

# What is it like to win the lottery?

Written by David Lilley



Throughout a typical year, winning the lottery is a dream that many of us dedicate a fair few moments contemplating. I think it's fair to say that, when plotting how we would use the money, many of us ponder five key questions:

1. What would it be like to be financially free?
2. How would we use the money?
3. Which members of our family and which friends would we seek to help and to what extent?
4. What difference would the money make to our lives?

For Karen Child and her husband Wayne, winning the lottery is no longer a dream, and these are no longer questions that tease them!

In February 2007 Karen won a mind

blowing £8.4 million on the UK National Lottery.

On February 11th 2009, can you believe that Karen and Wayne, two football fanatics, sacrificed watching England versus Spain for a local Chinese meal with little old me?!

I wanted to hear their story so that we could all understand what it really feels like to win the lottery. Karen and Wayne were beautifully open and honest in their summary of living for two years as multi-millionaires. This is their story in my words.

**“I can vividly remember seeing Karen sharing drink with her friends at our poshy of local pubs”**

Before her lottery win, I can vividly re-

member seeing Karen sharing drinks with her friends at our poshy of local pubs. I can also remember Karen checking out my groceries at the local Tesco store, the role she occupied before her useful win!

**“A £1 lucky dip and a 1 in 14 million chance of winning”**

Incidentally, it was at the same Tesco store that Karen bought her winning lottery ticket - a £1 Lucky Dip from check-out number 10. Who says lucky dips don't win?! According to my calculations, Karen's odds of winning were an incredible 14 million to 1. Someone has to be that one person from 14 million, and on this occasion the spotlight of good fortune shone down on Karen.

Because of my work and international travel, being in the presence of seriously

wealthy people is something I have experienced on a number of occasions over the years. These occasions have rarely seen the pleasant and light hearted banter we experienced at our local Chinese Restaurant.

Egos, suspicion, self righteousness and delusions of grandeur are some of the words I would use to describe the time I have spent with other seriously wealthy people.

### **“They were friendly & humble”**

That was not my experience on this occasion. Within a minute of entering the restaurant, I was immediately put at ease. Karen and Wayne were simply lovely in their attitude towards me. They were friendly, humble and most importantly for me, they were interested in my life. They asked questions about my kids, my job and my family. They listened to what I had to say. For me, much more important than all of that, is eye contact. Both Wayne and Karen looked me squarely in the eye when they talked to me. I have always said you can gauge peoples' personalities through their eyes.

The venue I selected for the interview was not the most salubrious of joints, but the salt and pepper mushrooms are to die for!

Karen and I started with a few shorts with mixers. We then shared two bottles of £10 Rose wine. Wayne polished off four pints of lager and an enjoyable evening had ended in double quick time.

### **“The interview got lost in a sea of good humoured banter”**

As for my intended interview... well it did happen (in a fashion!) but it got lost in a sea of good humoured banter and a few too many drinks!

Here is what I recall of the discussion.

The night that changed Karen and Wayne's world was an unforgettable Saturday night in February 2007.

On many other Saturday evenings before this 'life changing' date, Karen had often forgotten to check her lottery ticket. On this occasion, as 10pm approached, Karen flicked on the teletext to check her numbers.

Three numbers..."Oh, I have won a tenner". A few seconds later the reality had dawned upon Karen. She had all six numbers!

Disbelief quickly set in and the numbers were hastily checked a dozen times, before the inevitable phone call took place.

Karen quoted her numbers to the Camelot Help Line and was advised to write her name on the ticket. As this was a rollover week, Karen was keen to know how many other winners there were! Who can blame her for that?!

The Camelot lady did not know the answer. "It was too early", she said but she promised to ring back.

### **“Are you sitting down Karen?”**

An hour later the telephone rang. "Are you sitting down Karen?" a friendly female voice on the line pronounced. "There is only one winner tonight. If the numbers you have given me are genuinely on your ticket, you have just won £8.4 million pounds"

Karen sank to her knees in joy at hearing the news.

That night, Karen and Wayne decided to drive the winning lottery ticket over to Wayne's brothers for safekeeping.

"You did what?!" I heard myself saying without meaning to extend an insult. "You let the ticket out of your site?"

That night Karen and Wayne slept at their friendly neighbours. The next day, a Camelot representative turned up and the dream was certified as real.

Karen Child had won £8.4 million on the lottery and was presented with her cheque at the home of her favourite football team, Manchester United's Old Trafford.

### **“Wayne asked Karen to marry him before her lottery win”**

At the time of the win, Karen and Wayne were not married. Many idiot commentators have since expressed their views on this. However the truth is that Wayne is no fortune teller. He had actually snapped Karen off the available list in the January - a full month before her win. His romantic proposal occurred at the top of the Eiffel Tower in France.

At this time Wayne worked for B&Q.



**The Tesco Supermarket where Karen worked and purchased her winning lottery ticket.**

He and Karen shared a modest three bedroom council house in Clowne, Derbyshire.

Home now is a 5 bedroomed house near Worksop. It boasts an acre of land and requires a Gardener and a sit on lawn mower. This revelation was greeted with an eager request from me "Can I come and cut your grass?"

I asked Karen and Wayne all of the questions you would expect me to ask. Having read so many stories about other lottery winners being unhappy, I was keen to know if the impact of the money had been positive or negative for the couple.

"We have found the experience a very enjoyable one" said Karen without the slightest hesitation. "Most people have been really happy for us. It has made us more cautious about new people who come into our lives. We sometimes wonder if they want our friendship for genuine reasons or because they have some interest in our money. But apart from that we are really happy and we have most of the same friends that we had before our win".

I never found it easy to ask people personal questions, and I made this point clear at the beginning of the interview. But as a normal human being, you cannot help but wonder what type of things a lottery winner would buy and so I asked.

Shortly after the win Karen left her council house for a new 4 bedroomed detached property in the same village. Her choice of car is a BMW in Man United colours, whilst Wayne drives a sensible and spacious Citroen Picasso.

Karen lived in her first house for just over a year before buying her current home

In terms of family, Karen has helped Wayne's parents her brother and some friends.

Chesterfield Football Club has also been the beneficiary of Karen's generosity through sponsorship. The Chesterfield Kop, where the home supporters stand, is now called The Karen Child Kop, and Karen attends most of the home games.



### **"She has a passion for people in the village"**

Whilst Karen does not live in the village of Clowne any longer, she still regards the place as her home. She has a passion for the people in the village, and wants to give something back to the local community. As someone who has always enjoyed a social drink in the pub, the natural choice of how to give something back to the local community is through her own bar. And so, The Village Bar concept was born.

The building is a former primary school, where incidentally I was educated from the age of 11, and has recently been converted into a quality bar. The establishment is due to open late 2009.

#### **My conclusions**

I think many people in this world see money as being far too important in the grand scheme of things. Money has certainly been too big an obsession for me, for all but the last five years. I now see health and happiness as the biggest prizes to win and sustain in this life. Karen and Wayne actually share this view too and I am sure this will keep them grounded. The reality is this! They put their £1 stake on, like millions of other people, not expecting for a second to win.

And then fate, or some higher power for those of you who believe in that, picked them out.

So what can they do now? What choices do they have? They can simply do their best to enjoy the money and live happy lives.

Winning the amount of money that Karen scooped may seem like a fairytale for millions of people. The reality, as hard as it may seem to grasp, is that managing such amounts of money is not easy.

In Karen and Wayne, I think lady luck has found two people who will stay true to their personalities, who will use the money wisely and for the greater good.

One of the most poignant moments in our interview was when Karen said "I believe in fate and I think I won this money for a reason – to do some good with it and that is what I intend to do".

I enjoyed my dinner with Karen and Wayne immensely and I wish them both well. No interview with a lottery winner would be complete without the inevitable question... "Can you give me six numbers for the draw on Saturday?"

Karen answered "Tell your members to buy a Lucky Dip."

Good luck!