**Example of Back Your Local Bookie Campaign Letter**

Dear Ministry,

# Re: High street bookmakers are under attack and we need your support

## *I am writing today to urge you to “Back your Local Bookie” and maintain the current levels of stakes and prizes on electronic gaming machines.*

Britain’s betting shops have been on our high streets for more than fifty years. Over the past decade, electronic gaming machines (EGMs) have been introduced and become a popular part of the leisure experience on offer.

Betting shops employ over 40,000 people, serving eight million customers, whether they are betting on events from horse racing to who will win the X-Factor, or playing on an EGM.

Operating across the UK, bookmakers make a significant contribution paying a billion pounds a year in tax, and contributing over £3billion annually to the country’s economy.

In our area there are 18 shops, employing 90 people.

Anti-betting campaigners want to stop us enjoying our leisure time and are demanding the Government significantly reduce the levels of stakes and prizes on EGMs.

Such action would put thousands of betting shops across the country at risk of closure.

Anti-betting campaigners claim EGMs are addictive. Yet the tiny number of people who are classed as problem gamblers using EGMs dropped by 25% between 2007 and 2010 (Gambling Commission survey).

Popular myths also suggest that EGMs have led to an increase in the number of bookmakers and that they are targeted deliberately in deprived areas.

Shop numbers have in fact remained stable at about 8,500 for the past decade, down from 10,000 a decade ago and over 16,000 in the 1970s.

Bookmakers operate like any other retailer be it supermarkets, convenience stores or fast food outlets. The position of betting shops is driven by the location of people.

Quite simply, more bookmakers will be found in areas with a high density of population.

At a time when many retailers, both large and small, are struggling and major retailers are leaving the high street, bookmakers are creating jobs and investing in town centres.

The Government is holding its triennial review of the stakes and prizes on all gaming machines.I am asking you to support us and leave the stakes and prizes on EGMs as they are.

I am also sending this letter to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport consultation.

Yours Sincerely,