

Charity Retail

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Charity Retail Association (CRA)

Held on 14 November 2019 at 11am at 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA

Item No.	
1.	<p><u>Welcome and introduction</u> – <i>Anne Webb, Chair, Charity Retail Association</i></p> <p>Anne Webb, Chair of the Charity Retail Association (CRA), welcomed members, exhibitors and other attendees to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Charity Retail Association.</p> <p>Anne thanked the exhibitors at this year’s AGM who introduced themselves and gave a brief statement about their organisation.</p> <p><i>Exhibitors: Boxmove, Charity Fleetcare, CTR Group, Eproductive, Kudos, Lodge Services, Nisyst, whatCharity, Wil-U, World of Books</i></p>
2.	<p><u>The place of charity shops</u> – <i>Wayne Hemingway, Designer, and Hattie Lamb, Shop Manager, Shelter</i></p> <p>Wayne Hemingway, the founder of HemingwayDesign, gave an impassioned talk on his early career and ethos with his personal insights into the importance of charity shops on the high street. Their philosophy is “to improve the things that matter in life”.</p> <p>He noted the sea change in the current retail environment caused by a combination of factors, including the change in shopping habits caused by the online revolution.</p> <p>He advocated strongly the need for charity retailers to reinforce the narrative that charity shops are a force for good for customers, for the environment, and fulfilling social needs for staff and volunteers, in addition to improving their skillsets. They also provide an ideal platform for re-purposing the high street as a place for social interaction and experiences.</p> <p>Wayne cited the recent development in Coal Drops Yard, Kings Cross, with Shelter as a lead tenant, as an example of an innovative retail model in a very upmarket area, and introduced Hattie Lamb, the Manager of the Shelter shop, to detail how the shop operates.</p>

	<p>Hattie gave a fascinating insight into the operation and layout of this innovative shop with the basic concept of its being “not your average charity shop”.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p><u>a) Approval of the Minutes of the 14 November 2018 Annual General Meeting</u></p> <p>The minutes of the last AGM in 2018 were approved by the meeting as a true record, proposed by Dan Corns (St Richard’s Hospice) and seconded by Emma Peake (Air Ambulance Service).</p> <p><u>b) Approval of the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended March 31st 2019.</u></p> <p>The report and accounts for the financial year ending March 31st 2019 were approved by the meeting, proposed by Dan Corns (St Richard’s Hospice) and seconded by Sarah Coles (St. Francis Hospice).</p> <p><u>c) Notification of retiring Directors and Elections to the Board</u></p> <p>The chair notified the meeting that there had been a number of changes to the board in 2018/9.</p> <p>Susan Newcombe and Simon Dodds had resigned as they had left their respective organisations.</p> <p>Sarah Coles and John Egan had been appointed to the board accordingly to fill the vacancies but John had resigned subsequently due to pressure of work. Karen Bilsby and Karen McKenzie had also been appointed to the board. David Longmore was now representing Barnardo’s in place of Roy Clark and Jo Mewett was now representing CRUK in place of Julie Byard.</p> <p>Special mention was made of the retirement of Steve Biddle, who had acted as a Board member, Chair of the Finance Committee, and Company Secretary for several years, including a stint as interim Chief Executive Officer prior to Robin Osterley’s appointment. The board thanked him for his contribution to the CRA.</p> <p>The chair took the opportunity to thank all the CRA directors, whose diligent and thoughtful voluntary work goes a long way to making CRA the powerful and knowledgeable body it is.</p> <p><u>d) Appointment of accountants for the Company</u></p> <p>The election of Kingston Smith as reporting accountants to the CRA was approved by the members, proposed by David Borrett (Sue Ryder) and seconded by Dan Corns (St Richard’s Hospice).</p>

4.	<p>Review of the Year - Robin Osterley, Chief Executive, Charity Retail Association</p> <p>Robin Osterley (RO) presented the review of the year, in which he noted some of the CRA activities during the past year, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbying and Advocacy – waste charges; the CRA is working with DEFRA with a view to issuing an edict to local councils detailing the legal position re household waste with an injunction to desist from charging charity shops accordingly; working with British Retail Consortium on retail issues such as internal and external theft, safeguarding of staff and volunteers, etc.; TRAIID report on clothing banks demonstrating the relatively low percentage of banks benefiting charities compared with commercial collectors, CRA advocating complete transparency on contracts for placing of Clothing Banks with local authorities, retail parks etc. to ensure that the public is made fully aware of who their donations are benefiting; plus further work in Scotland and Northern Ireland on various issues. • Research – the research team of Olaia and Irina have published 41 reports this year with 89% of members rating the reports either good or excellent. The team has published, in total, some 160 reports including those compiled in collaboration with BDO. • Member services – including issue of new Health & Safety posters, file of case studies detailing some innovative activities, adoption of Barnardo’s licence-to-operate scheme on safeguarding developed with an e-learning module. • Membership – Number of members, as at 31 March, is at an all-time high, numbering 396 operating 9,058 shops. • Finance - A 2.5% increase in total income, including a 4.5% growth in membership income, and a 5.4% increase in expenditure resulting in an overall loss of £3,240 in 2018/9 compared with a surplus of £16,107 in 2017/8. • “To do list” – volunteering toolkit, implementation of the safeguarding licence-to-operate scheme, All-Party Parliamentary Group relaunch, Waste charges, New Strategic plan <p>The Chief Executive noted that the Association still had substantial reserves and were reviewing ways to improve existing services and add new services to members accordingly.</p>
5.	<p><u>Community and social impact – Dermot McGilloway, Director of Retail Services, Society of St. Vincent de Paul</u></p> <p>Dermot delivered a very interesting and thought-provoking presentation on the history of the Society, its ethos and its current global reach.</p>

	<p>Dermot noted that the Society had won the CRA award for Community and Social Impact last year and played several informative and thought-provoking videos highlighting their past and present work and, in particular, their emphasis on working with and drawing together both sides of the Irish community, despite its origins as a Catholic organisation.</p>
7.	<p><u>TRUST – Jonathan Mail, Head of Public Affairs, Charity Retail Association and Dawn Dungate, Operations Manager, East London Textiles</u></p> <p>Jonathan outlined the new planned accreditation TRUST (Trader Recycling Universal Standard) scheme for CRA recyclers. This scheme is designed to ensure that all recyclers meet minimum standards for Health & Safety, Employment Rights and Sound Finances.</p> <p>Such a scheme should enable charities to have a high level of confidence in the probity of their recyclers and obviate the need to carry out formal checks themselves.</p> <p>Dawn Dungate of East London Textiles was introduced to give a merchant’s view of the scheme and its benefits in ensuring a level playing field for bona-fide recyclers who often compete with unscrupulous operators paying below minimum wage levels and with inadequate standards for Health & Safety and Employment Rights.</p> <p>The scheme would be operated under the aegis of the CRA and was planned to start in the New Year with accreditation of all current recyclers hoped to be completed by the end of 2020.</p>
8.	<p><u>Panel session: Town centre engagement – Robin Osterley (CEO-CRA), Dan Corns (St. Richards Hospice), David Cryer (Shelter), Tracey Robbins (Eden Project)</u></p> <p>The panel took questions from the floor and shared their experience on ways to facilitate town centre engagement. The consensus was that landlords, developers and local authorities have a much more open attitude to charity shops than has been the case for many years, partly because of the many recent high-profile casualties on the high street. Some of the smaller charities expressed some frustration, however, at the attitude to those organisations without the resources and profile of the larger charities.</p> <p>RO noted that the CRA were considering an accreditation scheme for local authorities that would enable charity retailers to assess how “charity-friendly” such bodies are in dealing with issues such as rates relief, planning, waste charges, clothing bank sites etc. but that this was at an early stage at present.</p>

9.	<p><u>Any other business</u></p> <p>Robin Osterley – reminded attendees of the “Good Cause Santa Claus” programme, asking that Secret Santa presents are sourced from charity shops, and noting that the CRA website has specific resources relating to this initiative in the members section.</p> <p>He also reinforced the recent request for Conference speakers for the 2020 CRA Conference, whose theme is “Sustainability”.</p> <p>Both Robin and Anne expressed their thanks to attendees, exhibitors, speakers and staff for their input in making the event such a success.</p> <p>There being no other business, the meeting closed at 3.00pm.</p>
----	--