

Nicola Sturgeon MSP  
First Minister  
The Scottish Government  
St. Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

17<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear First Minister

### **Charity shops and re-opening**

I am writing to ask that you consider allowing charity shops to re-open ahead of the 26<sup>th</sup> of April reopening date for all non-essential retailers announced yesterday. There is a strong case for including charity shops in the extended list of retailers allowed to reopen from the 5<sup>th</sup> of April.

The Charity Retail Association represents the interest of charity retailers in Scotland and across the UK our 400 + members run around 80% of charity shops.

The current restrictions have had an especially severe impact on charity retailers due to the difficulties in selling lower-cost donated items online or via click and collect due to the need to list and describe each item individually. Enabling charity retailers to open on the earlier date of the 5<sup>th</sup> of April would:

- Raise much-needed funds for charities
- Provide access to good quality donated goods at affordable prices to those on lower incomes. For example, the average cost of a woman's coat is £7.64 and the average cost of a man's top is £4.30.
- Avoid good quality second-hand goods from ending up as waste with all the associated waste disposal costs and environmental harm.

Allowing some non-essential retailers to reopen on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April but not charity shops will compound the inequity of open retailers selling large volumes of clothing, books, and other non-essential items at a time when charity shops that sell the exact same items are prohibited from opening.

I hope that you will consider the unique contribution that charity shops make as you refine the details of which non-essential retailers will be able to reopen from the 5<sup>th</sup> of April.

Yours sincerely



Robin Osterley  
Chief Executive

[www.charityretail.org.uk](http://www.charityretail.org.uk)