

Running a fundraising raffle, sweepstake or tombola

Thank-you for thinking of organising a raffle, sweepstake or tombola to raise money for Martlets. They are great fun to take part in and can help to raise lots of money for our hospice care.

All raffles, sweepstakes and tombolas are a form of gambling, and as such are regulated by the Gambling Commission, according to the Gambling Act 2005. In law, they are referred to as 'Lotteries'. The Gambling Act 2005 states that all Lotteries are illegal unless they fall into a category which is specifically permitted by law.

This is why we ask that anyone who is considering organising a raffle, sweepstake or tombola in aid of Martlets to read and follow the below guidelines.

What exactly is a lottery?

A lottery is a kind of gambling which has three essential ingredients:

- You have to pay to enter the game
- There is always at least one prize
- Prizes are awarded purely on chance

A typical small scale lottery is a raffle where players buy a ticket with a number on it. The tickets are randomly drawn and those holding the same numbered ticket win a prize.

Another version is a sweepstake, for example, where the participants pay to randomly draw the names of a horse in a race. The person who draws the winning horse wins a prize.

There are other versions too, such as a tombola – often found at a fun-day or summer fete; or a 100 club which is a weekly event organised for members only.

Types of lotteries allowable under the Gambling Act 2005

For legal reasons, the Gambling Act has created allowable categories of lottery, and each of which has its own dos and don'ts, with guidelines on the ticketing system, and whether or not you'll need to register your lottery with the local authority.

Use our table overleaf to find out how to organise your fundraising lottery, raffle or sweepstake safely and legally.

These types of lottery require a licence from the local authority:
Small society lotteries: A stand-alone lottery activity organised by or on behalf of a charity with a top limit of £20,000 in ticket sales.
Large society lotteries: Similar to the small society lottery, but there is a minimum of £20,000 in ticket sales
These types of lottery do not require a licence but must still be compliant with the Gambling Act 2005
Customer lotteries: These can be held at commercial events (such as exhibitions) or commercial premises or non-commercial events (such as school fetes). They must be aimed at customers only and must be for charitable or other good causes.
Work lotteries / Residents' lotteries: Only for colleagues who work at the same single set of premises / people who live on the same single set of premises.
Private Society Lotteries: Organised by a group or association of people, raising money for a charitable or good cause
Incidental lotteries: These can be held at commercial events (such as exhibitions) or non-commercial events (such as school fetes). The raffle must be incidental to the event (ie. not the sole purpose of the event or independent to the event) and must be for charitable or other good causes. All tickets must be sold at the location and time of the event but the draw can be at the event or after it has finished.

To comply with each category the correct ticketing system must be followed. The ticket systems are as follows:

System A	System B	System C	System D
Tickets must show the name of the society or local authority, the ticket price, the name and address of the organiser and the date of the draw.	Tickets must show the name and address of the organiser, the ticket price, any restrictions as to who may or may not buy a ticket, and state the rights created by the ticket are non-transferable.	A ticket must be provided but there are no specific requirements for tickets. The price payable for each ticket must be the same and the rights created by the ticket are non-transferable.	A ticket must be provided but there are no specific requirements for tickets.

So which ticketing system to use? Please use the following table to see which ticketing system to use.

Type of Lottery	Who can play?	Limits on location of ticket sales	Can I claim my costs?	Rollover permitted?	Ticket System?
Small Society	16 & over	Check with licensing authority	Yes, for prizes and expenses. Up to 80% of sales	Yes	A
Large Society	16 & over	Not in a public street	Yes, for prizes and expenses. Up to 80% of sales	Yes	A
Customer	Your customers 16 & over	No sales or advertisements off premises	Yes, for prizes and reasonable lottery running costs	No	B
Work / Residents society	Employees or residents at a single premises	No sales or advertisements off premises	Yes for prizes and reasonable lottery costs.	No	C
Private Society	Only members or guests on the society premises	No sales or advertisements off premises	Yes for prizes and reasonable lottery costs.	No	D
Incidental	Anyone at an event	Sales and advertisements only at event	Yes for prizes and reasonable lottery costs.	No	D

FAQs

Which type of lottery is my raffle?

The first question to ask yourself is who you are going to sell raffle tickets to. If you are selling tickets only to a private group of people, your raffle may fall into the **Private Society** category, if you are selling tickets at an event you are organising, it may fall in the **Incidental** category. Or if you are selling tickets to the general public, even to friends of friends, this may fall into the **Small Society** category.

Do I need to register my raffle with the local authority?

If your raffle falls into the **Small Society** category, then yes you **must** register your raffle with the local authority. Visit [Brighton & Hove City Council website](#) for more information on how to do this.

For your raffle to be exempt from having to register, you may have to limit who you sell tickets to so that it falls into one of the exempt categories above.

Can I use raffle ticket books?

If you are running an **Incidental** raffle at an event, such as an exhibition, a school fete or evening gala, then yes you can use raffle ticket books.

If you are running any other raffle, then you **cannot** use raffle ticket books. Instead you must follow the ticketing guidelines of that category.

Can I offer deals on tickets?

If you are running an **Incidental** raffle at an event, such as an exhibition, a school fete or evening gala, then yes you can use raffle ticket books.

If you are running any other raffle, then you **cannot** offer deals on tickets. Instead, every ticket must cost the same.

Is my raffle legal?

If you are not sure what category your raffle falls into, whether you need to register your raffle with the local authority, or which ticketing system to follow, please call the fundraising team on 01273 273400.