Gambling
- Gambling is a popular pastime in the UK, and worldwide. Approximately 77% of UK adults gambled in the 12 months prior to the last BGPS, (British Gambling Prevalence Survey, Waddell et al. 2011) – over 35 million adults

Homelessness
- Over 3500 people sleeping rough on any given night in the UK. Highest proportion in London, most in Westminster
- Over 100,000 households considered as category homeless. Hidden homelessness – sofa surfing or staying with friends / relatives, but with no fixed abode
- All types of homelessness increasing annually in the UK
- The homeless have been shown to report increased levels of drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, depression, loneliness, and childhood maltreatment compared to the general population

Study 1 – Aims and Methodology
- Key aim: To measure the prevalence of problem gambling within a homeless population than in the general population
- Participants were recruited from 16 homeless centres across Westminster (n= 456). Participants were recruited from homeless shelters, hostels and day centres
- Data collected via survey responses, administered by key workers

Results (1)
- Overall sample (n=456):
  - PGSI ‘problem gambling’ (score > 7): 23.6%
  - Gambling risk distribution differs between hostel residents and rough sleepers
    - ‘No risk’ (score 0): 63.9%
    - ‘Moderate risk’ (score 5): 30.1%
    - ‘Low Risk’ (score 1): 14.6%

Graph A: Reliable risk category distribution differences in the homeless compared to the general population, driven by difference in No risk and Problem Gambler categories (x² (3) = 11.4, p = .001).

Graph B: Data for those who scored 0 on the PGSI, indicating some level of risk. Significantly greater proportion of at risk gamblers are problem gamblers relative to the BGPS data (x²(3)=47.1, p = .001).

Study 2 – Aims and Methodology
- Study 1 confirmed that there is an elevated level of problem gambling within the homeless population compared to the general population
- However, it does not tell us anything about the direction of the effect; is gambling more commonly a cause, or a consequence of homelessness?

Overall sample (n=72):
- PGSI ‘problem gambling’ (score > 7): 23.6%
- Moderate or Low risk (score 1-7): 12.5%
- ‘No risk’ (score 0): 63.9%
- Elevated levels of PG replicated

Reliable difference between our data and the BGPS (x² (2) = 27.4, p < .001). Driven by No Risk and PG groups

Some Risk: 61.5% of participants with some level of gambling risk had gambling problems before homelessness: 15.6% reported experiencing problems after becoming homeless.

- Problem Gamblers: 3.4% of PGs indicated gambling problems prior to homelessness.

- PGSI scores were not correlated with the number of endorsed DSM IV alcohol disorder items (r = .08) or DSM IV substance disorder items (r = .2).

Treatments
- Awareness of Treatment Services
  - Gambling: 76.5%
  - Alcohol: 94.7%
  - Substances: 95.5%
- Utilisation of Treatment Services
  - Gambling: 26.5%
  - Alcohol: 46.5%
  - Drugs: 67.5%

Levels of problem gambling are significantly higher in the homeless population than in the general population.

Conclusions and Future work
- Gambling and homelessness have a complex relationship. Gambling is predominantly a cause of homelessness, however some problems develop post homelessness.
- Homelessness and gambling does not occur in a vacuum; further work is needed to understand the relationship between homelessness, gambling, and other mental health disorders.
- Next stage of research is to collaborate with Shelter, Crisis and Homelessness Link; 20 in-depth interviews with homeless gamblers to truly understand the nature of the relationship.
- Data from these interviews will help develop a brief cognitive screen and intervention, which will be used to reduce the impact of gambling on homelessness.