



## Refund & Returns (Retail) Policy

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### 1. Introduction

This policy sets out Essex Wildlife Sales’s approach to refunds, returns, and exchanges for retail items sold through its Nature Discovery Centres (NDCs) and online shop. The policy ensures customer transactions are handled fairly, consistently, and in compliance with UK consumer legislation.

It provides clear guidance for staff and volunteers on how to manage refund and return requests and helps safeguard the organisation from financial, reputational, and legal risk.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All retail items sold at Essex Wildlife Trust Nature Discovery Centres
- All online retail purchases made through the Essex Wildlife Trust website
- All staff and volunteers involved in retail sales, refunds, and customer service

- All refund, return, and exchange transactions relating to retail purchases

This policy does not cover non-retail income such as donations, memberships, event bookings, food and beverage or educational activities unless explicitly stated elsewhere.

### 3. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure refunds and returns are handled fairly, transparently, and consistently
- Provide clear guidance to staff and volunteers on acceptable refund practices
- Ensure compliance with UK consumer law, including statutory refund rights
- Reduce the risk of incorrect refunds, inconsistent decision-making, or customer disputes
- Protect the organisation from financial loss and reputational harm

### 4. Policy Statement

Essex Wildlife Trust will offer refunds, returns, or exchanges for retail purchases in accordance with UK consumer legislation and the conditions set out in this policy. Refunds will only be issued where eligibility criteria are met and will be processed using the original method of payment wherever possible. Statutory consumer rights will always be upheld.

### 5. Procedure

#### 5.1 Retail Purchases (In-Store)

Customers may request a refund or exchange within 28 days of purchase, provided that:

- The item is unused and in its original packaging
  - The original receipt or valid proof of purchase is provided
- or
- The item is faulty, damaged, not as described

Where eligible, refunds must be issued using the original payment method.

#### Exceptions

Refunds or exchanges must not be offered for:

Perishable goods (e.g. food items, cosmetics)  
Personal items such as earrings  
Items bought at Sale price, unless faulty

#### 5.2 Online Purchases

In accordance with the Consumer Contracts Regulations 2013 and the Consumer Rights Act 2015, customers are entitled to:

Right to Cancel – Consumers may cancel an online order within 14 calendar days of receipt without giving a reason, except for:

- Perishable goods
- Bespoke or personalised items
- Sealed goods which are not suitable for return due to health protection or hygiene reasons, once unsealed
- Faulty or Misdescribed Goods. Customers have the right to a full refund, repair, or replacement if goods are faulty, not as described, or unfit for purpose.

## Refund Process

- Refunds will be processed within 14 days of receiving returned goods or proof of return.
- Refunds will be made to the original payment method.
- Return postage costs are met by the customer, unless the item is faulty

### 5.3 How to Process a Return

For in-store purchases:

- Items must be returned to any EWT Nature Discovery Centre
- Staff must verify the condition of the item and proof of purchase

For online purchases or additional support:

- Customers should be directed to [onlineshop@essexwt.org.uk](mailto:onlineshop@essexwt.org.uk)

Any complex or disputed cases should be escalated to a manager.

## 6. Definitions

Retail Item - Any physical product sold in an Essex Wildlife Trust NDC or online shop

Proof of Purchase - A receipt, digital receipt, or other valid transaction record

Statutory Rights - Consumer rights provided under the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and related legislation

Resalable Condition - An item that is unused, undamaged, and suitable for resale

## 7. Appendices

### 7.1 Supporting Documents

Refund & Returns Policy – Retail (Customer Facing) [Refund Policy RETAIL v2 \(Customer Facing\).docx](#)

Consumer Rights Act 2015 Guidance [Consumer Rights Act 2015 - GOV.UK](#)

Distance and Online Selling [Online and distance selling : Distance selling - GOV.UK](#)