



Promoting Reuse, Preventing Waste

Best practice and role of UK charity shops

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Association of Charity Shops



About the Association

- Membership body for charities with shops – set up formally in 1999, but with an informal network since 1993.
- 300 charities running around 6800 shops including large national charities and many small, locally based ones.
- Funded by subscriptions and other income generating activities – no government funding at all!
- Independent voice for the charity retail sector lobbying government and policy makers on its behalf, promoting awareness of shops and their contributions, promoting best practice and self regulation and providing a wide range of services to the sector. More on www.charityshops.org.uk.



What is a charity shop?

- A retail outlet set up by a charity (under UK law) to sell goods to raise funds for the charity's work.
- The model is based on selling second hand goods donated to the charity and follows the first 'modern' such shop set up by Oxfam following WWII in 1947.
- Large growth in numbers of these shops from mid 1980's.
- Now found on most high streets in towns and cities.
- Receive charity tax concessions granted by the UK government.
- A small number also receive reuse and recycling credits from a handful of local authorities for their contributions to waste reduction.
- Staffed by volunteers and usually one paid staff member (possibly part-time).
- Have developed from old fashioned 'jumble' shops to modern boutiques and large warehouse shops selling furniture and electrical goods.



'JUMBLE' CHARITY SHOP FROM 1950/60'S



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1970's



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1980's



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1990's



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21st Century



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Charity shop stock processing



Stock donation sacks



Sorting



Steaming clothes before display



Diversification – bridal shops



Diversification – Book shops



Diversification – Furniture shops



Diversification – Large format shops



Diversification – Music shops



Some facts and figures

Overview of UK charity retail sector

- Total number of shops 2008/9 > 7500
- Total number of charities with shops > 350
- Total profit p.a. > £120m
- Sales from 2nd hand donated goods > 87%
- Total raised for charity 1999 – 2009 > £1,000m



Contributions

Environmental contributions

- >250,000 tonnes of textiles diverted from waste p.a.
- Reuse of textiles saves 33kg of CO2 equivalent per kilo of textiles compared to disposal, and 29 kg compared to recycling.
- Charity shops' reuse activity alone saves around 2.5m tonnes of CO2 each year.
- Only around 4% of textiles donated end up in the waste stream.
- Also thousands of tonnes of books, furniture and electrical goods are diverted from waste stream.

Social and other contributions

- Provide over 10,000 jobs in the sector & over 130,000 volunteering opportunities including training for those out of work or returning to work.
- Promote local high streets through encouraging daily visitors.



Support from the public

- % of public donating to charity shops >70%
- % of public buying from charity shops 65%
- Over 90% believe best thing to do with unwanted clothing is to donate to a charity
- Donating to charity shops is the most popular method of disposing of clothing, non-electrical small household items, small furniture, toys & games, linen & curtains and jewellery.
- Most people donate direct to shops; but some also donate to collection sacks which are distributed by charities to householders and then collected.



Reasons for public support

<i>Buying from charity shops</i>	<i>Donating to charity shops</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <u>Main reason</u> for buying second hand is people enjoy finding a bargain. The next reason is they benefit charity. Other reasons include price and environmental issues.● 58% said they make purchases based on environmental issues sometimes but 35% rarely or never.● Very high awareness of charity shops' contribution to reuse (93%), recycling (80%) and waste reduction (77%).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The <u>main reason</u> for donating to charity shops is wanting to support charities in general.● When asked which other reasons were important, convenience came first followed by environmental reasons.● Environmental reasons are definitely a very important factor when deciding to donate to charity shops.



Charity shops' influence

- Charity shops are therefore well placed to influence public behaviour and to contribute to waste reduction strategies working in partnership with others.
- Increasingly the shops are seeking to raise awareness of their contributions to sustainable waste management and engaging with the broader environmental agenda.
- With the increase in the importance of environmental issues on the political agenda – national and international – charity shops can provide opportunities to influence behaviour and to engage in innovative ways to promote waste reduction.



Innovative examples - location



Charity shop located at a County Council Recycling Site



Innovative shop location & partnership

- This is an unconventional charity shop situated at a County Council Recycling Centre. It sells re-saleable items brought to the shop when members of the public are visiting the recycling centre. All items that are potentially re-usable are donated to the shop which helps to reduce landfill.
- You can get practically anything from an egg cup to a three piece suite in this shop. You can buy electrical equipment, bicycles which have been refurbished by a scheme run by local prisons, and even compost for your garden.
- It is popular and the charity's most successful, raising over £500,000 for the charity in 4 years. The charity is the local hospice providing palliative care to local people – a popular and worthwhile cause.
- There are some restrictions on what can be accepted due to space limitations or issues around safety. Rent is paid to the Council and all material diverted from landfill can be counted against the Council's performance targets.
- An example of creative and positive partnership working to significantly reduce waste as well as raising funds for a vital local charitable cause.



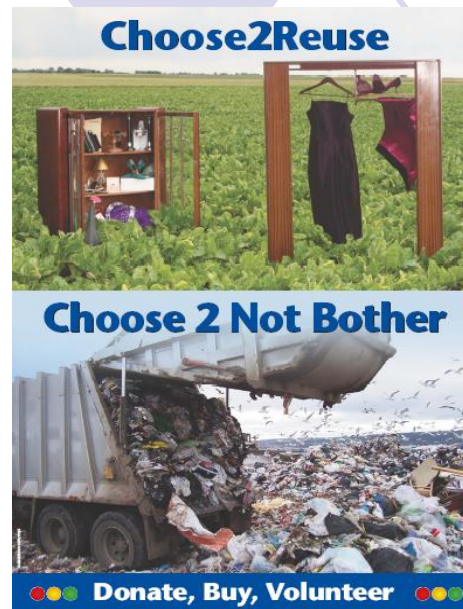
Choose2Reuse - Influencing public behaviour

– pilot regional project

- Government supported pilot project (DEFRA) run by the Association of Charity Shops and local community reuse and recycling groups 2005-8 involved over 50 charities/groups and 520 shops/other reuse outlets.
- To promote:
 - Quality donations to charity shops and other reuse outlets
 - Buying more second-hand goods
 - Increased participation in reuse activity and volunteering
 - Understanding of the link between reuse and the environment
- Campaign run using free posters displayed in shops and leaflets handed out to the public, collection boxes for donations at workplaces and window stickers to promote volunteering. These were combined with local press coverage and events to raise awareness.



Choose2Reuse - materials



Workplace donation boxes

Shop window posters



Shop window display materials to recruit volunteers



Promotional events
'Green Santa'



Choose2Reuse - impacts

Key Findings

Most participants felt that:

- Quantity of donations had increased.
- Public awareness of reuse had improved.
- Existing volunteers' awareness of reuse had also improved.
- Most participants would want to continue to take part.

Key Barriers

- Too much paperwork/bureaucracy.
- Insufficient funding for research and advertising, including repeated sustained messages in the media.

Outcomes

- Impacts primarily in raising awareness of reuse amongst public and those working in charity shops themselves.
- Adoption by some local authorities as ongoing campaign to raise awareness.



Other new initiatives

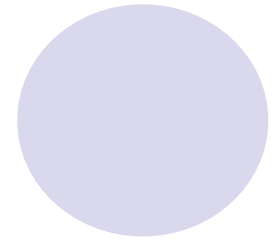
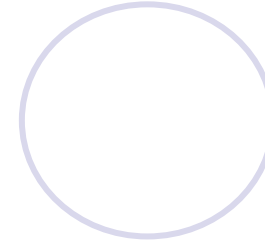
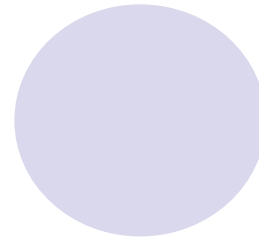
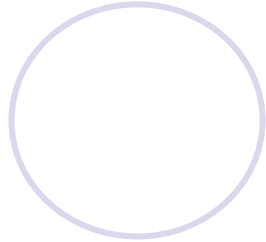
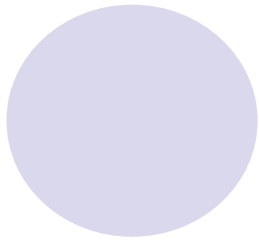
- Mary Queen of Charity Shops TV programme in June 2009 watched by 2-3m people each episode. This promoted awareness of the importance of donating to charity shops and encouraged innovative ways of giving through workplace donating events: D-Day – Donate, Don't Dump. The Prime Minister and his wife have given their backing - and some items of unwanted clothing - to the campaign.
- A follow up donation campaign planned by Association and its members for early 2010 using reuse contributions to support a key public message. The shop windows of thousands of shops on high streets will maximise impact.
- Increasing donations to charity shops is particularly relevant during a recession when charities need additional funds and in the context of global issues around climate change and sustainability. Likely to be more such campaigns in the future.



Potential future contribution to waste reduction

- Mainland Europe does not have large numbers of charity shops.
- There are significant numbers only in the USA, Australia, UK, Republic of Ireland – though now increasing in South Korea, Japan, South Africa as a means of charity fundraising.
- Potential for large increases in reuse tonnages and further reductions in waste to landfill.
- Opportunity to build sustainable behaviour and awareness of environmental impact.
- Why not start a charity shop?





- **QUESTIONS?**
- **THANK YOU.**

