

**FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION**

## **SURVIVING THE DOWNTURN – 2<sup>nd</sup> SCOTTISH CHARITY RETAIL CONFERENCE**

The Association of Charity Shops' second Scottish charity retail conference in Glasgow will focus on opportunities and challenges for the charity shop sector in Scotland during and after the economic downturn.

Publicising the conference, Lekha Klouda, Director of the Association, said;

**“The first, successful, charity retail conference in Edinburgh in 2007 looked at challenges for the future, but no-one could predict the current economic crisis. The second conference will examine the real challenges the sector faces now in a very difficult trading environment.**

**Focus sessions will give participants guidance and strategies for reducing costs, and increasing income and performance. These will be key to survival in a very tough retail climate”.**

With an opening address from Ken McKenzie, Chairman of the Scottish Retail Consortium, about the challenges for Scottish retail in the next three to four years, focus sessions throughout the day will look at \* volunteer-led operations, \* maximising Gift Aid, \* how to get free PR, \* understanding supporter behaviour, \* maximising donations and a host of other topics designed to help charity shops to increase sales and minimise costs in all areas.

The conference is aimed primarily as charity heads of retail and senior managers, and is open to Association members, other charity and voluntary organisations and others interested in the sector.

It will close with a drinks reception to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Association.

**ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

1. The Association of Charity Shops represents 300 charities which, together, operate 6,800 shops in the UK
2. There are about 650 charity shops in Scotland, most of which are operated by Association members, comprising both UK-wide and Scottish charities
3. In 2008, charity shops in the UK raised about £120m for vital charitable causes
4. The Association's first retail conference was held at Pollock Halls in Edinburgh in February 2007 and was attended by 80 delegates and speakers.
5. The 2009 conference is sponsored by ***Pride Shopfitting Ltd***

**Attachment: Conference flyer**