

TalkBanStop Evaluation Report 2026

What this report is about

TalkBanStop (TBS) is a program designed to support people who are currently, or are at risk of, experiencing harms from gambling. It is a partnership between GamCare, Gamban and GAMSTOP, and was launched in December 2020. TBS combines emotional support, gambling blocking tools, and self-exclusion for a layered approach to addressing gambling harms. For TBS users, the journey usually begins with contacting the National Gambling Helpline operated by GamCare. Users then receive a free Gamban licence to access gambling blocking tools. They are also encouraged to register with GAMSTOP to self-exclude from UK-licensed online gambling operators.

By making the helpline the first contact point for TBS, people experiencing gambling harms are able to discuss their concerns with trained advisors. This provides an opportunity for advisors to not only explain the partnership and its individual services, but also the benefits of a layered approach. Having multiple safeguards in place is expected to drive more sustained behaviour change over time.

This report outlines the details and results of an evaluation of the TBS program. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of TBS, including its reach and impact on users. The report also provides recommendations on how to improve future delivery of TBS and its effectiveness.

What was done?

Kantar, a market research and consulting company headquartered in London, England, was commissioned to conduct the evaluation. To accomplish this, the research team used a mixed-

Why is this report important?

This report was prepared on behalf of GamCare to assess the effectiveness of TalkBanStop (TBS), a partnership between GamCare, Gamban, and GAMSTOP. TBS was designed to provide a layered approach to addressing gambling harms in Great Britain, combining emotional support, gambling blocking tools, and self-exclusion.

The researchers adopted a mixed-methods approach, using data collected from a national omnibus survey of 1,263 adults, a survey of 1,767 Gamban users, and a qualitative group session with 55 people who had used TBS. Overall, it was found that awareness of the program was quite high and had increased over time since its launch. Users reported better outcomes when they had engaged with multiple components of the TBS program compared to using only one service.

The evaluation also identified a number of ways to improve the program, including strengthening the transitions between services, reducing barriers to access, having a more consistent entry process while maintaining the 'no wrong door' approach, improving understanding of the program and follow-up support, and tailoring services to the needs of specific groups of people.

methods approach. A number of data sources were used, including:

- *Kantar Omnibus Survey*: A general population survey through Kantar's online panel to measure awareness levels and

behaviours, as well as accessibility of services provided by TBS.

- *Kantar Live*: A qualitative group session to capture user engagement and behavioural impact. This was the key source of information to assess program effectiveness.
- *Gamban user survey*: A survey to explore the experience of Gamban users with TBS.
- *Monitoring data*: The data were provided by GamCare to gauge program uptake and establish the operational baseline.

The Kantar Omnibus Survey included responses from 1,263 adults from the general population of Great Britain. Data were collected over three waves. The baseline data were collected in December 2020, prior to marketing campaigns for TBS. The second survey was launched in August 2021. The most recent survey was administered in March 2026.

The Gamban user survey was designed to recruit participants for Kantar Live. A total of 1,767 Gamban users provided information on their engagement with both TBS and Gamban. Kantar Live recruitment was facilitated by GamCare and Gamban. Participants had to have engaged with the TBS partnership, with a total of 55 participants. GamCare provided monitoring data that were collected by their media agency, 23red.

What you need to know

1. Awareness and engagement

The use of paid media advertising was found to play a central role in increasing awareness of the TBS program. The launch of individual campaigns led to spikes in interest. When compared to earlier 'Always-On' advertising, paid campaigns were found to result in much higher levels of exposure, as measured by impressions on digital platforms.

Since the launch of Always-On advertising in 2022, the number of impressions across digital platforms accumulated over time. Paid advertising occurred on Search, Display, Meta, X, TikTok and Reddit. By 2025–26, these media campaigns resulted in over 41 million impressions. These findings indicate that media investment has consistently maintained awareness of TBS, with advertising spend closely related to website sessions.

The findings from the omnibus survey indicate that partnership activity has also led to maintained awareness of TBS and related services over time. For instance, in March 2026, 32% of survey respondents reported having heard of the TBS program. This number was relatively stable compared with the number recorded in 2021 (29%). Awareness of the National Gambling Helpline (64%), GAMSTOP (39%), and Gamban (36%) remained high over time. Lastly, data from the helpline show that referrals to Gamban have also increased. The researchers highlight that even though visibility has increased, awareness is often activated at the 'point of need', rather than through familiarity with the TBS program.

Next, the researchers investigated whether awareness of the TBS program has increased since the pilot phase. Between December 2020 when TBS was launched and March 2026, awareness of each component increased as follows: Gamban (from 28% to 36%), GAMSTOP (from 29% to 39%), GamCare's treatment service (from 27% to 35%), and the National Gambling Helpline (from 48% to 64%). Although TBS was not asked about at baseline, it was in the remaining two waves. Familiarity with TBS rose slightly from 2021 (29%) to 2026 (32%). While generally positive, the results also indicate that more focus needs to be given to the gap between 'heard of' and 'familiar with' TBS.

It was also found that even though people had heard of TBS, true understanding of it was more limited. Many respondents to the omnibus survey viewed TBS as a generic support service, with only about 20% having an understanding of the partnership model. Kantar Live participants often described TBS in terms of a single component (usually Gamban or GAMSTOP) or as an additional benefit after initial contact.

It is important to determine whether 'Talk' can translate to the uptake of "Ban" and "Stop". First, the data indicate that engagement is driven by active help-seeking and not simple exposure. Participants were found to most frequently seek out TBS through online search or referral by GamCare. When people called the helpline and talked to an advisor, approximately 70% signed up for Gamban. Providing

a link to sign up led to over 50% of people enrolling. However, qualitative findings from Kantar Live also reveal that people come to TBS through multiple routes, highlighting the need for clear links across all partner services.

2. How the layered journey operates in practice

Most participants first accessed TBS through the National Gambling Helpline, with the most common route being helpline to GAMSTOP to Gamban. However, there were differences in user journeys. For instance, younger people tended to start with Gamban before registering for GAMSTOP. This could suggest a preference for using technology to reduce gambling harms. The researchers emphasize a 'no wrong door' approach, whereby people should have the choice regarding their entry point to the program.

Second, the researchers investigated transitions between components of the program. Overall, transitions were generally rated by users as smooth, with some aspects being smoother than others. For example, the transition from the helpline to GAMSTOP was rated positively by most respondents. But ratings were lower for helpline-to-Gamban transition. Similarly, ratings declined for transitioning from GAMSTOP to continued support/treatment. The data also indicate some regional variation in these ratings.

The survey data reveal that accessing the multiple components of TBS is more effective for behaviour change than relying on a single component. The majority of Kantar Live participants (68%) indicated that using multiple components made it easier to reduce their gambling. Most participants (54%) also strongly agreed that using tools alongside accessing support changed their behaviour. These responses suggest that the layered approach that combines the use of tools to block gambling alongside emotional and cognitive supports is effective.

Notably, Kantar Live participants reported that restricting access to gambling resulted in reduced stress and a greater ability to focus on how to maintain abstinence and prevent future gambling. Accessing GamCare support then helped them learn emotional regulation and cognitive reframing

strategies. Being able to access the same adviser each time also improved continuity of care.

3. Perceived behavioural impacts and user-identified strengths/limitations

Kantar Live participants reported strong appreciation for the 'triple lock' aspect of the TBS program. That is, they saw benefit in the combination of advisor support, self-exclusion, and device-level blocking of gambling apps. The layered approach was found to work well, but it also depends on having a smooth progression between components and supportive contact with advisors.

Nevertheless, there are still areas of friction. A number of barriers were found that influence progression in the program. These include being able to gamble on offshore gambling sites; challenges with administration when using TBS, including identity verification requirements for self-exclusion and issues with device compatibility; and concerns over accessing TBS due to stigma and skepticism. Kantar Live participants felt that addressing these barriers is important.

Finally, Kantar Live participants identified a number of priorities moving forward. They thought that the TBS program should focus on increasing visibility and outreach, providing simpler and clearer explanations on how the program works and how GamCare, GAMSTOP and Gamban fit together, and better streamlining between these different components. Participants also emphasized the need for proactive follow-ups after initial contact and tailored support formats.

Who is it intended for?

This report can inform the TBS partner organizations, GamCare, Gamban, and GAMSTOP. The report could also be useful to policy makers, researchers, and clinicians who are interested in how effective such a partnership program is for reducing gambling harms.

What does the report recommend?

The researchers provide several recommendations based on their findings. First, they recommend a clear entry approach that is consistent across partners. Regardless of where a user starts, they

should be able to easily access the TBS program. While it is important to maintain a 'no wrong door' approach, the steps should be better coordinated.

Second, there is a need to close gaps that enable workarounds and bypass restrictions. There should be clear communication about the benefits of the 'triple lock' approach at the entry point. Other ways to close gaps include improving device and platform compatibility, and working with payment providers/financial institutions to improve blocking.

Third, the researchers recommend improving understanding of the TBS program. The evaluation has revealed that there is high awareness of the program, but lower levels of understanding of how it works. It is important to use common and clear language at each entry point to explain of how the different components fit together. It is also recommended to have a more consistent follow-up model.

Fourth, it is recommended that support be tailored for specific groups of people. For example, young people may prefer a 'tech-first' route to immediately block gambling access. There should also be more emphasis on tackling the issues of emotional readiness and stigma. This could involve improved messaging, more one-to-one support, and targeted outreach to specific populations and locations where more friction and barriers to uptake exist.

About the researchers

Kantar is a market research and consulting company headquartered in London, England. Kantar was commissioned to conduct the evaluation and author this report by GamCare.

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About Greo Evidence Insights

Greo Evidence Insights is an independent, non-profit organization specializing in research, knowledge mobilization, and evaluation in the health and well-being sectors. Greo transforms research and insights into actionable strategies to prevent and reduce harm related to gambling, gaming, technology use, and substance use. To learn more about funding for Research Snapshots visit [our website](#).

