

PRESS RELEASE
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SLUGGISH SALES BUT PROFITS UP – 2010 Q1 FIGURES FOR CHARITY SHOPS HAVE MIXED MESSAGES

Charity shops' profits increased in the first quarter of 2010, despite sales falling off for many, new data from the Association of Charity Shops suggest.

The Association has collected quarterly sales data from its members for some time. This year – for the first time - it has also started to collect data on reported profits. On average, income for January-March was only marginally higher (0.4%) than for the same quarter in 2009. But, the same charities reported profits were about 8% up for the quarter. Some charities saw a slight fall in sales.

David Moir, Head of Policy & Public Affairs at the Association, said: **“This is the first time we have collected profits data in this way, so we need to treat these figures with some caution. But increased charity shop profits - that is, vital funds raised for charity - are very welcome, at a time when demand for charity services is high”**.

Typically, charity shop sales are on a par with, or ahead of, wider retail sales figures, but – for the first quarter 2010 – charity retailers did less well than others on the high street.

David Moir added: **“Like other retailers, charity shops took a real hit from the poor weather early on. These sales figures suggest charity shops were perhaps hit a bit harder. So, the fact that they increased funds raised is excellent news”**.

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Notes to Editors

1. The Association of Charity Shops represents 300 charities which, together, operate 6,800 shops in the UK
2. In 2009, they raised about £120m for vital charitable causes
3. The Quarterly Market Analysis is a quarterly benchmarking for charity retailing that has been carried out since the Association of Charity Shops was set up 1999. It is an analysis of turnover, not profit, but we have recently added a section to be able to test if turnover changes are leading to profit changes
4. The income figures reported above reflect the average like-for-like turnover change for the charity's retail operation. It excludes Gift Aid tax reclaims
5. The figures reported reflect the average performance for the sector, but wide variations have been reported

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