



Showcase
& Awards
2024

Chelmsford City Racecourse

The Raceday Award
Good Friday Family Fun Day

Proudly partnered by



Racing
Together

RACING POST



Objectives

Our ambition is to create unforgettable experiences that surprise, delight, and excite people throughout Essex.

As the first of three Good Friday meetings, this fixture was the first in a three-year plan to **make our Good Friday raceday the biggest in our calendar**. To grow attendance and revenue for the first of these meetings, we wanted to build an event that appealed to everyone, creating a race-day experience that people of all ages and demographics would want to come to.

We conducted market research, identifying that is Good Friday a traditional date deeply connected with racing, and that popular public holiday events reflect a preference for experiences that families and groups of all sizes and ages could enjoy together. Which affirmed our idea of a family funday.

Strategically, we aimed to deliver a well-attended, successful event early in the year. This was designed to introduce a new audience to the racecourse and act as a catalyst for engaging and re-engaging visitors in events throughout 2024. In 2023, visitors to our fixtures attended on average 1.2 times throughout the year. Our goal became to use this event find new customers, increase attendances and encourage more repeat visits.

In planning this event we concentrated on removing any barriers to attendance, particularly for families and new customers. We aimed to provide an all-inclusive experience that not only delighted customers with a variety of activities but also offered great value for money. We decided therefore, that after purchasing a ticket (under 18s were free), everything on offer, except for food and drink, would be free to enjoy. By providing inclusive entertainment and creating an enjoyable and memorable experience, we aimed to introduce a broader audience to racing and demonstrate all that Chelmsford City has to offer. Turning first-time visitors into regular attendees.

Objectives

Grow attendance through:

1. Re-engagement of lapsed customers
2. Attract new customers

KPI's

3,700 adult attendees

5,200 total attendees
(including child and owners & trainers)

50% new customers

£115,000 ticket revenue

20% aim for return visits
in 2024

Deliver a positive and
memorable brand
experience

Delivery



Our objective was to create an event everyone wanted to attend, filling our venue with activities and entertainment that would appeal to different demographics and interests.

For younger visitors, we launched a new **Kids Zone**. Here Children were able to express their creativity through **arts and crafts activities and egg colouring**. A **children's entertainer** was on-site, leading children in games and songs, as was a **face-painting**, which parents were delighted to learn was free. Outside, young racegoers could take part in our **Easter Bunny trail**, searching for nine bright bunnies and taking them on a tour of the racecourse. There was also a **petting zoo** and display featuring 35 animals, including birds of prey, reptiles and alpacas. Additionally, the day's first race was a hugely popular **Shetland Pony race**.

There was also lots of entertainment on offer for adults and groups of friends. Our summer marquee was transformed into an **Arcade and Game zone**, including Scalextric, a life-size rodeo bull challenge, and many more interactive and fun games. Also in the summer marquee was our **resident DJ**, playing live music during the afternoon. After the racing finished, this became the venue for our **Rock and Roll Bingo** game, with hundreds of players staying to take part. Good Friday also saw the launch of **The Galloping Horse**. This new on-site pub added to the relaxed, family-friendly atmosphere and featured local suppliers like Essex Spirit Co., New Hall Wine and Redchurch Brewery.

Our focus on creating an enjoyable experience was also demonstrated by adding a **new staffed information** point that provided a consistent touch point for guests all day. As visitors left at the end, staff handed out chocolate eggs to send everyone home happy.

Our objective included appealing to Jockeys, Owners, and Trainers. To encourage this, we made Good Friday our most valuable card ever. **Raising the prize money from £125,000 in 2022 to £250,000** underscored the racecourse's long-term commitment to offering lucrative opportunities and attracting top-tier competitors.

Our marketing began in October with a multichannel teaser campaign, building anticipation before launching the new easter fixture a week later. Over the following weeks, we prioritised promotion in local groups, local media and days out listing websites like Visit Essex, as well as running competitions that encouraged sharing to maximise opportunities to see in our target audience. As tickets sold, we built scarcity in our communications, creating urgency in our customer's purchasing behaviours.

Results

This raceday sold out 29 days early at a capacity of 6,350. The decision to cap attendance was made to ensure a positive on-site experience in the event of bad weather. The on-site restaurants were fully booked, reflecting the high demand for different experiences, including hospitality.

In our first year, we exceeded all our KPIs, including achieving 67% of our bookings from new customers. Moreover, we've already seen 70% of Good Friday customers return for a second visit. The launch of the Galloping Horse Pub was financially successful, generating a gross revenue of £11,745.20.

Our most valuable card ever attracted a record-breaking 220 entries across seven races, including two Class 6, three Class 5, one Class 4, and one Class 2 race. This also contributed to a record number of owners & trainers in attendance (301). The presence of three Irish horses running and our first Irish winner at Chelmsford since 2021 added to the event's international appeal and we had the honor of crowning Billy Loughnane, All Weather Champion Apprentice.

The viral success of the collaboration with Racing TV for the Shetland Pony Race reel played a key role in raising the racecourse's profile, which has over 11 million views and is growing. Influencer marketing and viral content were instrumental in boosting brand awareness.

Highlights and reviews

[Viral Shetland Pony race passed 10 million views on Instagram](#)

[Danni.ever.after Visit to Chelmsford City Racecourse](#)

[We Visited: Family Fun Day at Chelmsford City Racecourse | Reviews \(essexmums.com\)](#)

[Essex Mums | We have had an amazing start to the Easter holidays thanks to @chelmsfordcityracecourse](#)

[Christmas Silk Design Competition Winner](#)

Building on the success of this event, the goal for the following year is to increase attendance to 10,000, reflecting the ongoing efforts to grow the event's popularity and impact.

Headline Results

Sold out 1 month in advance:

1,314 bookings

4,109 adult attendees

6,350 total attendees
(including child and owners & trainers)

67% new customers

£118,488 ticket revenue

Betting turnover **50% higher**
than average

70% of Good Friday bookings
have since returned for
another 2024 fixture

1.2M search impressions

950K paid meta impressions

52,302 email opens

26,839 landing page views

Viral Shetland Pony Reel

11.2M views

227K likes

2,362 comments

- THE BRITISH STALLION STUDS EBF MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS 2) (GBB RACE) £40,000
- THE IT'S NEVER ORDINARY AT bet365 HANDICAP STAKES (CLASS 6) £33,150
- THE bet365 BET BOOST HANDICAP STAKES (CLASS 5) £35,650
- THE bet365 BEST ODDS GUARANTEED HANDICAP STAKES (CLASS 5) £35,650
- THE DOWNLOAD THE bet365 APP HANDICAP STAKES (CLASS 6) £33,150
- THE bet365 6 HORSES CHALLENGE HANDICAP STAKES (CLASS 4) £40,650
- THE WATCH LIVE RACING AT bet365 HANDICAP STAKES (CLASS 5) £35,650



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We have had an amazing start to the Easter holidays thanks to @chelmsfordcityracecourse family fun day- it has been a busy day with thumbs up from the 4 year old.

Once inside everything (other than food) was included which is amazing especially as kids were free entry but it meant it was busy for the activities-we got to have a go at everything we wanted to and the wait times were bearable.

We loved watching the Shetland pony race and the main races, P particularly liked watching the horses cool down after the races.

COMINGSOON
KEEP YOUR EGGS PEELED



GOODFRIDAY
FRIDAY 29 MARCH 24

UNDER 8s
EASTER ARTS
& CRAFTS
AREA

GOODFRIDAY
FRIDAY 29 MARCH 24

HOSTED BY
DJ MARKY T

Rock and Roll
Bingo

GOODFRIDAY
FRIDAY 29 MARCH 24

EASTERBUNNYTRAIL

THE EASTER BUNNIES HAVE ESCAPED!
CAN YOU HELP TO FIND THEM?

Our nine bunnies have hoped it and hidden themselves around the racecourse. They like to eat the plants and grass, so they'll all be outside, but we need your help to find them. As you explore the racecourse, tick them off when you see them, and remember to take a photo with your favourite.

Once you've found them all, return this sheet to the Kids Zone in the Parade Ring Marquee and show the picture of your favourite to collect your prize.

GOOD LUCK!



NAME: _____
CONTACT NUMBER: _____
Contact details may be used to contact winners

GOODFRIDAY FAMILY FUNDAY



Shetland Pony content



11.2M