

Camden's Local Area Profile

Gambling Act 2005

Date: 2026

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Executive summary

Camden continues to meet the Gambling Commission's description of an area where a local area profile is useful: it is a densely populated inner-London borough with major transport hubs, a substantial student and young adult population, marked inequalities, high housing costs, and a busy evening and night-time economy.

The most up-to-date borough sources point to several conditions that are highly relevant to gambling-related harm. Camden's resident population is now estimated at about 217,000, the borough has 20 wards under the post-2022 boundaries, and it remains one of the most mobile populations in London. Camden also has 11 higher education institutions and a student population of almost 30,000 residents, with particularly high student concentration in Bloomsbury.

Recent local evidence also shows continuing inequality. Camden's median household income was £52,048 in 2025, but 18% of households had annual income below £30,000. Camden is more deprived than around two-thirds of local authorities in England on IMD 2025, and four Lower Layer Super Output Areas fall within the 10% most deprived areas nationally.

Housing pressure remains acute. Average house prices were reported at £876,065 in 2025; there were 8,380 households on the social housing waiting list in March 2025; and 975 people were seen rough sleeping in 2024/25. These pressures matter because financial strain, unstable housing, and debt are all closely linked to becoming vulnerable to gambling-related harm.

Recent public health research estimates that around 600 residents are gambling at levels that cause harm, around 5,000 are gambling at levels that put them at risk of harm, and around 13,000 are harmed by someone else's gambling. The research also highlights the links between gambling harm, poor mental health, debt, domestic abuse, and increased suicide risk.

This profile therefore recommends that Camden continue to focus operator risk assessments and licensing scrutiny on locations with high concentrations of young people, students, deprivation, homelessness or temporary accommodation, treatment and support services, and high-footfall transport or night-time economy uses.

1. Introduction and background

The Council is the Licensing Authority under the Gambling Act 2005 and is responsible for issuing premises licences and permits for gambling premises in Camden. When exercising its gambling functions, the Council must have regard to the Act, relevant regulations, the Gambling Commission's Guidance to Licensing Authorities, the Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice, and the Council's own Statement of Licensing Policy.

The statutory licensing objectives are to:

- (1) prevent gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder, or being used to support crime;
- (2) ensure that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and
- (3) protect children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

The Gambling Commission's current guidance continues to endorse local area profiles as a useful way for licensing authorities to understand local risk, even though a local area profile is not itself mandatory. The guidance stresses that profiles should be updated regularly, should draw on a wide range of local intelligence, and should help operators shape local risk assessments and mitigation measures.

2. What is a gambling local area profile?

A gambling local area profile is an evidence-led assessment of the local environment in which gambling takes place. It does not attempt to prove that a particular person or place is experiencing gambling harm. Instead, it identifies characteristics and locations where vulnerability to gambling-related harm may be higher, so that the licensing authority and operators can anticipate and mitigate risk.

In line with Gambling Commission guidance, this local area profile focuses on both actual and potential risk. That includes current patterns in Camden and emerging pressures that may affect future licensing decisions.

3. Scope of this 2026 review

This document updates the earlier Camden Local Area Profile by amending the descriptive sections, replacing outdated borough facts, incorporating newer local and national gambling-harm evidence, updating ward and demographic references, and setting out a revised evidence base for operator risk assessments.

4.2 Students, younger adults and population structure

Camden has 11 higher education institutions and the third largest student population in London. Recent borough reporting puts the student population at almost 30,000 residents, with the highest share of student residents in Bloomsbury.

Camden has a comparatively young age profile. Recent evidence states that 43% of residents are aged under 30 and 66% are under 45, with a mean age of 37.2 years. These characteristics matter because younger age groups are repeatedly identified in national gambling research as having higher exposure to gambling products and higher risk of severe adverse consequences from gambling.

4.3 Ethnicity and diversity

Camden remains ethnically diverse. Recent local public health reporting based on 2021 Census data states that the borough population is 59.5% White, 18.1% Asian, 9.0% Black, 6.6% Mixed and 3.8% from other ethnic groups, meaning 40.5% of residents identify as Black, Asian, Mixed or other ethnic groups.

4.4 Income, deprivation and labour market

In 2025 the median household income in Camden was £52,048, almost 5% higher than the previous year, but 18% of households still had an annual income below £30,000.

In 2024, 8.5% of employees in Camden were paid below the London Living Wage at the time. In 2025, around 1,045 young people aged 18 to 24 were claiming unemployment benefits in Camden.

Camden's deprivation profile remains mixed. Camden Council's State of the Borough reporting notes that, on the overall IMD 2025 measure, Camden is more deprived than around two-thirds of local authorities in England and sits roughly in the middle of London boroughs. Camden's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) deprivation profile reports that 21.5% of Camden Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are among the 20% most deprived in England, including four LSOAs (3.1%) in the 10% most deprived nationally.

4.5 Housing pressure, homelessness and instability

Housing pressure is one of the clearest structural risks in Camden. House prices in Camden were reported at an average of £876,065 in 2025, among the highest in the UK.

In March 2025 there were 8,380 households on the waiting list for social housing, up 9.5% on the previous year. In 2024/25, 975 people were seen rough sleeping in the borough, an increase of 8% on the previous year.

Recent local health needs evidence also notes that levels of overcrowding in Camden are among the highest in the country, that over 500 homeless households were in temporary accommodation, and that overcrowding differs sharply by ethnicity. Housing insecurity, debt, and unstable accommodation all increase vulnerability to gambling-related harm and reduce resilience when harm occurs.

4.6 Health and wellbeing

In 2023, life expectancy at birth in Camden was 80.0 years for males and 85.5 years for females.

Camden remains a borough with strong assets but persistent health inequalities. Recent local reports note high levels of bullying reported by pupils, continuing sexual health inequalities, and substantial variation in outcomes between communities and neighbourhoods.

Public health and social care services, mental health services, debt advice, homelessness services and substance misuse treatment all remain relevant partners for any future local area profile review because they can help identify both vulnerability and opportunities for harm reduction.

5. The gambling context

5.1 What is gambling-related harm?

For the purposes of this profile, gambling-related harm means the adverse financial, personal, relational, social and health consequences of gambling on individuals, families, social networks and communities. Harm can occur well before someone meets a clinical threshold for gambling disorder.

Camden's own gambling harm reduction materials describe gambling harm as a hidden but serious issue, impacts include debt, poor mental health, relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, employment and education impacts, and increased suicide risk.

5.2 Current national evidence

The Gambling Survey for Great Britain (annual report for 2024, published in 2025) found that 48% of adults had gambled in the previous four weeks, or 28% if lottery-only participation is excluded.

The same survey estimated that 2.7% of adults scored 8 or more on the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI), and that younger adults who had gambled in the past year were much more likely than older adults to report at least one severe adverse consequence from their own gambling (5.4% among 18 to 34 year olds compared with 0.8% among those aged 55 and over).

Among young people aged 11 to 17, the Gambling Commission's 2024 survey found that 27% had spent their own money on some form of gambling in the previous year and 1.5% screened as experiencing problem gambling, up from 0.7% in 2023. Exposure to gambling advertising also increased.

5.3 Current local evidence in Camden

Camden's public health training material published in 2026 estimates that around 600 Camden residents are gambling at levels that cause them harm, around 5,000 are gambling at levels that put them at risk of harm, and around 13,000 are harmed by someone else's gambling.

Camden's JSNA now includes a dedicated gambling-related harm profile (March 2026), indicating that gambling harm has become a recognised public health and place-based issue in the borough.

National policy has also shifted. From 2026/27, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities is distributing a new local council gambling harms prevention grant funded by the statutory gambling levy. This creates a stronger framework for local prevention activity and should support future evidence development.

6. Who is vulnerable to gambling-related harm in Camden?

Consistent with Gambling Commission guidance, national research and Camden's own current evidence, the following groups and circumstances remain especially relevant in Camden:

- children and young people, especially where schools, colleges, youth settings and family-oriented locations are close to gambling premises
- students and young adults, given Camden's unusually large higher education population and evidence of higher harm among younger adults nationally
- people in or near deprivation hotspots, including residents in LSOAs within the 10% or 20% most deprived nationally
- people experiencing low income, debt, cost-of-living pressure, or unstable employment
- people experiencing homelessness, rough sleeping, temporary accommodation or severe housing insecurity
- people in contact with mental health, substance misuse, debt advice or wider support services
- people affected by someone else's gambling, not only the person gambling directly
- communities and locations exposed to high advertising density, high footfall, transport interchange activity or late-night economy pressures

7. Evidence base and datasets

7.1 Existing licensed premises

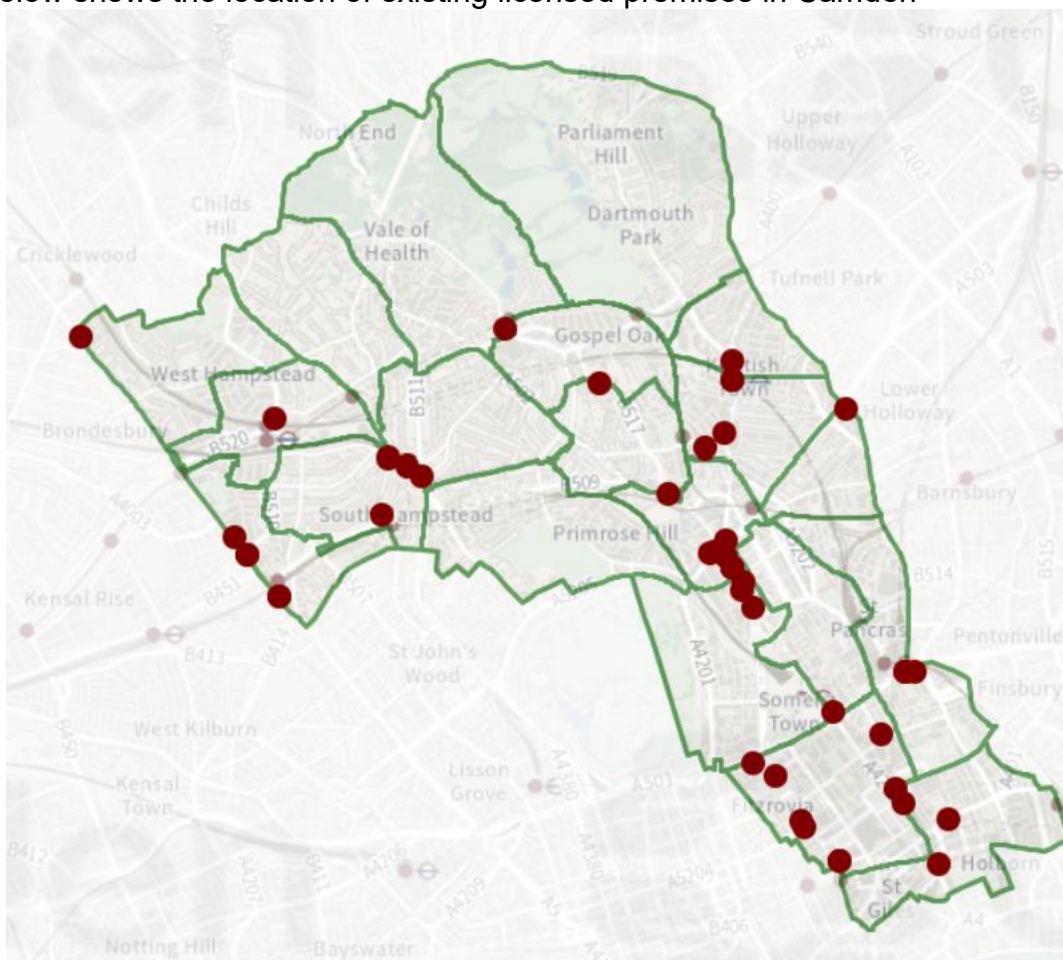
At the time of writing this local area profile, the following premises types operate under a premises licence issued by Camden:

- 1 casino premises licences
- 30 betting premises licences
- 14 adult gaming centre premises licences

In addition, 40 organisations have registered as a small society lottery and Camden has issued the following gaming machine permits:

- 10 club gaming machine permits
- 37 licensed premises gaming machine permits

Map A below shows the location of existing licensed premises in Camden



7.2 Complaints against licensed premises

Between 01/04/2025 to 31 March 2026, the licensing authority did not receive any complaints regarding the operation of the above licensed gambling premises.

Issues arising from inspections of licensed premises

The Councils licensing enforcement officers carry out programmed inspections of licensed premises throughout the year. Over the period 01/04/2025 to 31/04/2026, officers carried out 22 inspections.

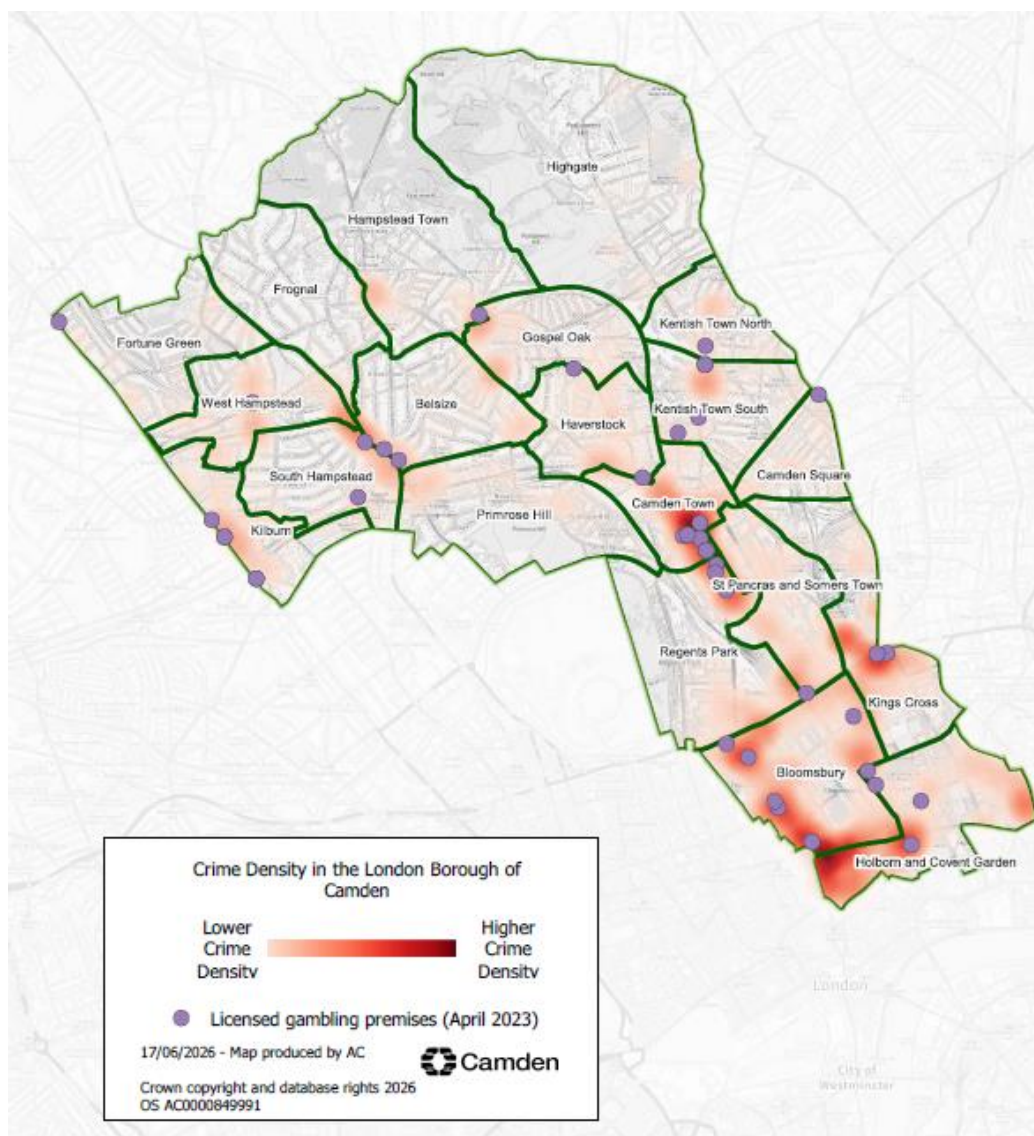
The issues were common across the premises and included:

- lack of awareness of the Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice (LCCP), in particular the social responsibility codes
- premises licence not displayed at premises.

The visits identified a clear need for staff to receive training in the requirements of the Gambling Act 2005 and the LCCP

7.3 Crime and anti-social behaviour

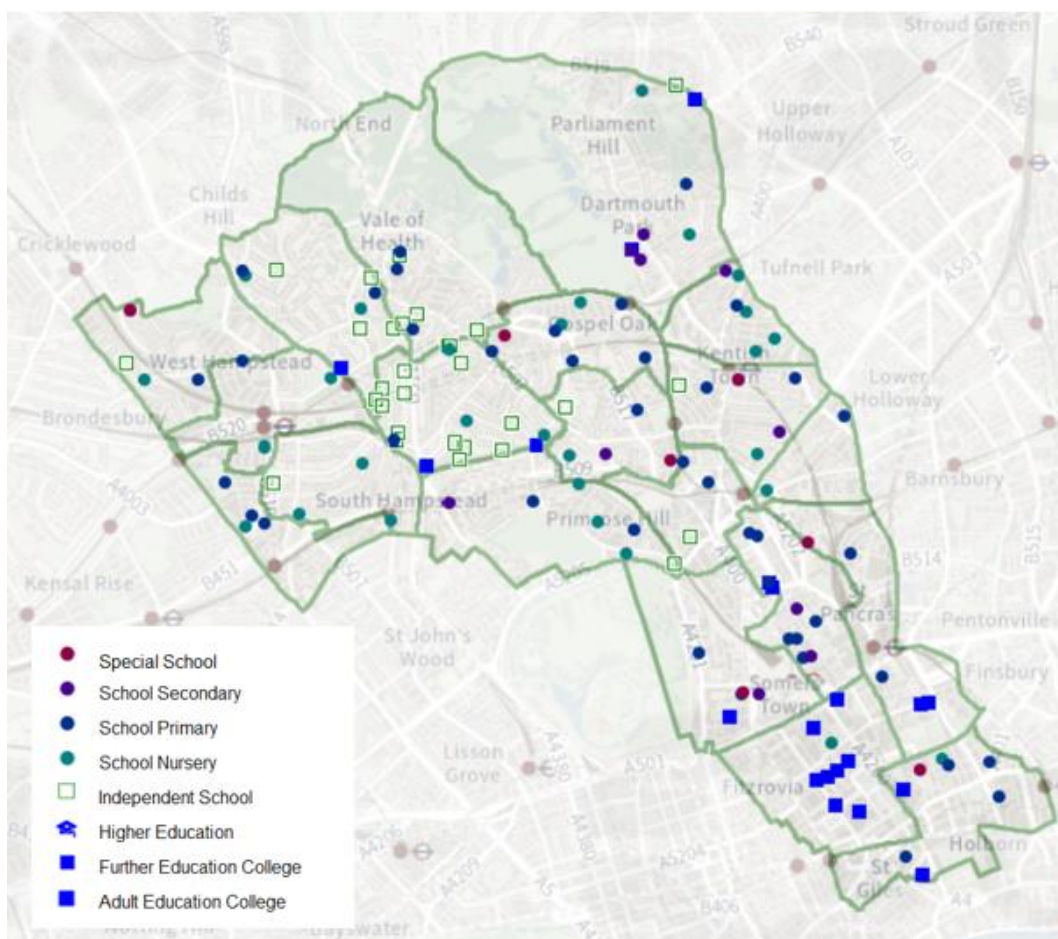
Camden recognises that crime and anti-social behaviour can occur at or near gambling premises. However, the available data does not enable the Council to identify which incidents are directly related to gambling activity, nor does it establish a direct link between those incidents and people who may be vulnerable to gambling-related harm. Accordingly, Map B shows the location of recorded crime and anti-social behaviour in relation to gambling premises, but it should not be taken as evidence that those incidents are caused by gambling activity or are directly associated with gambling-related harm.



7.4 Youth and young adults

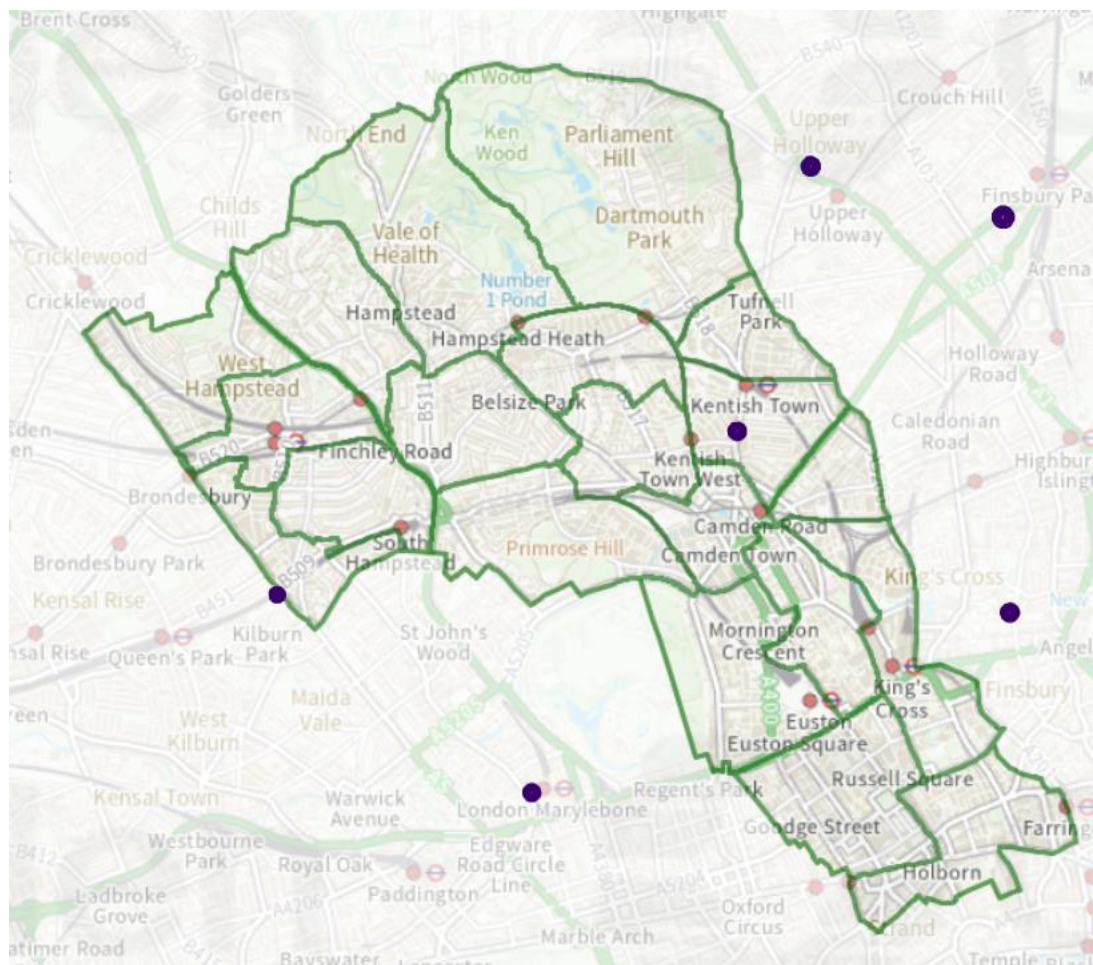
The map below shows the location of education institutions with students of 13-24 years and includes:

- Further education colleges.
- Adult education colleges.
- Special schools.
- Independent schools.
- Higher education establishments.
- Secondary education establishments.



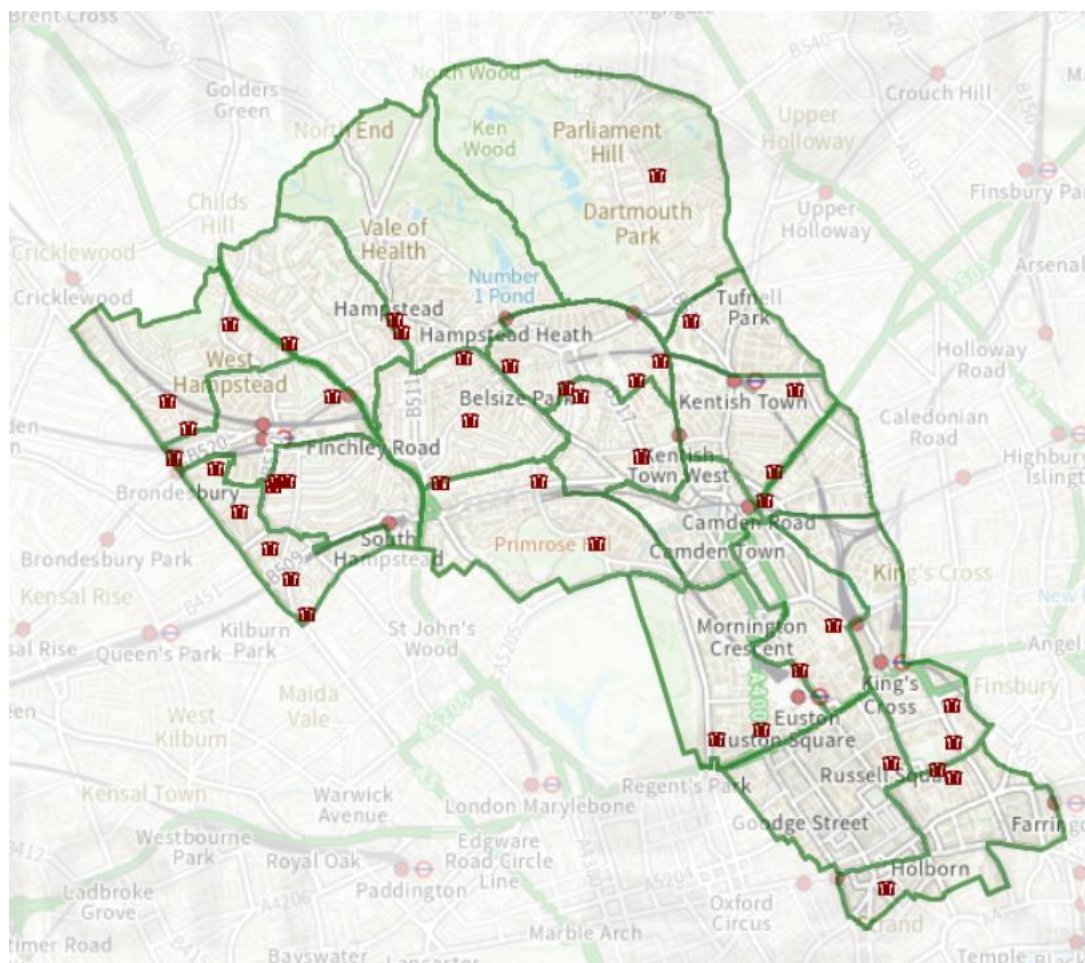
7.5 Unemployed People

The map below shows the location of job centres



7.6 Homeless /housing instability datasets:

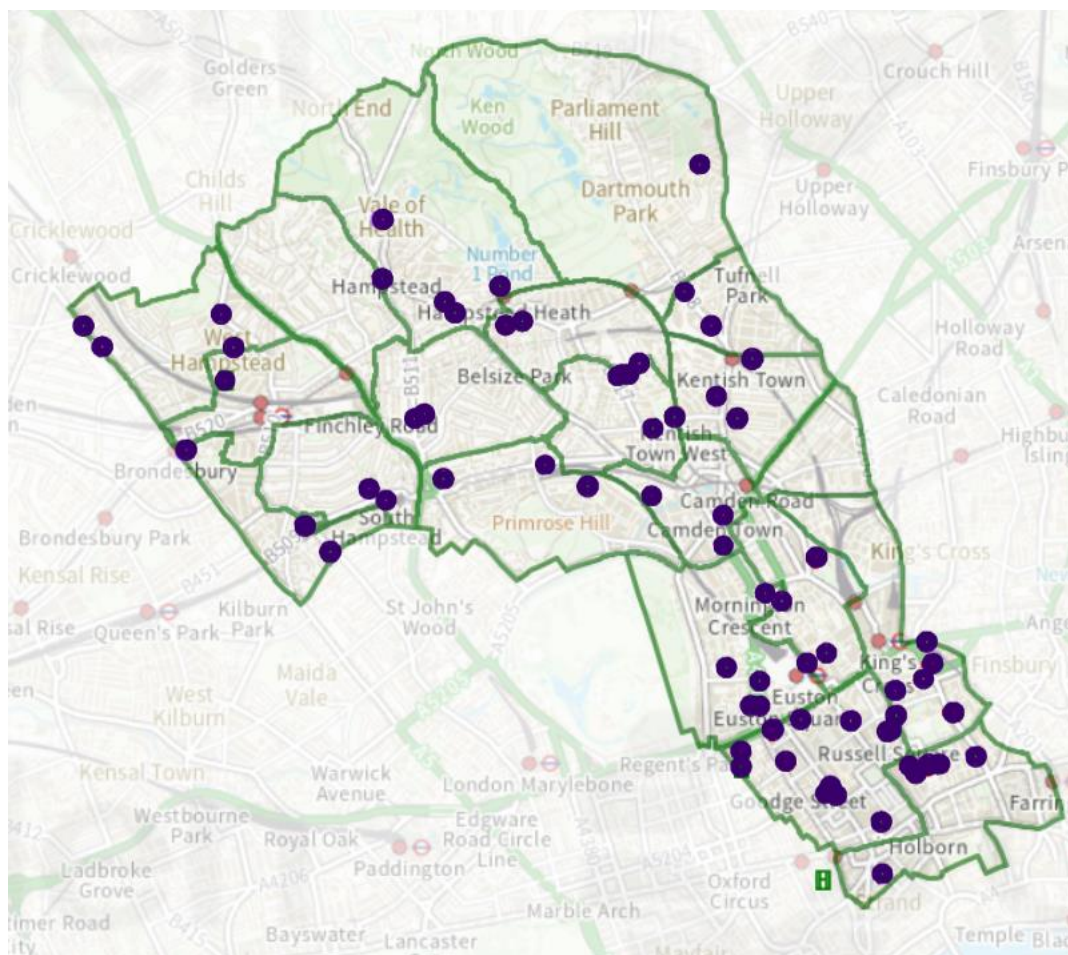
The map below shows the location of homeless accommodation from local authority lists/Homeless UK



7.7 People with poor mental health

The map below shows the location of Doctors surgeries, hospitals, day centres, counselling and advice centres which include:

- NHS Trusts.
- Mental health day centres.
- Hospitals.
- Health Centres.
- General practitioner surgeries.



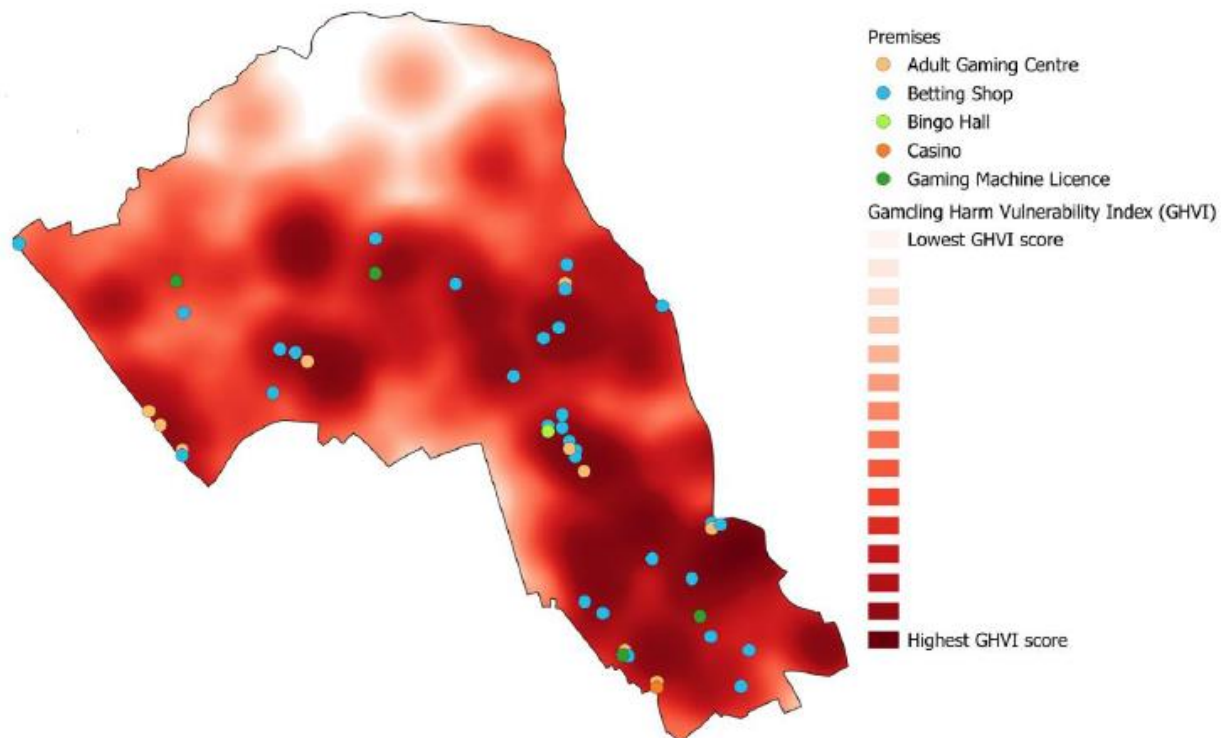
7.8 Gambling harm vulnerability index

The map below draws on a range of data sources that are relevant to vulnerability to gambling-related harm. These include the distribution of younger people, minority ethnic communities, benefit claimants, indicators of mental health need, and the location of services and premises such as substance misuse treatment centres, food banks, homelessness hostels, educational establishments, pawnbrokers and gambling treatment services.

Each factor is weighted individually to reflect both the strength of the available evidence linking it to vulnerability to gambling-related harm and the relative degree of gambling harm or problem gambling associated with that group or indicator.

The model does not include the location of gambling premises as a factor contributing to underlying vulnerability. This is because, while such premises may be used by people who are already vulnerable to gambling-related harm, their presence does not in itself create that underlying vulnerability.

However, for completeness and contextual reference, the location of licensed gambling premises is shown on the final map.



8. Implications for licensing and operator risk assessments

Operators are expected to demonstrate that their local risk assessments are based on current Camden evidence rather than generic national templates alone.

Licence applications and variations should pay particular attention to proximity to schools, colleges, universities, youth settings, hostels, temporary accommodation, rough sleeping hotspots, mental health or substance misuse services, debt advice or food support locations, and high-footfall transport interchanges.

Given Camden's large student and young adult population, operators are also expected to consider the visibility and timing of external advertising, the design of shopfronts, staff training on customer interaction, multi-operator clustering, and referral pathways to support.

Camden will continue to make use of inspection and licensing powers to test whether operators' mitigations are visible in practice: for example, age-verification controls, self-exclusion processes, staff training, local knowledge, incident logging, machine supervision, and signposting to support.

9. Conclusion

Camden's overall context remains highly relevant to gambling licensing: a large young adult and student population, substantial inequality, severe housing pressure, high mobility, major transport hubs, and a dense urban environment with a strong evening economy.

From the information obtained, we can conclude that people in all Camden's wards have an elevated risk of vulnerability to gambling-related harm. The main drivers for all areas are the location of residents who are aged 10-24 years and children locality areas.

We can also conclude that some areas are at greater risk and some locations within those wards present the highest risk of vulnerability to gambling-related harm. The following wards indicate an elevated risk

- the Euston–King's Cross–St Pancras corridor, because of transport interchanges, transient footfall, homelessness pressures and concentrations of deprivation nearby
- Bloomsbury and the southern central area, because of the concentration of students, universities, visitors and the wider evening economy
- Camden Town and adjoining high-footfall commercial areas, because of nightlife, visitor economy activity and youth presence
- Kilburn and parts of the western edge of the borough, where deprivation and cross-border clustering with neighbouring boroughs remain important considerations
- parts of Gospel Oak, Kentish Town North and Kentish Town South where deprivation, housing pressure and vulnerable populations remain relevant

Appendix A. Key public sources

- [1] Gambling Commission, Guidance to Licensing Authorities, Part 6: Local area profile (updated 27 June 2025).
- [2] Camden Council, Statement of Licensing Policy 2026–2029 (Gambling Act 2005).
- [3] Camden Council, State of the Borough 2026: This is Camden.
- [4] ONS, Camden local area profile and 2024 mid-year population estimate references.
- [5] Camden Council / JSNA Hub, Deprivation profile (Dec 2025).
- [6] Camden Council, State of the Borough 2026: Inclusive Local Economy.
- [7] Camden Council, State of the Borough 2026: Equalities.
- [8] Camden Council, State of the Borough 2026: A Place to Call Home
- [9] Camden and Islington Sexual Health Needs Assessment 2024 (for demographic summary based on recent Camden profile data).
- [10] Camden JSNA / Public Health, Gambling-related harm profile and Camden gambling harm reduction training material (Mar 2026).
- [11] Gambling Commission, Gambling Survey for Great Britain annual report (2024, published 2025) and Young People and Gambling 2024.
- [12] GOV.UK / OHID, Gambling harm prevention: local council funding 2026 to 2027.