

The Love Blaby Lottery launched on 27th January 2018 with the first weekly draw taking place on Saturday 24th February. The aim of the lottery is to enable good causes to generate income and therefore increase their capacity to deliver services and activities into the future. For every £1 ticket sold in support of their cause, they receive 50p. 10p from each ticket is added to the Blaby District Community Fund (BDCF) – a good cause in its own right - to be distributed through the Community Grants programme.

As at 13/2/2019, the Love Blaby Lottery has actually raised just over £28,000 and is on track to raise over £31,000 a year for good causes. Of this, the total raised for the BDCF is just over £12,000. These figures are after deducting 40% for both the prize fund (20%) and Gatherwell's admin fees including VAT (20%).

Good Causes

There were 30 good causes registered in time for the first draw. As at 13/2/2019 there are 48 registered good causes, including the BDCF, with one further cause pending. The lottery has attracted a good range of different organisations. For example: community transport charities, PTA groups, junior football clubs and other community sports clubs, disability and health groups, community managed libraries, good neighbour schemes and more. Several organisations serve the whole district and 14 different parishes have good causes specifically based within them.

Here are just a couple of examples of how the lottery is making a difference:

Community Action Partnership's Social Car Scheme provides vital transport for older and vulnerable residents and is raising nearly £500 a year. *Chief Officer, Suzy Bresnihan*, says: 'We have spent the funds on raising awareness of our service and recruiting volunteers in Blaby district meaning we can offer more transport help, especially to residents who live in our more rural communities'.

Huncote Community Library, run entirely by volunteers, is raising nearly £250 a year. *Secretary of the committee Margaret Leach* says: 'As well as improvements to our lighting and heating, we've spent the proceeds on children's books for our Summer Reading Challenge. The lottery has enabled us to encourage more children to participate in the challenge as we offered a free book to every participant. It is also great to see communities supporting each other which is part of the ethos of our community library'.

One of the current criteria for good causes joining the lottery is to maintain a level of 20 supporters. Some good causes have performed much better than others and it is clear that this is a challenging target for some organisations for a variety of reasons. During the year we have developed guidelines on managing this element of compliance to ensure a fair approach, including offering additional marketing support (see below), as well as building in a meeting prior to approval stage.

During the first year, 12 good causes that applied were not accepted. In most cases, they did not meet the eligibility criteria due to their geographical remit. In a couple of cases, county-wide organisations did not feel they could commit to ensuring money would be spent on Blaby district residents. 5 good causes have left the Love Blaby Lottery after registering. This was either because the groups disbanded, re-structured or they felt there wasn't enough support from their members for the initiative.

Supporters

As at 13/2/2019, there are 592 active players with a combined 994 tickets being played. Ticket numbers peaked in July 2018 at 1024 in play. We have seen a recent increase in ticket numbers following Christmas as a result of a successful campaign to target new good causes. Analysis during December 2018 showed that the majority of lottery players are aged 36+ years. At that time only 7% of players were aged between 16-35 years. As at 13/2/2019 911 prizes have been won, including £6300 in cash. Our biggest winner was in August 2018 for £2000.

Marketing Activities

Ongoing marketing of the Love Blaby Lottery has been a key activity for staff at the Council with the aim of increasing both the number of registered good causes, as well as supporters and ticket sales. Marketing activities have included: six press releases, features in Contact magazine and paid advertising in local publications, BDC social media posts as well as paid Facebook Advertising, poster campaigns, regular e-mailouts (Lottery supporters, mailchimp and the VCS database) and attendance or information stalls at a variety of events and locations. For example, Fosse Park shopping centre on two occasions, leisure centres, Annual Sports Awards and Local Sports Alliance Summit, BDC Achievement Awards and Carol Concert.

Despite the guidance and templates available on the lottery website, it has become clear that marketing is an area that some good causes have found difficult or where they lack expertise. In response, we have offered support to those organisations by: facilitating two marketing workshops, distributing a written guide to marketing ideas, lending out banners/bunting/promotional items to good causes for their events and offering 1-to-1 appointments.

The top five ways that supporters tell us they have heard about the lottery are: through friend, email, the good cause, Facebook and local magazines. Gatherwell have agreed to make some changes to the website that will enable us to better monitor how supporters hear about the lottery and therefore the impact our campaigns have going forward. This will include new bin lorry advertising that is expected to start in March 2019.

As a new initiative for the Council, there was no benchmark information to determine how successful the Love Blaby Lottery was likely to be. As such, raising £31,000 a year for nearly 50 local good causes has been a great start.

13th February 2019