74 tended to spend more than those who were older or younger than this. There are variations in the distribution of total spend – with the top 5% of patrons averaging more than £85 on their last visit and the bottom 5% spending less than £5.50.

The study is published here: <http://www.responsiblegamblingtrust.org.uk/research/research-publications/>

The Bingo Association has produced a “GambleAware bingo ticket” to raise awareness of the help available to anyone concerned about their own or someone else’s gambling. An electronic copy can be [downloaded here](#).

The Responsible Gambling Trust is the leading charity in the UK committed to minimising gambling-related harm. As an independent national charity funded by donations from the gambling industry, the Responsible Gambling Trust funds education, prevention and treatment services and commissions research to broaden public understanding of gambling-related harm. The aim is to stop people getting into problems with their gambling, and ensure that those that do develop problems receive fast and effective treatment and support. Click here to find out more: <http://www.responsiblegamblingtrust.org.uk/>

- The Responsible Gambling Trust raises over £7 million each year in voluntary contributions from the gambling industry operating in Great Britain. This donation based system was proposed under the Gambling Act 2005 and is prescribed by the Gambling Commission in its Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice.
- The Responsible Gambling Trust’s programme of treatment, education, harm prevention and research are guided by the National Responsible Gambling Strategy, which is defined by the independent Responsible Gambling Strategy Board (RGSB) and endorsed by the Gambling Commission. The RGSB, the Gambling Commission and RGT work together under the terms of an agreement in place since 2012.

Problem gambling is gambling to a degree that compromises, disrupts or damages family, personal or recreational pursuits.