



**Press release - for immediate release  
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### **Gala rejoins Bingo Association to help fight for fairer tax regime**

The Bingo Association is delighted to announce that Great Britain's largest bingo operator with 138 clubs, Gala Bingo, has re-joined the Association with immediate effect.

Gala Bingo's return marks a significant growth in the size of the Association, which had been operating without Gala as a Member since the company withdrew in 2008.

Gala Bingo adding their presence, the Association will be further stepping up its campaign to tackle the inequitable tax system levied on bingo. Bingo pays a 20% Gross Profit Tax (GPT) rate, while most other forms of gambling (including betting shops, high street arcades and even online bingo sites) pay a rate of 15%.

Tax burden remains the single biggest constraint on the financial viability of bingo clubs and a significant contributor to the closure of on average one club per month, as well as why more than 150 of the Great Britain's bingo clubs remain vulnerable. At a time when the Government is about to levy an additional £9m per annum tax on the bingo sector through the introduction of Machine Games Duty (MGD), there is a strong need to reduce bingo GPT (as recently recommended by the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee in Parliament). Despite this the Bingo Industry continues to innovate and move forward.

Gala being part of the Association is one of many positive changes taking place at The Bingo Association, with reduced subscription fees for all bingo clubs creating better value for all members, particularly smaller community clubs.

Miles Baron, Chief Executive, The Bingo Association said:

“As the largest operator of licensed bingo clubs in the UK, Gala Bingo are a very important part of the industry and it is great to have them on-board and be fully integrated in all our work. The team at Gala have a wealth of experience that will be extremely valuable in helping to shape and develop the industry’s future and I look forward to working closely with Simon in the future”

Simon Wykes, Managing Director, Gala Bingo said:

“We are delighted that Gala Bingo are part of The Bingo Association and will again have the opportunity to work closely with other operators. Bingo continues to face challenging operating conditions which are worsened by unfair tax treatment and the fear of ever more restrictive regulation. The combination of the two can only ever stifle investment in a business that needs to innovate through investment. I look forward to working closely with Association Members to fully represent the interests and needs of the industry and further develop the sector agenda.”

## **Ends**

For further information, please contact Amelia Bullock-Muir on 0207 618 9166 or email [ameliabullockmuir@luther.co.uk](mailto:ameliabullockmuir@luther.co.uk)

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## **Notes to editors**

### The Bingo Association

- The Bingo Association is the trade association of the licensed bingo industry in Great Britain, representing the proprietors licensed under The Gambling Act 2005. [www.bingo-association.co.uk](http://www.bingo-association.co.uk).
- There are 51 proprietors in membership. Membership profile ranges from the large operators, including Gala (138 clubs) and Mecca (97 clubs), to smaller operators like Carlton Leisure (14 clubs) and many single unit businesses. The bingo sector directly employs over 13,000 people in the UK.
- Over 3 million customers made over 48m visits to bingo clubs last year.
- The House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee concluded in July 2012 that, “We recognise that the Bingo sector remains highly taxed in

comparison with other sectors despite its status as one of the softest forms of gambling. In principle we believe that bingo should be taxed in line with other forms of gambling at 15%. Moreover, we recommend that the Treasury make an assessment, within the next financial year, of the likelihood that a reduction in bingo duty, to 15%, would result in increased investment in the bingo sector and a rise in net tax take.”

### Gala Coral Group

- Gala Bingo, the UK’s largest Bingo Operator, runs 138 clubs from Peterhead to Plymouth. Every one of the 4,500 staff are focused on going further than anyone else to guarantee that over one million customers a year experience the best buzz in Bingo. Gala Bingo are totally committed to increasing the number of Bingo fans in the UK, who can regularly enjoy the great value bingo, state-of-the-art fruit machines, and fantastic food and drink on offer in Gala Bingo clubs, every day.
- Gala Coral Group is one of Europe’s largest betting and gaming businesses with strong market positions and well established brands, both on the high street and online.
- The Group’s operations are primarily focussed on the UK and Italy.