

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, 27 February 2009

STEERING SCOTTISH CHARITY RETAIL THROUGH THE ECONOMIC GLOOM –

ASSOCIATION OF CHARITY SHOPS SUPPORTING THE SECTOR TO RAISE VITAL FUNDS

The Association of Charity Shops marked its tenth birthday yesterday in Glasgow, at a one-day conference for charity retail staff in Scotland. It also received an unexpected “birthday present”, by being invited to join the Scottish Retail Consortium Board.

Speaking after the conference, Lekha Klouda, Director of the Association, said:

“The conference was an unqualified success. It is vital for the charity sector in Scotland to be supported in their tremendous work during the economic gloom, and to know that the Association is right behind them. We celebrate our tenth anniversary this year, and we look forward to continuing to support the sector so that it can prosper in the next 10 years.”

The Association held their second Scottish Charity Retail Conference on Thursday, 26 February 2009 at the Teacher Building in Glasgow. This one-day event focused on opportunities for improving sales and reducing costs, issues of particular value in the current climate. Fourteen focus sessions were run by representatives from charities and others, including Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO). Topics covered included corporate partnerships, Gift Aid, environmental issues, staff motivation and other strategies to cope with the credit crunch.

Ken MacKenzie, Chairman of the Scottish Retail Consortium (SRC), opened the conference, speaking on the key challenges and opportunities facing Scottish retailing. In a very welcome surprise announcement, Mr MacKenzie invited the Association to join the Board of the SRC, as a “birthday present” to the Association.

Sue Azzopardi, the Association’s Chair, said:

“We were doubly delighted – the conference was a great success, and, by joining the SRC Board, we are able to work with High Street partners to promote retailing in Scotland, to benefit customers, local shopping centres and – vitally – key charity causes.

In these tremendously difficult times for everyone, we are keen to support our members in Scotland. That was what the conference was all about.”

Fiona Moriarty, Director of the SRC, said:

“We are delighted to welcome the Association of Charity Shops onto the influential SRC Board and I look forward to their contribution to the Consortium’s work in supporting Scottish retail, both during the current downturn and when the economy and the Scottish High Street recover”

ENDS

**ASSOCIATION OF
CHARITY SHOPS**

SUPPORTING CHARITY RETAIL

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

- The Association of Charity Shops represents 300 charities which, together, operate 6,800 shops in the UK
- There are about 650 charity shops in Scotland, most of which are operated by Association members, comprising both UK-wide and Scottish charities
- In 2008, charity shops in the UK raised about £120m for vital charitable causes
- The 2009 conference (the second the Association has held in Scotland) was sponsored by *Pride Shopfitting Ltd*. It was attended by over 75 delegates and speakers from 40 charities, hospices, community organisations and from other sectors.

The Association's key aims

- Lobbying effectively national and local government in the UK, and in Europe and monitoring proposed legislative changes
- Promoting charity shops to policy makers and the general public
- Developing good practice in charity shops
- Improving efficiency in all shops by providing and sharing information and expertise

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