

Local Group Hints and Tips; Organising a Raffle

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Raffles can be a great way to raise funds for your local group, they can be very simple to arrange, your costs will be next to nothing and the proceeds are limited only by the number of tickets sold.

What sort of raffle should you organise?

Small Raffles

A small raffle is the simplest raffle to organise and will often be part of a larger event. When hosting a small raffle no form of registration is required.

- Tickets must be sold on the day at the event and should not cost more than £1 per ticket. For small raffles these can be basic cloakroom tickets.
- You can spend up to £500 on prizes, although donated prizes with a higher value can be accepted.
- You can only take £100 from the proceeds to cover any expenses.
- The winners should be made public during the event.

In Northern Ireland there are a few further rules;

- You must ensure that the raffle is not the only entertainment or reason for the event.
- You must ensure that they keep records of the accounts and how the proceeds will be spent.
- Groups should also inform their local police of the raffle at least 7 days prior.

Private Raffles

These raffles are called private as tickets are only available to a private group of people. There are no restrictions on prizes or ticket prices as long as this is constant across all tickets sold.

- Tickets must be sold only by or on behalf of the local group.
- Tickets must state the price, the name and address of the promoter and identify the group of people who are eligible for the draw, for example 'Members of London DCS'.
- Tickets are non refundable or transferable and this must be stated on the ticket.
- The price of each ticket must be the same and paid prior to receiving the ticket.
- The raffle can only be advertised to group members and on the tickets.
- Private raffles must not be held on a vessel.

In Northern Ireland there is a further rule;

- Proceeds from the raffle cannot exceed £1000

Society Raffles

This is a larger raffle where tickets can be sold during the run up to the event and to the general public. When arranging a society raffle you will need to be registered with the local authority or district council where the raffle is taking place. They will have specific guidelines regarding the raffle that you will need to adhere to. This might include detailing certain information on the tickets and direction on how the raffle should be administered. There will also be a registration fee of around £30-£40 for the year.

- Tickets should not cost more than £2 and all tickets will be sold at the same price. "5 tickets for the price of 4" are not allowed.
- Tickets should only be sold to individuals over the aged of 16.
- Tickets must not be sold in public places, although they may be sold door to door.
- The value of the tickets sold must not exceed £20,000.
- No more than 55% of the proceeds can be used to provide prizes.

Each ticket must also specify the following; the date of the raffle, the name and registered charity number of your local group and the price.



In Northern Ireland when organising a society raffle;

- The raffle should be registered with the district council by submitting an application form and lottery scheme model.
- Tickets should not cost more than £1.
- Tickets should not be sold as the 'winning ticket' or with the suggestion that you can only win with a purchase of more than one ticket.
- After the draw a Return Form needs to be sent to the District Council along with a copy of a ticket. Records of the raffle should be kept by the group for 18 months.

Tips for snapping up raffle prizes

This can be one of the trickiest parts of hosting a raffle. Ideally you do not want to buy the prizes so you will be looking for donations. We have put together a few tips to help you gather the best prizes;

- The prizes don't have to be of a particularly high value, sometimes having lots of smaller prizes on offer is better than a select expensive few. This way people have a higher chance of winning!
- When asking local businesses try to meet with them face to face and speak with someone who has the authority to donate a prize.
- If you are unable to meet face to face send letters addressed to specific contacts as opposed to a general letter. You might also like to include a stamped addressed envelope.
- If you are planning a Christmas raffle, think ahead. Raffles are very popular at this time of year so you will have much more competition for prizes.
- Ask members of your group, they may have contacts or be able to source prizes from work.
- Think about who your raffle audience is and try to match prizes accordingly.
- You may want to offer donors the opportunity to advertise as an incentive to donate; either on the raffle tickets, on the day of the raffle, or through your newsletter after the event .
- If your event will be receiving press coverage let potential prize donors know.
- Finally, always remember to thank people who donate a prize. It might be worth waiting until after the raffle so you can let people know how much money was raised and what your plans are for the money.

On the day of the raffle

You should purchase raffle tickets in advance of the event;

- Remember you need to give one ticket to the customer and keep the copied ticket for the draw.
- Bring something to draw the winning tickets from (traditionally a top hat!)
- Create an attractive display of the raffle prizes for people to see, this will inspire them to buy tickets.

Announcing the winners

Once you have gathered the prizes and sold the tickets, all that is left is to announce the winners.

- Make sure you do this in front of an audience and be clear about the rules that apply.
- If you are giving away multiple prizes be sure to identify which prize you are drawing for (unless you are giving winners the choice) so not to disappoint.
- Decide whether you will ask winners to pick the next ticket or if someone impartial will do the draw.
- You should also decide if tickets will return to the draw after a win or if you will have a one win per ticket policy.

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