



Your Guide to Charity Christmas Cards

Charity Christmas cards can be a bit of a maze. It can seem hard to work out the best way to support your favourite charities. But actually, it's quite simple...

There are three main places you can buy charity Christmas cards. Each works in a slightly different way:

“High Street” shops

These are the cards sold by High Street chains (like WH Smith, John Lewis or Boots), large High Street shops and some supermarkets. You can buy cards from a range of charities. The charities, in effect, receive a donation from the sale of the cards sold. They do not have to pay for the printing or distribution of the cards – that is covered by the retailer or card publisher.

Charity shops

These are the cards sold in charity shops which also sell other items all-year round. The cards will almost always be from just one charity - the one which runs the shop. The charity will have paid to have the cards printed and sent to the shop. They will also have to pay any applicable VAT.

Multi-charity card shops

These are the cards sold in temporary card shops, often in churches, libraries or museums. These shops sell cards from a wide range of charities. Cards for Good Causes (CFGC) sells cards on behalf of more than 320 national and local charities from around

350 outlets and gives back at least 79p in the £1 to charities. In most CFGC shops at least 25 charities are represented.

The charities who sell their cards in multi-charity card shops will have paid to have the cards printed and sent to the shops. They will also have to pay any applicable VAT.

So what's the difference?

It is all about who pays for printing and distributing the cards. In multi-charity card shops and charity-owned card shops, the cards are paid for by the charities. They invest in printing and distributing their cards so that they will raise money from their sale.

It's different in a High Street shop. Generally 'High Street' cards are printed and produced by card publishers for the retailers – NOT by the charities. The retailers sell them as part of their normal stock. After Christmas the publisher, or in some cases the retailer, makes a payment to the charity which is a straight donation and does not involve the charity in any costs.



Your charity Christmas card questions answered

So how much goes back to charity?

We can't comment on anyone else's cards, but once we have paid our operating costs, including our staff and for the premises we use, Cards for Good Causes gives back at least 79p in every £1 from its card sales.

We are the UK's largest dedicated charity Christmas card organisation. In the last five years charities have received over £20 million from their card sales through Cards for Good Causes outlets.

Some card sellers might say that 100% of their profits go back to charity – but remember, profit is what is left after they have paid all their operating costs; it is not the same as the whole price of the card.

How come High Street shops only give a small percentage of the price of their cards to charity?

'High Street' cards give a smaller percentage of their price because both the publishers and the retailers have to cover their costs. For the publisher it is the cost of having the cards printed and produced and for the retailer, who sells the cards as part of their normal profit-making stock lines, a proportion of the underlying operating costs. The charity takes no financial risk, merely gives the publisher permission to reproduce their logo. The charity then receives a donation from the publisher, or in some instances the retailer.

So why do some cards seem to give back more than others?

There is often confusion about the difference between different types of cards and how they provide funds for charities. Some groups regularly suggest that the retailers selling High Street cards are being mean. This is not the case. The different types of cards give money to charity in fundamentally different ways.

Are High Street cards a rip-off?

No – they simply offer charities a no-risk income they would otherwise not receive. Comparing the two types of card sales is rather like comparing apples and bicycles.

What about Cards for Good Causes?

CFGC sells cards on behalf of specific charities. The charities pay to have the cards designed, printed and distributed by CFGC through its national network of shops. In other words, the charities invest in the print and production of their cards and look for a return on that investment.

Because the cards are sold by CFGC, but printed by the charities, CFGC is able to return a higher percentage to the charities, whilst at the same time retaining only a very small percentage of the price to cover its running costs. We give back at least 79p in the £1.

For more information, call 01264 361555 or visit us at www.cardsforcharity.co.uk

Cards for Good Causes Limited is the trading company of The 1959 Group of Charities (Registered Charity No 249039)

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