



# Guidance for Registered Society Bingo and Racing Events

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Version 1

## About this document

This document has been prepared by the Gambling Supervision Commission to assist those who are planning to offer bingo, horse racing nights and so forth to members of the public either as suppliers of these events or as hosting charities.

## Is gambling legal?

All gambling is illegal in the Isle of Man unless provided for specifically by the law.

Good causes can register with the Gambling Supervision Commission and are then permitted to conduct lotteries (such as raffles and tombola's).

These lotteries can be turned into games to enhance their entertainment value and to encourage participants to spend additional funds between events; these are known as "society lotteries played as games" and specific rules apply to the way they are conducted.

While it might be helpful for venues and event-suppliers to be familiar with this document, the onus is on the society lottery to understand what can be offered and to comply with the conditions.

In all cases registered societies must run their gambling events in line with the conditions laid out for the conduct of society lotteries within the Gambling, Betting and Lotteries Act 1988.

Additional conditions may apply to lotteries which are played as games.

## Do you need to read any further?

You need only continue reading this document if you are a society registered with the Commission and you are planning to offer the following events to the general public where there are prizes which are money or have a monetary value:

- A bingo event;
- A racing event where the outcomes are randomised and pre-recorded (such as "horse racing night" or "a night at the races");

Any other events that the society wishes to run and where the games aren't races that require pre-recorded outcomes or bingo are lawful if operated under the existing law for society lotteries (the Gambling, Betting and Lotteries Act 1988). Conditions for these games are not prescribed by specific regulations.

## How do I register a society lottery

The process of registering a society lottery can be done by visiting the Gambling Supervision Commission's headquarters and a brief guide and the paperwork required can be found online on the Commission's website

## What should I do before offering an event?

Before the event, you should ensure that your society lottery registration is up to date.

You should also study the tables in the next sections and determine if you are likely to deviate from any of the conditions.

If you think it is likely or that you require more latitude, you should contact the Commission using the details at the front of this guidance and explain what you would like to do. If the Commission agree, you will be able to conduct your event along modified lines.

## What rules govern racing nights?

There are a number of rules that are primarily designed to ensure that lotteries played as games remain an essentially social entertainment rather than an ongoing revenue-generating business. The rules are summarised in the following tables. In these tables, the following definitions are used:

- Event: the entertainment during which any number of games are offered to players.
- Race: the lottery which is offered as a game during which a single pre-recorded race is displayed and upon which bets are placed.
- Contender: a runner/rider/vehicle/driver, etc. which takes part in the actual race that is recorded.

## Rules regarding the event

### Frequency of event

There are no restrictions on how frequently the events may be held.

### Duration of the event\*

The event must start and end on the same day.

### The venue

The event must start, continue and finish in the same venue.

## Rules regarding money

### The promoter's consideration

The promoter must be a member of the registered society and must not receive any money for their efforts to organise the event.

### Entry fees

There are no restrictions on entry fees to the event.

### The price of a chance or ticket

The maximum price that can be charged for a chance or ticket in any given race is £5.

### The amount a society lottery can raise from a race event

A maximum of £7500 may be raised during a racing event through the sale of chances or tickets and a maximum of half of the money raised may be retained by the society for its purposes.

There is no restriction on the amount of money raised in other ways, such as the provision of refreshments, etc.

The society should cover its costs out of these sums.

The balance of the money raised from the sale of chances must be put into prizes for players.

### The winnings

All proceeds from the sale of chances, less the amount retained by the society must be distributed to winners.

The winnings must be divided along the principles of a totaliser / pari-mutuel. In effect this means that after the society has deducted its money, the balance of the money is distributed to the winners on the following lines:

Each winner's prize equals the total money available divided by the total number of chances sold on the winning outcome.

## Rules regarding participation

### Promoters and organisers

No one under the age of 16 may sell tickets or chances during the event.

### Players

Those providing the games may not take part as players.

No one under the age of 16 may purchase tickets or chances during the event.

Anybody may participate in the games subject to the age-restrictions on purchasing tickets notes above.

## Game Suppliers & Venue Suppliers

The prices charged to the registered society for the provision of gaming facilities or the venue are a matter between the supplier and the society.

## Rules regarding the races

### Determining the results

The outcomes must be determined using pre-recorded but strictly unidentified races or other sporting events. Players must not be able to identify the race or its contenders prior to placing their bets.

### Betting on contenders

Each ticket or chance sold must be allocated to a single contender in the race. Tickets cannot cover multiple contenders or no contenders.

### Identifying contenders

Contenders upon whom players can bet must be identified to them either by a number or a fictitious name.

No hints or information that could lead a person to identify the true winning contender in a given race must be available to players. This includes odds or form about the contenders whether correct or randomised.

### Closing bets

All bets must be placed/tickets and chances purchased, etc before the race begins. Once the race begins, all betting is over for that race.

### Identifying the winner

The winners in a given race are those players who purchased chances backing the contender that won the race. There can be no other factors which modify this.

This doesn't preclude the allocation of points for wins with the ultimate prize being awarded to the player or team with the greatest amount of points but it does preclude mechanisms like handicaps from declaring a race's winning contender to be different from the one in the recording.

## What rules govern bingo?

Just as with race nights there are a number of rules that are primarily designed to ensure that bingo remains an essentially social entertainment. The rules are summarised in the following tables. In these tables, the following definitions are used:

- Event: the entertainment during which any number of games of bingo are offered to players
- Game: the lottery which is offered as a game during which a single game of bingo is started and completed – typically this will be when a winner is identified as having collected their numbers from 1 to 90 and having declared their win with “house” or an equivalent.
- Sheet: the item upon which players mark off their numbers and which supports any number of games.

## Rules regarding the event

### Frequency of event\*

A society may hold bingo events as often as it wishes.

### Duration of the event\*

The event must start and finish on the same day.

### The venue\*

No game of bingo can link up with any other game of bingo irrespective of where that other game takes place.

## Rules regarding money

### The promoter's consideration

The promoter must be a member of the registered society and must not receive any money for their efforts to organise the event.

### Entry fees

There are no restrictions on entry fees to the event.

### The price of a chance\*

The maximum amount of money a player may pay for a ticket for one game of bingo is £5. They may purchase any number of tickets for a given game to increase their chances.

Sheets containing multiple games must not exceed the £5 per game rule.

## The amount a society lottery can raise from a bingo event

A maximum of £2000 may be raised during a bingo event through the sale of chances in games and a maximum of half of the money raised may be retained by the society for its purposes.

There is no restriction on the amount of money raised in other ways, such as the provision of refreshments, etc.

The society should cover its costs out of these sums.

The balance of the money raised from the sale of chances must be put into prizes for players.

## The winnings

The prizes available to winners throughout the event must not exceed a total of £2000 (or its equivalent in value).

No amount can be deducted by the society from sums staked or won.

## Rules regarding participation

### Promoters and organisers

No one under the age of 16 may sell tickets or chances during the event.

### Players\*

Those providing the games may not take part as players.

No one under the age of 16 may purchase tickets or chances during the event.

Anybody may participate in the games subject to the age-restrictions on purchasing tickets notes above.

### Game Suppliers & Venue Suppliers

The prices charged to the registered society for the provision of gaming facilities or the venue are a matter between the supplier and the society.