

Refunds Policy



A group of four independent statutory Land Drainage, water levels and Flood Risk Management Authorities working collectively under a partnership agreement in accordance with section 11(5) of the Land Drainage Act (1991).

Four Independent Boards:

- *Witham First District Internal Drainage Boards*
- *Witham Third District Internal Drainage Boards*
- *Upper Witham Internal Drainage Boards*
- *North East Lindsey Internal Drainage Boards*

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Date of Approval by Joint Services Committee (JSC) on behalf of North East Lindsey (NEL), Upper Witham (UW), Witham First District (W1) and Witham Third District (W3) IDBs: 09th December 2024

Policy Owner: Director of Finance and Governance (RFO)

Author supporting review: Risk Manager

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1.0 - Introduction

The purpose of this policy on payment refunds is to provide clarity for staff processing payments and refunds and to provide prior guidance to be available on the 4 Boards' website as to how payments will be processed and under what circumstances refunds will be provided to customers.

1.1 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

This Policy document is written to meet the requirements of the Legislation within England. It does not discriminate against persons based on age, disability, family status, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, as defined as protected characteristics within the Equalities Act 2010. It is applied to meet the laws within England at the time of writing.

2.0 – Refunds Policy

2.1 – Drainage Rates and invoices for goods and services

Refunds are not offered unless a Drainage Rates payer or Customer has paid the relevant Board more than they owe in error, and that being the case they do not wish that credit balance to carry over to the next financial year. If you believe that you have overpaid, you must get in touch with us at rating@witham3idb.gov.uk to set out your concerns in writing, or if you are unable to do this please in the first instance phone the Board during office hours Monday to Friday on 01522 697123 to let us know of your concerns [please ask to speak to one of our two Ratings Officers].

Any refund processed and honoured by Worldpay (the 4 Boards' payment provider) which has not been agreed to in advance will be collected from the Drainage Rates payer or Customer through the usual collection procedure, which may include Court action and imposition by the Board of additional collection charges.

2.2 – Consent Application Fees

At present, each of the 4 Boards charges a standard consent fee of £50 per consent application, in keeping with the national provisions of the Land Drainage Act [1991]. No refund is payable by the Boards for any withdrawn consent application or for an application which is determined and refused.

Any refund processed and honoured by Square (the 4 Boards' payment provider) which has not been agreed to in advance with the relevant Board's officers will be collected.

3.0 – Refunds Policy Statement

The Refunds Policy is to provide clarity for staff processing payments and refunds.

It is to provide prior guidance and ensure consistent application of the Policy.

The Policy will be shared via the website so that the standards to which refunds may be provided are clear to all rate payers.

The Board provide this information to be clear and transparent on the Boards Refunds application.

The Board achieve this policy by:

- Ensuring that the policy is available to all staff.
- Ensuring that the policy is available to rate payers via the website.
- Act promptly with any queries which are raised in relation to refunds.

4.0 - Glossary / Definitions

| Word/ term | Definition |
|------------|------------|
| | |

5.0 – Legislation & other partner organisation documents

- Land Drainage Act 1991
- The Equalities Act 2010
- Local Policy in line with ADA Lincolnshire Branch White Book.

6.0 – Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Arrangements for roles and reporting lines

The arrangements and organisational responsibilities for implementing the policy are detailed in this section.

6.1.1 – Board Members

- Reviewing and approving this policy
- Supporting the Chief Executive Officer and SMT in its application
- Following the policy and leading by example in its application

6.1.2 – Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Senior Management Team (SMT)

- Comply with this policy and lead by example.
- Cascade this policy and ensure it is available to all staff members.

- Provide guidance and information to the team members to ensure it is applied fairly and consistently through the boards.

6.1.3 – Line Managers / Supervisors / Foremen

- Support the CEO & SMT to cascade the policy, and lead by example.

6.1.4 – Ratings officers

- Follow the policy in relation to refunds to ensure fair and consistent application.
- Respond to any queries as soon as possible.

6.1.5 – All Staff

- Pass any such refund queries promptly to the ratings officers.

7.0 - Document review:

| Version | Date | Reviewed by | Changes | Approved by/ date |
|---------|---------------|---|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1.0 | July 2021 | Director of Finance & Governance (RFO) | Review and update | JSC May 2021 |
| 2.00 | November 2024 | Risk Manager & Director of Finance & Governance (RFO) | Periodic Review and new template | JSC December 2024 |

This policy is due for review at 5 yearly intervals, unless a review is required before e.g. change to management, process or anything which may affect the contents of this policy.

8.0 - Supporting documents and forms (Annex)

No additional or supporting documents.