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Camelot Reports £181 Million Increase In National Lottery Half Year Ticket Sales To Over £2,559m

New ways to play and Team GB's 'Beijing Boost' drive National Lottery ticket sales – and returns to Good Causes

Camelot Group plc today announced that it has succeeded in growing National Lottery ticket sales by more than £181m in the Half Year to 27 September 2008. New games and ways to play drove sales in all major areas, including retail, interactive and subscriptions channels. This performance was further buoyed by Britain's Olympic Games and Paralympic Games successes – and a series of mega EuroMillions jackpots .

Total National Lottery ticket sales across the portfolio of National Lottery games increased by £181.3m (7.6%) to £2,559.7m. This performance was driven by a £119.1m (6.4%) increase in sales of draw-based games which rose to £1,974.5m – including a £9 million rise in Lotto sales – in addition to double-digit growth in non draw-based games, which rose by £62.2m (11.9%) to £585.2m.

At the Beijing Olympic Games and Paralympic Games alone, 145 out of 149 GB medallists were backed by The National Lottery. The association struck a chord with National Lottery players, with the new version of the Go for Gold game delivering the highest sales of any non draw-based game this Half Year.

The latest increase in ticket sales further underlines the upward trend of the last five years – driving direct returns to Good Causes¹ over the Half Year by £38.3m to £689.2m, and bringing the total raised for Good Causes to more than £22 billion. The National Lottery is playing a major part in funding the infrastructure for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games – and contributions to the Olympic Lottery Distribution Fund (OLDF) also remain ahead of schedule with over £350m of the £750m target from designated games already raised.

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National Lottery players benefited as well – in addition to creating around four million winners a week across the portfolio of National Lottery games, there were over 130 Lotto jackpot winners in this Half Year alone. The recent series of EuroMillions mega-jackpots saw a raft of UK winners, culminating with the £102m jackpot draw on 26 September, when four of the 15 lucky ticket-holders were based in the UK – more than any other country. These results take the total number of millionaires created since the start of The National Lottery in 1994 to more than 2,200.

The continued increase in sales underlines the success of Camelot's long-term strategy over the past five years, which has been to grow portfolio National Lottery sales by introducing new games and ways to play, in order to appeal to a broad range of players – and so increase returns to the Good Causes.

Bricks and mortar retail remains the largest single National Lottery distribution channel, with sales in this area growing by £104.3m from £2,182.8m to £2,287.1m. The groundbreaking National Lottery Fast Pay service, which enables players to store their game preferences on a reusable card and play National Lottery draw-based games at the checkout, continues to prove popular in store. Total Fast Pay sales rose by over 103%, from £152.6m to £310.2m in the Half Year to 27 September.

The most recent results have also seen Camelot cement its position as the operator of the most successful interactive lottery in the world, with Half Year sales across national-lottery.co.uk, Sky Active and the Play by Text mobile phone service recording further double-digit growth, to reach £230.1m – an increase of £66.8m. Following the recent 'Who's Next?' Lotto integrated advertising campaign, National-lottery.co.uk recently signed up its 4.4 millionth registered player, becoming one of the top five e-commerce sites in the UK by monthly visits².

Subscriptions also proved increasingly popular with players. The National Lottery subscription service has now signed up almost half a million players, driving sales from £32.2m to £42.5m – an increase of 32%.

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Camelot is working closely with its partners and stakeholders on its plans for the third lottery Licence – including a totally revamped website with new 3D interactive games, further expansion of its non draw-based games portfolio and a pioneering world lottery draw³.

Camelot is also progressing well with the introduction of the new state-of-the-art lottery terminal and communications equipment for the start of the third Licence in February 2009. New terminals have so far been installed in more than 15,000 outlets – over half the current retail estate – with the number of communications installations already over the 19,000 mark. To date, over 99% of those retailers surveyed reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with their new National Lottery terminal.

Around 70% of the adult population now plays the National Lottery on a regular basis – with players spending, on average, around £3 per week. This year Camelot has again been recognised for the highest standards of corporate responsibility by both the World Lottery Association and Business in the Community.

Dianne Thompson, Chief Executive of Camelot Group plc, said: “The performance of GB athletes in Beijing really brought home to millions of people here the difference that National Lottery funding can bring to sport and UK society as a whole, so I’m very pleased to be able to announce a further rise in National Lottery ticket sales and returns to the Good Causes. Thanks to the performance of our athletes we’ve seen a real ‘Beijing Boost’ in awareness of all lottery-funded projects – but the underlying driver of this growth has been our five-year strategy of expanding the range of National Lottery games to appeal to a diverse cross-section of players. The National Lottery has now created more than 2,200 millionaires and has raised over £22 billion for the Good Causes, funding more than 300,000 awards – the equivalent of over 103 grant awards for each postcode district in the UK.

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“We have made a good start to the 2008/2009 Financial Year across the portfolio of games, building on the achievements of the last five years which have seen an 8.5% rise in National Lottery sales. We are also progressing well with preparations for the third lottery Licence, successfully introducing new technology which will enable our retailers to serve our players even more effectively to ensure continued long-term growth in National Lottery sales and returns to the Good Causes.”

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1 Direct returns to Good Causes exclude investment returns on National Lottery balances – these are reported in May, following end of the Financial Year.

2 Source: Comscore data

3 Subject to the usual approval process with The National Lottery Commission (NLC)

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Notes to Editors:

- Camelot Group plc is the licensed operator of The National Lottery® and is committed to raising money for the Good Causes designated by Parliament. Camelot is not responsible for distributing or awarding these funds.
- To date, over £22 billion has been raised for the Good Causes by The National Lottery, and more than 300,000 individual awards have been made across the UK – the biggest programme of civic and social regeneration since the 19th Century. The National Lottery has given away over £33 billion in prizes and created more than 2,200 millionaires or multi-millionaires since launch in 1994.
- Camelot runs one of the most cost-efficient lotteries in the world, with around 5% of total revenue taken in operating costs. At 40% of total sales (28% to the Good Causes and 12% in lottery duty to the Government), Camelot returns a higher proportion of lottery revenue back to society than any other lottery operator in the world. National Lottery retailers receive 5% of total revenue in commission, and 50% of sales is paid out to players in prizes.
- Camelot is committed to the highest standards in player protection and social responsibility in both the retail and interactive environments. The National Lottery website, Sky Active and Play By Text services have been accredited by GamCare, the UK's national centre for information, advice and practical help regarding the social impact of gambling – while Camelot's approach to game design, test purchasing and retailer vigilance campaigns ensures player protection at retail. Camelot is ranked first in the leisure sector in Business in the Community's 2007 Social Responsibility Index.
- For further information on Camelot, The National Lottery and its games, please visit the following websites: www.camelotgroup.co.uk and www.national-lottery.co.uk.
- Players of all National Lottery games must be aged 16 or over.
- The crossed fingers logo is the registered trademark of the National Lottery Commission.

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