

# BACKING SCOTLAND'S COMMUNITIES THROUGH COVID

---

REPORT INTO SCOTTISH RETAIL'S  
COMMUNITY ACTIVITY 2022



# CONTENTS

Introduction	6
Methodology	8
Key Findings	11
Fundraising and Charity Partnerships	12
Corporate Donations	15
Volunteering and Community Work	16
About the SRC	19



# GIVING IN NUMBERS:



In 2021 Scottish Retailers donated over

**4 MILLION MEALS**



In 2021 Scottish Retailers donated over

**900,000 HOURS** to help local communities



Since 2016 Scottish retailers have raised over

**£92 MILLION** for Good Causes



● Charity Fundraising

● Direct Donations by Retailers

● Donations (Product and Other)

● Other Fundraising/ Donations (i.e. Payroll Giving, Carrier Bag Levies)

**£16.63 MILLION**

raised by SRC Members in Scotland for Good Causes in 2021



# MEMBERS

Fifty-two Scottish brands have supplied us with information on their charitable giving, fundraising, and support for good causes in 2021.



# INTRODUCTION

This is the sixth SRC report into charitable giving and community work in Scotland. The report, based on interviews and data from Members of the Scottish Retail Consortium, allows us to shine a light on the incredible contribution made by retailers to communities across Scotland.

This year even more brands than before have supported this work. Fifty-two retailers, including department stores, coffee shops, fashion retailers, food to go, and grocers, have told us how they have helped everything from national charities to local community groups.

The key finding from this year's report is retail charitable fundraising and donations still remain below pre-pandemic levels. This year our Members reported they donated and fundraised £16.5 million for good causes, a small increase on 2020. This means in total since we started reporting in 2016 Scotland's retailers have raised over £92 million for good causes.

The last two years have been incredibly challenging for the industry. With many shops closed for large parts of 2021 it's no surprise fundraising has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. One theme we see carried on from 2020 is the proportion of money donated by retailers remains significantly higher, as businesses replace customer fundraising with direct donations. Whilst this report only formally covers 2021, we also found several retailers reporting they had made financial, product, and logistical donations to the appeals for those affected by the Ukrainian war.

“

“This report aims provide a snapshot of some of the ways the Scottish retail industry makes a real and tangible difference to Scotland's charities, communities, and people.”

It's important to note these donations are only part of the story. Retailers are involved an enormous number of projects to help support communities. Employing refugees, supporting schools in Scotland and across the world, providing crucial capital funding to charities, developing sustainable projects, and supporting Government campaigns. Retailers make financial donations, but just as importantly donate staff time, food, and other supplies, often

helping people in desperate need. It's an immense amount to contribute, especially in challenging retail times, but for these businesses it's just part of being a responsible retailer and a part of Scottish society.

This report aims provide a snapshot of some of the ways the Scottish retail industry makes a real and tangible difference to Scotland's charities, communities, and people.



# METHODOLOGY

Members of the Scottish Retail Consortium were approached and asked a series of questions regarding their community and charitable activity.

All Members of the SRC were given the opportunity to reply. The following retailers provided information for this report: Aldi, Amazon, AO, Asda, B&Q, Boots, CJ Lang, The Cooperative, Costa, Decathlon, Dobbies Garden Centres, Greggs, Hamilton & Inches, Halfords, Harvey Nicholls, HMV, Holland and Barrett, The House of Bruar, Iceland, Ikea, John Lewis, KFC, Lakeland, Lidl, Livingston Designer Outlet, Majestic Wine, Marks & Spencer, Matalan, McColls, McDonalds, Morrisons, Mountain Warehouse, New Look, One O One Convenience, Pets at Home, Post Office, Poundland, Primark, Rox, Sainsbury's, Schuh, Scotmid Cooperative, Screwfix, Seasalt, Sterling Furniture, Tesco, TK Maxx, Waitrose, Waterstones, Wilkies, The White Company, Whittard of Chelsea.

The SRC was clear the questions were not exclusionary, nor necessarily would capture all the different work done by Members. The retail industry engages in community work in a vast number of ways, and there is quite rightly no single way to approach this. We were also clear it was unlikely each member would be able to answer each question – the aim was to try to encourage as wide reporting as possible.

On a practical level, we were clear this report is meant to include all work supporting 'good causes' in Scotland. That was deliberately to ensure support given to local community groups, who may not be OSCR registered but nonetheless play a crucial local role, were included in this.

Members were also promised all individual submissions would be treated in confidence, and only aggregated figures would be published. Members were also encouraged to submit specific case studies for inclusion which would be published unedited and in full.

In a small number of cases Members were unable to provide a Scottish specific figure. In those instances, the SRC has modelled a Scottish figure based on population share, market share, and on data from retailers who provide both Scottish and UK data.

However, whilst we estimate retailers support for volunteering and community work was worth at least £9.84 million in 2021, we have not included that as a financial contribution as it's an in-kind donation. We have similarly not estimated the financial value of food redistribution donations.

On a methodological note, due to the impact of the pandemic on both the SRC and Member businesses workload we did not conduct a full report last year. Therefore, when making detailed comparisons we are referring to our 2020 report, which reported on giving in 2019.



“ The retail industry engages in community work in a vast number of ways, and there is quite rightly no single way to approach this.”

## CASE STUDY

### ONE O ONE CONVENIENCE



In 2021 One O One Convenience focused on working with the community and their colleagues to support children's charities. They partnered with Radio Clyde and ran bespoke events to fundraise for Cash for Kids, raising £145,000 directly, alongside raising over £50,000 in store. The business also directly supported Cash for Kids events and Grocery Aid through further direct donations.



## CASE STUDY

## STERLING



Sterling Furniture have encouraged their stores to take the lead in finding distinct local approaches to supporting good causes. From the tens of thousands of pounds raised in Tillicoultry for Strathcarron Hospice through a bookstall in the café through to the Glasgow store where the local Manager inspired colleagues to provide Christmas goodie boxes to fundraise for the Erskine Hospital; the business is committed to helping local charities and groups raise money to make a difference in the community.



## KEY FINDINGS

SRC Members reported a small recovery from last years charitable giving with the total raised for good causes increasing to 16.63 million. That is marginally above last year's figure of £16.4 million, with slightly more retailers involved. The increase is attributed to a small rise in customer fundraising as the economy started to reopen more fully in the final months of the year.

The discrepancies with the last pre-pandemic report the SRC produced are more insightful. Direct donations by retailers rose during the pandemic, but that was more than offset by a very significant fall in fundraising – a consequence of the covid pandemic retail restrictions. It's also worth noting some of this increase will also arise from an increased number of retailers reporting. Indeed, our like-for-like comparison found a nine percent fall from the 2019 figures from retailers directly involved.

Direct donations therefore became the largest category with 61 percent, a 14 percent increase from 2019. Fundraising donations fell by 1 percent, whilst product donations fell by four percent. We'd note we have excluded food donations from this metric this year which explains most of this discrepancy.

We estimate that the amount raised by fundraising decreased by over £2.2 million from 2019, whilst the amount donated increased by £1.6 million. Whilst we didn't conduct detailed reporting in 2020 the similar breakdown of donations and fundraising implies that Scottish charities have missed out on around £4 million in lost fundraising opportunities due to the pandemic restrictions.

This year we have taken the decision not to include figures from the single use carrier bag charge. The reason is many of the major grocery retailers now provide bags which don't fall under the scope of the charge, and consequently the value of the reporting has diminished. We found in our research those retailers were in many cases still raising money through the sale of bags for life, and other initiatives, and this was one factor which led to a higher increase in direct donations.

The largest contribution was through direct donations to charities from retailers, which totalled over £10.1 million. That was followed by fundraising for charity partnerships which raised £4.9 million.

We also asked about retailers' community programmes and volunteering. Taken together we estimate Scottish retailers donated over 900,000 hours towards volunteering or community work in 2021, a contribution worth at least £10 million. Please note we don't include the value of this donation in our headline figures as it's an estimate.



“The largest contribution was through direct donations to charities from retailers, which totalled over £10.1 million. That was followed by fundraising for charity partnerships which raised £4.9 million.”

# FUNDRAISING AND CHARITY PARTNERSHIPS

The largest single category of fundraising and donations to good causes comes from charity partnership work between a lead charity and a retailer. The total value of those donations was over seven million pounds, reflecting the enormous commitment from retailers, colleagues, and those charities.

These partnerships, which commonly run for multiple years, are an opportunity for retailers to collaborate and learn from their partners, both on how to support community work but also how to more effectively fundraise. For those charities' retailers provide a welcome and necessary source of revenue, but just as importantly provide a platform to engage with thousands, or even millions, of Scottish shoppers.

Retailers also put significant effort into supporting some of the major annual fundraising campaigns, including raising nearly £400,000 for Poppy Scotland, Children in Need, and the STV Children's Appeal.

We don't include these figures elsewhere in the report but alongside their 2021 reports Members also said they had raised or donated nearly £500,000 to support those affected by the war in Ukraine by March when we concluded the fieldwork.



## CASE STUDY

### HOUSE OF BRUAR



In 2021 the House of Bruar increased its charitable donations in response to the clear need in the local community. That support was both through financial support, but also donating food and clothing to local charities. We also worked on an initiative to help colleagues' mental health and worked with Dementia Friends Scotland to enhance our understanding of that condition.



**CASE STUDY**

**SPAR SCOTLAND**

SPAR Scotland's 300 stores have spent a lifetime supporting community groups, charities and foodbanks through donations of stock, vouchers and cash. Since 2013 they have donated over £1m to both local and national community-based initiatives and charities. This includes running Community Cashback schemes in 2020 and 2021 which both years donated £30,000 to community groups and good causes affected by the Covid pandemic. This is alongside the businesses support for the SPAR UK national partnership which raised over £2 million for Marie Curie Cancer.



**CORPORATE DONATIONS**

Business donations were worth over £10.9 million to Scottish charities in 2021. That included £10.1 million in direct donations and £824,000 in product donations.

Direct donations refer to a myriad of different ways in which retailers directly support good causes. It includes direct donations to national charities and funds provided to individual stores to support local good causes. It also includes other mechanisms where retailers partner with charities, such as selling specific branded products with the profits going to charities. It also includes schemes where a portion of customer purchases are donated to a charity of the retailer or consumer's choice. It also includes the approach taken by several retailers where parking fine revenues are also donated to charities.

Product donations refers to items which the retailers donate which have an attributable financial value. This includes clothing, furniture, and food and drink products. These are often used to support charities in their own operations or fundraising. In 2021 these were worth £824,000 million.

Our fieldwork found there were hundreds of Scottish and national charities who were supported in this way. Health Charities did well, but also those working in sport and education, as well as local good causes all benefitted from these donations.



# VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY WORK

SRC Members also contributed over 980,000 hours of volunteering – worth around £10 million of time given over to good causes. That figure is significantly higher than previous years as we choose to include retail community programmes within this area.

Those programmes involve retailers giving a member of staff specified hours each week to work with the local community. The community worker receives training, support from the store management team, and a small budget which allows them to help charities small and large. Some of this is to coordinate access to the store for groups to fundraise, bag-pack, or raise awareness of an issue.

Alongside this, retailers also provide staff with the opportunity to support local projects, or even to give up time to support other charities. This is on top of the number of charitable foundations which large retailers run to support their charity work.

Alongside this, retailers also campaigned to support awareness raising around issues as diverse as period poverty, sepsis, loneliness, and modern slavery. It's also worth noting several retailers have provided direct support for the successful campaign to bring forward tougher penalties for those who assault shopworkers.



## CASE STUDY

### SCOTMID

Scotmid's Winter Giving Campaign made donations totalling £55,000. Funding was provided to more than 80 good causes across Scotmid's trading area with a focus on helping those dealing with food poverty, as well as organisations that tackle homelessness.

"Winter can be tough for many people, especially for those who rely on foodbanks or who may be struggling with homelessness. It is important for us to support the causes that directly help people in these difficult circumstances. We hope the funding has helped to make winter a little easier for people across our communities." Shirley MacGillivray, Head of Membership & Communities at Scotmid.



## CASE STUDY

### ROX

Since founding ROX nearly 20 years ago, Grant and Kyron have worked to build a strong community of brand partners and a network of charities that we can support both locally and nationally. In the last 5 years alone, we've raised over £150,000 for our chosen charities.

We created our own ROX in a BOX fundraiser that works perfectly at gala dinner events and ladies lunches. It is a really simple way to raise thousands of pounds for our chosen charities. We're a long standing supporter of the prestigious Women of Influence Lunch in aid of Action for Children and through our partnership with Hublot we've also built strong ties the Alan Shearer Foundation. We support by donating auction prizes as well as creating hospitality experiences for our clients and friends of ROX.

Music is also at heart of the ROX brand DNA and for the last four years we have been a proud supporter of the Scottish Music Awards which raise funds for musical therapy charity Nordoff Robbins. This event also allows us to discover and support up-and-coming new artists who have gone on to perform at our ROX events."



---

## ABOUT THE SRC

The SRC's purpose is to make a positive difference to the retail industry and the customers it serves, today and in the future.

Retail is an exciting, dynamic and diverse industry which is going through a period of profound change. Technology is transforming how people shop; costs are increasing; and growth in consumer spending is slow.

The SRC is committed to ensuring the industry thrives through this period of transformation.

We tell the story of retail, work with our members to drive positive change and use our expertise and influence to create an economic and policy environment that enables retail businesses to thrive and consumers to benefit. Our membership comprises businesses delivering £180bn of retail sales and employing over one and half million employees.

---



SCOTTISH RETAIL CONSORTIUM

Box 112, 12 Southbridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1DD  
07880 039 743 | [info@brc.org.uk](mailto:info@brc.org.uk) | [brc.org.uk/src](http://brc.org.uk/src)

Scottish Retail Consortium - a company limited by guarantee  
Registered in England and Wales No. 405720