



ticketing mailbox <ticketing@culture.gov.uk>

Secondary Ticketing Review - British Racing's response

1 message

24 November 2015 at 16:00

To: "ticketing@culture.gov.uk" <ticketing@culture.gov.uk>

With apologies for the late submission, please find attached British Racing's submission to the Online Secondary Ticketing Review Call for Evidence.

Please do contact me if there is any further information or evidence that you would like British Racing to provide for the purposes of this Review.

Kind regards,

British Horseracing Authority

75 High Holborn, London WC1V 6LS

www.britishhorseracing.com

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British Racing response to Secondary Ticketing Review - Nov 2015.pdf

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Review of Consumer Protection Measures relating to Online Secondary Ticketing Platforms – Call for Evidence: Response on behalf of the British Horseracing Authority and The Racecourse Association.

1. British Racing

British Racing is the second largest sport in Britain, in terms of revenue and attendances, playing an important role in Britain's sporting landscape. Our industry has an annual economic impact of £3.45 billion, and provides direct, indirect and associated Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employment to over 85,000 people, predominantly in rural areas. We generate over £300 million annually in tax contributions, and are a significant trade lever for UK plc, attracting investment and fans of the sport from around the world. On a visit to Newmarket – known as Racing's Headquarters – in February, the Prime Minister referred to British Racing as a "massive success story" which he would like to see go from "strength to strength."

Racing takes place across Britain's 59 racecourses, 363 days of the year, attracting six million spectators annually, with record attendance projected for 2015. Racing's flagship occasions – Royal Ascot, the Cheltenham Festival, the Grand National and the Derby – are all within the top ten highest attended annually-held sporting events in the country. In 2015, for example, 250,000 people attended the four days of the Cheltenham Festival, and over 290,000 to the five day Royal Ascot meeting.

2. Racing – protecting our major events

Many of our racecourses, particularly those that host our more high profile racedays, report experiences of secondary ticket selling both outside the racecourse by ticket touts and on the online market. Unlike most sporting venues and events, racecourses are not generally seated venues. There are a few notable exceptions however at high profile racedays, such as certain stands at Aintree racecourse for the Grand National. Racecourses sell a number of different categories of tickets, permitting admission to different areas of the racecourse. While ticket touting outside racecourses is an issue for a number of our racecourses, particularly the larger venues, tickets to our major racing events such as the Cheltenham Festival and the Grand National, are increasingly appearing on the online ticketing marketplace.

Although we appreciate that the ability to re-sell tickets under certain circumstances is beneficial to the consumer, British Racing does have concerns around the manner in which tickets to our events are being listed and sold via online secondary ticketing websites. The most concerning issue is the inflated prices that these tickets are being sold for - sometimes as much as £150 over the face value of the ticket - with no clear representation to the buyer of the original value of the ticket. Attached in Appendix A is an example of tickets to the Grand National with a face value of £130 being sold at £219.50 before booking fees, a 68% markup, with no clear representation of the original price of the ticket. This is also a common occurrence for the many music concerts that are hosted on our racecourses that are inevitably in high demand. Tickets that are bought in bulk on the primary market and then appear on secondary selling online sites at a considerably higher price, which do not present the required information under the Consumer Rights Act, are significantly detracting from the value that British Racing works hard to provide its spectators.

It is widely known that there are close links between online sites and those who tout outside the ground and we are also concerned at the image this brings to events and also the inconvenience and sometimes harassment that can occur when entrances to courses are impeded by touting activity. This is an issue which, we believe, needs to be addressed by the Government.

Britain is a global leader in the hosting of major sporting events, and in the recent DCMS Strategy for Sport consultation, the Government expressed their intentions for Britain to continue to build on the platform that hosting the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games provided through the funding of initiatives such as UK Sport's Gold Event Series. It is right that when Britain hosts such major events as the Olympic and Paralympics Games in 2012, the consumer, whether they are British fans or tourists travelling to the event, are protected from the unauthorised re-sale of tickets.

British Racing hosts major sporting events every year which attract spectators from across Britain and abroad and it is only right and fair that these, along with all sporting events in Britain, are protected by the same legislation.

3. Consumer Rights Act

British Racing was involved in the development of policy measures on the resale of tickets contained in the Consumer Rights Bill, participating in meetings with officials and briefings to Parliamentarians during its passage in Parliament.

We therefore welcome its inclusion in the legislation but wish to record two main concerns about Section 90 of the Act to this review.

- a) The reporting requirements set out in the Act should have also included the ticket reference/identification number, the name of the seller, and any specific terms and conditions that relate to the resale of that ticket.

The reason for this is that many of the tickets sold at racecourses do not have a block, row or seat number provided. In these circumstances it then becomes impossible for the consumer to take any action to check the validity of the ticket with the event organiser, which is what the legislation provides for.

We also believe it is important that people are told the terms and condition of ticket's resale. Purchasers risk not being admitted to the course if the terms and conditions have been broken. In this circumstance it means that they are being sold a ticket which doesn't guarantee entry. This of course is tantamount to being sold something that doesn't exist – similar to being sold a fake – and we believe that fans deserve greater protection.

- b) The Act is not being enforced. Recent evidence published in 'Which' shows that there is widespread flouting of the requirements to list key ticketing details. We also attach as Appendix A an example of a ticket being listed for a reserved seat at the Grand National, that does not contain the relevant information.

This is clearly unacceptable. The legislation must be obeyed and enforced and secondary ticketing sites must publish the details required by them. We call upon this review to make it an urgent priority to seek the enforcement of these provisions – not least as, until that is done, we cannot assess the effectiveness of the new regulations.

4. British Racing supports a fair and healthy secondary market

British Racing is committed to ensuring that consumers who wish to visit our racecourses are provided with the best possible customer experience. We therefore support mechanisms that enable the transfer and/or re-sale of tickets when the original ticket holder is no longer able to attend the event.

The Racecourse Association provides guidance to racecourses on the Terms and Conditions that are applied to ticket sales, and these are kept under constant review. The current advice very specifically prohibits a ticket being transferred, sold or offered for sale in the course of any business whatsoever without the consent of the racecourse.

It is recommended that any ticket that has been transferred, sold or offered for sale under conditions prohibited by the terms and conditions of the ticket be made void.

We are confident that these are fair terms and conditions that meet the standards set by regulatory bodies. We also know they meet with the approval of the vast majority of racing fans and those involved in our sport. We do not see how it is in the interest of our sport to allow people to deliberately buy tickets with the sole aim of selling them on at a profit.

We would be happy to provide any further information. If required please contact ' ' via ''


APPENDIX A


Crabbies Grand National 2016:

<https://www.seatwave.com/checkout?tsqld=15036295&qty=8>

seatwave:

Welcome to Seatwave. Log in | Sign up Help

 **TICKET GUARANTEE**
You're protected with TicketIntegrity™

 **FANS RECOMMEND US**
★★★★★ Trustpilot rating

 **SECURE DELIVERY**
Royal Mail, UPS & e-tickets

 **Secure Checkout**

Have an account?

Log in

Your Tickets



The Grand National - Crabbies Grand National Day

Aintree Racecourse, Liverpool, UK
Saturday 09 April 2016, 10:00


Queen Mother Seats

Select number of tickets

2

2 tickets x £219.50 each

£439.00

Booking Fee (inc VAT) 

£79.98

Do you have a discount code? Click here

Important information

*Ticket prices are set by the sellers and may be higher than face value

Face value printed on ticket excluding fees: £0.00


Total For Your Tickets

£518.98

Your Details

As referenced in section 3, this listing does not include key ticketing details such as block, row and seat number.

As referenced in section 2, the face value of the ticket (£130) is not included anywhere on the listing.

 **Events are more fun with friends**

Buy 3+ tickets and save on booking fees

 **ticket integrity™**

All tickets are covered by our ticketintegrity™ guarantee.

You'll get the tickets you ordered, in time for the event.

Otherwise we'll find replacements or refund you.

Fast & secure delivery

We'll get your tickets to you in time for your event

