

Dismantling racism in charity retail

A statement of commitment

We are the lead body in charity retail, with some 80% of the UK's charity shops in membership. As such, we believe we have a duty to tackle racism in all its forms within the sector, and to give our members guidance, training and encouragement to do the same.

We recognise that there is a problem of race inequality in society and our sector, and this impacts on our staff, volunteers and communities we serve.

Far too many of the senior roles within our sector are held by white people, and there has been a lack of opportunity for individuals from diverse ethnic groups to begin, develop and succeed in their careers in the voluntary sector whether as paid staff or volunteers.

Systemic racism and discrimination in the UK directly and indirectly leads to poorer life chances, deeper health inequalities and greater risks being carried within some diverse ethnic groups, and those challenges are exacerbated when our sector fails to address diversity and inclusion.

While many of our members have campaigned and fought for race equality and social justice over many years, collectively we have not done enough to create the real changes that are needed in our work environments.

We know that words alone are not enough. But we also know that silence amongst leaders, especially white leaders, in our sector causes pain for our colleagues and our communities. We know that people from diverse ethnic groups are tired of hearing worthy words and seeing no action, and that fundamental change is required before progress can be made.

We hope our first action plan will go some way towards addressing inclusion for people from diverse ethnic groups in charity retail. Fulfilling this plan will take determination, planning, energy and resource and we will need to work closely with our members to achieve the desired results. We are committed to working as quickly and effectively as possible to achieve measurable change.

We commit to being open and accountable and will report publicly on progress against our plan – with honesty about the things that don't happen as well as those that do. As a board and staff team we commit ourselves to move forward together, to listen and to learn, to take action jointly and individually, to effect change and to be held accountable for delivering change. We know we have much to do. Our sector, communities, charities and social change organisations are #NeverMoreNeeded, and we need to get this right.

Charity Retail Association, published July 2020 with the plan and a media statement