



ASSOCIATION OF CHARITY SHOPS

The Code of Charity Retailing 2009

The Code of Charity Retailing promotes best practice, high standards and increased public support for charity retailing. The Code is a mandatory part of membership of the Association for UK members that run shops. Its aim is to help members to raise the largest amounts possible for charitable purposes from their retail activities. The Code of Charity Retailing sets out what is mandatory in law (must) and what further good practice members of the Association are required to observe (should), as well as outlining additional good practice that is advised but optional (ought).

1. General Requirements

- 1.1** Members of the Association of Charity Shops should always have regard to the purpose of the Code – to promote charity shops as the way to make the most of donations of unwanted goods – and seek to maximise income for parent charities.
- 1.2** Members must comply with their statutory obligations as charities, as employers, as retailers and occupiers of property.
- 1.3** Members should not bring the charity shops sector into disrepute, or *undermine it*, by any inappropriate or illegal activity.
- 1.4** Members should display where possible the Code of Charity Retailing (“CCR”) logo on all materials seeking donations and in their shops.

2. Shop Operations

- 2.1** Members must operate charity shops that comply with existing legislation including:
 - Data protection
 - Disability Discrimination and other Equality issues
 - Employment
 - General charity law
 - Health and Safety (including Fire prevention)
 - Sale of goods
 - Trading Standards and Consumer Protection
 - Waste
- 2.2** Members should treat the public (donors and customers) with care and consideration.
- 2.3** Members should provide clear information to donors and customers about the charity's objectives and activities on request.
- 2.4** Members should provide appropriate training, information and support to staff and volunteers.
- 2.5** Members should take all reasonable measures to ensure the secure handling of cash, cheques and credit card payments, as well as of donations in kind.
- 2.6** Members should have clear, published policies and procedures for the handling of complaints received in their shops.

3. Stock Collection

- 3.1** Where collections of goods are undertaken, members must comply with the requirements of the relevant legislation as appropriate, in addition to the more general statutory requirements under Health and Safety, Employment etc.

House-to-house collections carried out directly by members

- 3.2** Members undertaking house-to-house collections for goods in England, Wales and Northern Ireland must hold either a National Exemption Order or a local license to collect.*
- 3.3** Members must ensure collections are not undertaken by minors (those under 16) and that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that collectors are fit and proper persons.*
- 3.4** Members must ensure that all collectors are issued with identification badges and certificates of authority. These should always be clearly visible and produced to members of the public on request.*
- 3.5** Members must ensure collection sacks comply with relevant safety standards.
- 3.6** Members should include clear contact details for their charity on all requests for donations (including collection sacks and envelopes). Personnel representing the charity - whether employees, volunteers or subcontractors - and where possible their vehicles, should be clearly identifiable. The registered charity number must appear on all printed material.

Partnership collections

- 3.7** Members collecting goods using commercial organisations that use their charity's name must ensure these collections are within the requirements of the relevant legislation and that the collection is appropriately licensed. When selecting a partner company, members should establish that there are no conflicts of interest.
- 3.8** Members ought to be aware that these partnerships might be seen to conflict with a “core” charity retail objective (i.e. the donation of goods for sale in-store to maximise income for the charity). Members should also consider the reputational risks to their charity – and to the sector more generally – of being involved in activities which might be seen to undermine this objective, or which might damage the public's trust and confidence in the sector.



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- 3.9** Members should also ensure they are receiving the maximum possible financial benefit for their charity from such arrangements. Members should ensure clear and transparent statements are made on collection material detailing the benefits to both parties of such commercial partnerships. **Collection materials used in these partnerships may not carry the CCR logo.***
- 3.10** Members must ensure that appropriate remuneration statements are included with collection materials, in line with current legal requirements and Government guidance. Charity legislation also includes measures designed to safeguard a charity's name and reputation from abuse by others. Members must ensure that any agreements with commercial participators implement these measures in full.*
- 3.11** Partnership collections undertaken by members should always be transparent, and all collection materials (e.g. leaflets, bags) should state prominently: a) that the collection is not being conducted directly by a charity, b) the intended use and destination of any goods left out for collection, and c) the name of the commercial partner carrying out the collection.
- 3.12** Members should also meet in full the transparency requirements of relevant guidance notes in the Association's *Members' Handbook*.

General requirements relating to all house-to-house collections

- 3.13** Members should take appropriate measures to avoid house-to-house collections overlapping in time and place with other collections: for example, by asking a sample of residents whether they had received other recent collection requests from recognised charities.
- 3.14** Members should take care that collections do not saturate an area, that they are not excessively frequent or targeted repeatedly in the same area. Members should ensure, therefore, that collection areas are manageable and targeted to allow for proper checks to avoid such saturation.
- 3.15** Members ought to: collect at the times stated, push collection sacks carefully and fully through letterboxes, make every effort to collect unused sacks, close gates to houses approached, ensure collectors do not walk on householders' gardens and are polite and helpful at all times.
- 3.16** Members should also ensure partner organisations conform with these and the other requirements of this Code that apply to collections.

Collections via textile banks

- 3.17** Where textile banks are operated using a commercial partner, members should comply with the requirements of paragraphs 3.7-3.16 above, in addition to the requirements of this section. In addition, where stock which is collected in banks is not intended for sale in charity shops, this should be clearly stated on the banks. All banks described in this paragraph are not eligible to carry the CCR logo.
- 3.18** Members operating textile banks must ensure they comply with relevant safety standards.
- 3.19** Members operating textile banks should ensure they have the permission of the appropriate site owner before placing their textile banks and should ensure they comply with the terms of the site owner in relation to emptying of the banks, and the cleanliness and maintenance of surrounding areas.

Collections of cash

- 3.20** Cash should not normally be collected as part of the house-to-house collection of goods for charity shops. If members do collect cash alongside goods, then they should observe the Institute of Fundraising Code of Practice for cash collections and note that the legal requirements for cash collections may be different from those for the collections of goods.
- 3.21** Minors (those under 16) must not in any circumstances collect cash.

4. Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility

- 4.1** The charity retail sector already contributes significantly to waste reduction through promoting reuse, recycling and overall sustainability, and diverts large volumes of material from the waste stream. Notwithstanding this, members ought to be aware of their wider corporate responsibilities and to ensure their activities are sustainable. It is for individual members, within the limits of the law and the spirit of this Code, to determine which, if any, actions it might take to promote sustainable behaviour.

NOTES

* This Code is based on law current at January 2009 and will be revised as necessary to take account of legislative and policy developments.

Detailed guidance, support and information are supplied to all members in the *Members' Handbook*, which is regularly updated.

Breaches of the Code that are brought to the attention of the Association will be considered by the Board of Directors. Where misuse is by a person or body, which is not a member, appropriate legal steps will be taken. Where misuse is by a member, the case will be considered by the Board of Directors, which may remove that person or body from membership of the Association.

Valid for 2009/10 charity membership year

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