

Love Blaby Lottery – Annual Report 2023/24

The Love Blaby Lottery launched on 27 January 2018 and celebrated its six-year anniversary draw on Saturday 24 February 2024. The aim of the lottery is to enable good causes to generate income and therefore increase their sustainability and capacity to deliver services and activities for local communities into the future. For every £1 ticket sold in support of their cause, they receive 50p. Under the current model 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 6 February 2024, the Love Blaby Lottery had raised over £172k for good causes since its launch and was projected to raise over £30k per year. Of this, the total projected income raised for the BDCF per year was approximately £9,400. These figures are after deducting 40% for both the prize fund (20%) and Gatherwell’s admin fees including VAT (20%).

	As at 13/2/2019	As at 6/2/2020	As at 18/02/2021	As at 10/2/2022	As at 15/2/2023	As at 6/2/2024
Total Revenue (60%)	£28,000	£56,484.00	£86,247.00	£115k	£144k	£172k
Annual projected income	£31,000	£29,671.20	£31,324.80	£29,265.60	£28,600	£30,669
BDCF projected income	£12,000	£11,211.20	£10,602.80	£9,999.60	£9,692.80	£9,427

Despite the financial challenges of the last 12 months, we have seen a positive uptake in participation in the Love Blaby Lottery. Annual projected income was higher than the previous two years and has continued to increase during March 2024.

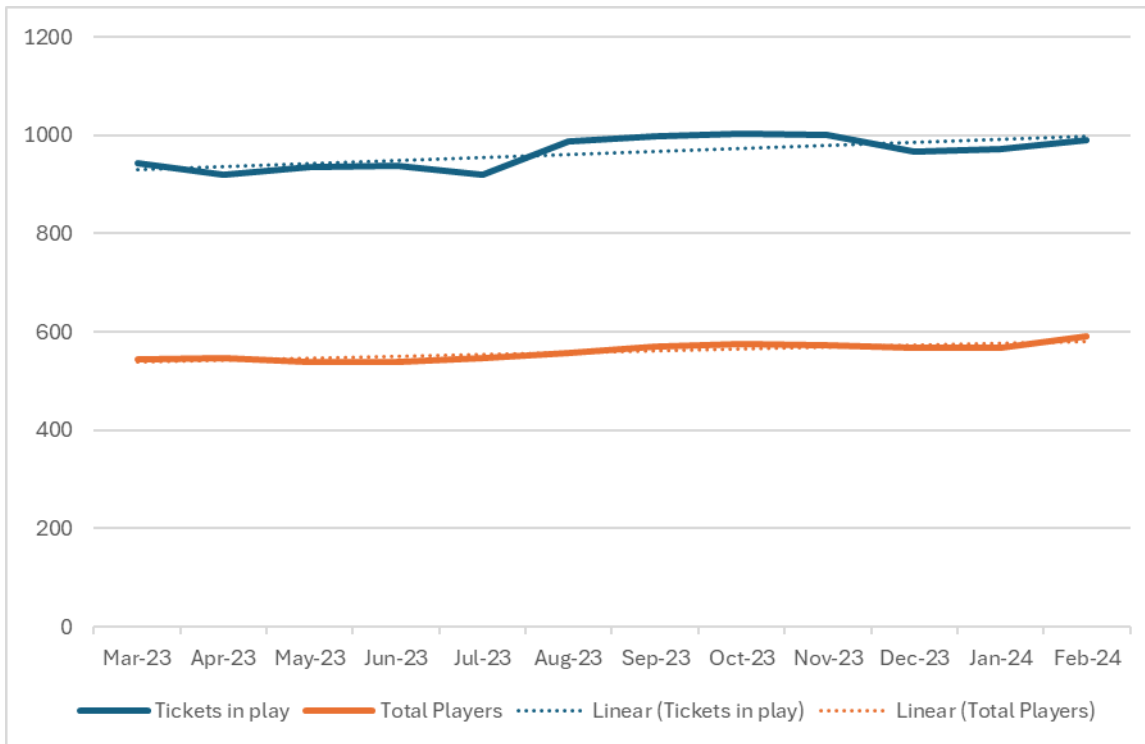
As expected, the income level for the BDCF has declined slightly year on year. We are keen to encourage supporters to get behind individual good causes and, whilst it is a clear option on the lottery website and contributes a valuable income to the community grants scheme, we do not actively market the BDCF. This approach may need to be reviewed in order to sustain the grants scheme into the future. A small proportion of income from the BDCF was awarded to winning community groups at our Community Awards in January 2024.

Good Causes

As at 6 February 2024, there were 54 registered good causes, including the BDCF, with seven new organisations joining in the 12 months prior. Four good causes have closed during this period. Closure has been instigated by the Council after a sustained period where the cause has not sold any or many tickets. The lottery continues to attract a good range of different organisations. For example: community transport charities, PTA groups, scout/guide groups, community sports clubs, disability and health groups, community managed libraries, good neighbour schemes and more. Several organisations serve the whole district, and 15 different parishes have good causes specifically based within them so there is good geographic coverage in terms of benefit.

Supporters

As of 10 February 2024, there were 555 active supporters with 928 tickets in play. The graph below shows tickets in play and active supporters at the end of each specified month. The trend lines show a positive, steady increase in both supporter and ticket numbers, particularly during Autumn 2023, January and February 2024.

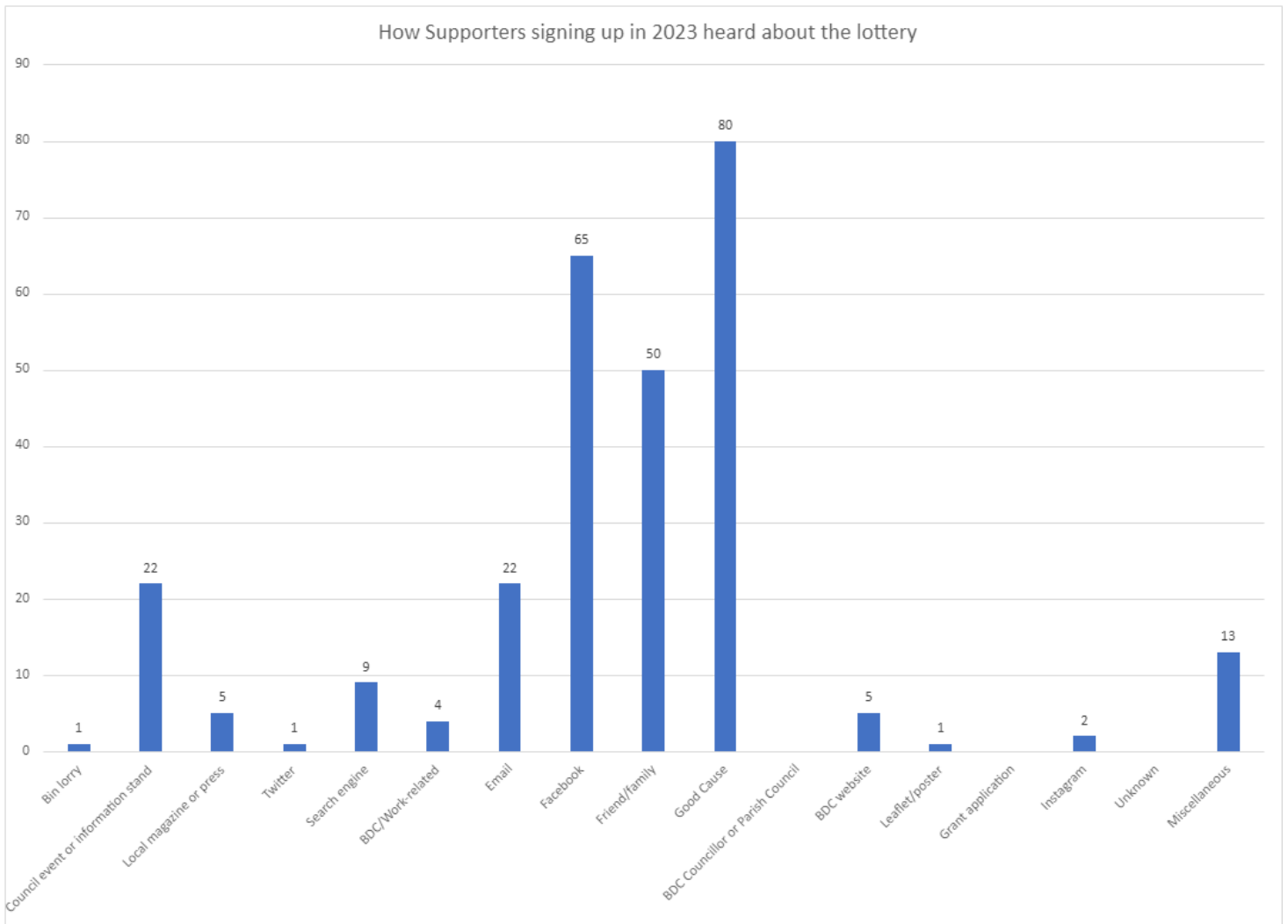


Marketing Activities

Information about the Love Blaby Lottery is permanently available on the Blaby District Council webpage and is featured on our grant application form for organisations to 'opt in' to find out more. Additional marketing activities during the past 12 months have included: supporter e-mailouts; staff intranet posts and a presentation to staff; features in corporate e-newsletters and VCS e-newsletters/mailouts; social media posts; refreshed posters/postcards sent out to community venues; and delivery of virtual information sessions.

We have also continued to offer support to registered organisations. This has been through regular email contact primarily as well as refresher sessions and presentations. We ran a campaign in the run up to the six-year anniversary draw, including a cash prize of £250 for a new good cause or a cause that increased supporter and ticket numbers during the promotion period, chosen at random. The campaign generated a good amount of interest with one new good cause and 44 new supporters joining during the promotion period.

Other than officer time (including support from the Communications Team), we have only made a small financial investment in new marketing materials as a result of the change in age from 16+ years to 18+ years in October 2023.



The chart above shows how the 280 new supporters signing up during 2023 heard about the lottery. Good Causes were the most effective form of reaching new supporters during this period. There is quite a lot of disparity among organisations in terms of their supporter numbers and it is worth noting that a few of the newer organisations to join have been particularly effective in recruiting players, more so than some causes that have been using the platform for longer. Social media – particularly Facebook – is the second most effective form of marketing. Word of mouth (friends/family) and email are clearly also effective marketing tools to recruit supporters. This analysis suggests that the best ways that the Council can attract supporters is through continued use of low cost or cost-free channels such as e-mailouts/newsletters, Facebook and attendance at events.

Conclusions and Future Recommendations

Love Blaby Lottery has performed surprisingly well during another financially challenging period for supporters and surpassed our expectations by achieving a growth in income, rather than simply maintaining performance levels. We have continued to see growth in revenue in the past two months. Good causes, particularly some newer ones to the platform, have helped to increase supporter numbers and ticket sales whilst some have essentially plateaued in terms of recruiting new supporters.

Marketing

- We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the various marketing channels and take advantage of new development/resources made available by Gatherwell, including ideas generated from the new best practice workshops now available

- We will continue to invest in centralised marketing and target our marketing using the demographic data and marketing analysis we have
- The funding and awards officer will continue to focus primarily on the recruitment of new good causes through regular contact with the local voluntary sector

Good Cause Management, including performance

- We will continue to regularly review the performance of good causes and apply the closure guidance in cases where there are persistently low supporter numbers/ticket sales and/or non-engagement. This will help to avoid inefficient use of officer time and overcrowding on the website with inactive good causes
- The Funding and Awards Officer will continue to meet with all new good causes to ensure they are given a sound start regarding marketing