

Annual General Meeting of the Charity Retail Association

Thursday 14 November 2024, 10am – 12pm, online

Minutes

1. Welcome and introduction

Emma Peake, Chair, Charity Retail Association, welcomed all and thanked the event sponsors for their support for the event.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the 21 November 2023 Annual General Meeting (These had been circulated with the AGM papers)

Proposer: Sarah Coles, Hospice of St Francis

Second: David Longmore, Barnardo's

3. Approval of the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (These had been circulated with the AGM papers)

Proposer: Robin Osterley, Charity Retail Association

Second: David Longmore, Barnardo's

4. Notification of retiring Directors and Elections to the Board

- The following changes to the Board had taken place since the last AGM:
- Outgoing: Sophie Lea
 - Ruth Blazye (became EDI director)
 - Alex Sutton (resigned as sustainability director)
- Joining: Steve Derrick (Category C) (RNLI) (elected)
 - Emma King (Category A) (Weston Hospicecare) (elected)
 - Katy Faulkner (Category C) (Sue Ryder) (elected)
 - Lauren Davies (Director of Youth Engagement) (St Michael's Hospice) (co-opted)
 - Nicholas Harris (Director of Digital Transformation (SATCOL) (co-opted)
- Recruiting: RO announced that the Association was in the process of recruiting a Director of Sustainability and a Category C director.

5. Appointment of accountants for the Company

Robin Osterley proposed Kingston Smith, the current accountants and put their case to attendees.

Proposer: Robin Osterley, Charity Retail Association

Seconded: David Palmer, Blue Cross

**6. Review of the Year by Robin Osterley, Chief Executive, Charity Retail Association
(presentation available with these minutes and on the CRA website)**

Robin's presentation referred to 2023-24 finances and up to date activities.

Summary: The CRA now has 469 members running 9436 shops, which was a reduction on last year, which Robin felt was due to charity chains reducing their numbers of small shops, but increasing the size of their estate's selling space due to a significant programme of opening much larger format stores. Robin noted the CRA's achievements over the past year, including the launch of the latest strategic plan, our largest ever annual conference, and our increasing involvement with Government. He also described the jobs still to do, including completing the new website, launch a new jobs service, and completing the UK's Favourite Charity Shop Programme.

Overall, the CRA's finances remain in excellent health and there are substantial reserves. Robin finished by thanking all who help – staff, members, those who volunteer their time for the CRA, and partner organisations.

7. Driving profitability in charity ecommerce – AI Listing Monster

Sponsors of the AGM AI Listing Monster spoke about growing the bottom line contribution of charity ecommerce platforms, noting that this is about A) increasing turnover, but also crucially B) doing so efficiently. They discussed overcoming profit challenges in charity ecommerce, and best practices for building an AI-enabled workflow that delivers better productivity and profitability.

8. Keynote – Mark Russell, Chief Executive, Children's Society

Mark, winner of the 2024 Most Supportive Chief Executive Award, delivered an inspirational and moving address on why charity retail is such a key part of his strategy for the Children's Society, how he first encountered Charity Retail, and how he uses it to help drive unity and commitment within his charity.

9. Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 11:50am.