

MP continues to push lottery issue

Mark Lancaster is one step closer to ensuring soldiers are lucky in their quest to play the lottery abroad.

The MP has been persistently raising the issue of the imminent blanket ban on National Lottery playing outside the UK, which will affect members of the armed forces.

Now the Government is asking the National Lottery Commission to reconsider the ban, which comes into effect on December 13.

At the moment it is only banned in countries where foreign gambling is prohibited, but the changes would extend this to all countries.

The Milton Keynes North MP, a serving Territorial Army Officer, has asked several written and oral questions on the matter.

Culture minister John Penrose was unable to tell Mr Lancaster which countries this would affect, however he said: "I have now written to the National Lottery Commission (NLC) to ask them to reconsider how we can allow armed forces personnel (and others) to participate from those countries where purchasing UK lottery tickets is lawful."

Mr Lancaster said: "I'm so pleased that we are inching towards a change in this ban. I appreciate the Government, NLC and Camelot looking again at this and in doing so acknowledging how important it is for our armed forces to enjoy the simple pleasures abroad they have at home. I intend to be the voice of the soldiers here and abroad who think, I pay UK tax, so why can't I play the UK lottery?"

Mr Lancaster is meeting with Camelot this week to talk through the finer details of their proposals.