

## The Charterhouse Retail Review Brief

### Introduction

[The Charterhouse](#) is seeking to commission a retail consultant to work with the Museum Manager to undertake a retail review of the Charterhouse museum gift shop. The Charterhouse shop has been open to the public since 2017 and after five years, we will be undertaking a retail review in order to visually improve the area, to reconsider stock choices, implement visual merchandising templates, and identify areas of weakness and strength, in order to optimise sales and to create a fresh and revitalised shopping experience for our visitors.

The consultant should provide a report including advice, guidance and suggestions on the below areas in order to improve the retail experience for our visitors:

- Experience of EPOS retail systems such as K3 Retail
- Price point and gross margin including cost vs sale price
- Upselling tactics
- Advice on sustainability
- [Online shop](#) suggestions and advice
- Visual merchandising guidance including product placement
- Ways to optimise and maximise sales
- Advice on shop layout
- Product line suggestions including top sellers for museum shops
- Current trends in heritage retail
- Supplier suggestions
- CRM
- Advice on designing new products
- Branding advice – ensuring synchronicity with current brand guidelines
- Guidance on our retail USP
- Realistic income/profit margins
- Realistic targets for increased spend per head
- Suggestions for sales and marking down products
- Advice on relevant training courses
- Any other relevant suggestions to enhance the customer experience and increase sales

### History of the Charterhouse

The Charterhouse is a former Carthusian monastery in London, located between Barbican and Smithfield Market, and to the north of what is now Charterhouse Square. Since the dissolution

of the monasteries in the 16th century the site has served as a private mansion, a boys' school and an almshouse, which it remains to this day.

Residents of the almshouse are known as 'Brothers', which is a purely traditional term acknowledging the Charterhouse's monastic past. The building is formally known as Sutton's Hospital in Charterhouse, and is a registered charity.

In January 2017, the Charterhouse opened its doors to the public for the first time since its foundation in 1348, as part of the 'Revealing the Charterhouse' project which was supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). The public are invited to discover our dramatic story in our Arts Council accredited [museum](#), which was curated in partnership with the Museum of London and there is now the opportunity to hire many stunning historic rooms of the Charterhouse for filming and private functions. We also have a purpose-built Learning Centre from which we run our Learning Programme for schools and families. As part of the 'Revealing the Charterhouse' project, a successful tour programme was created to enable members of the public to experience the interior of Charterhouse as well as seven acres of [gardens](#) on guided tours. We now hold a wide variety of additional virtual and physical [public engagement events](#) to complement the tour programme, such as lectures, carol concerts, Christmas fair, open gardens, evening tours and family events, to inspire and entice wider audience engagement with the Charterhouse.

The Covid-19 pandemic brought about many emotional and financial challenges for the charity. Despite 438 days of closure in 2020, we successfully refurbished our [Great Chamber](#) with thanks to the NLHF and reopened our museum, shop and tour programme on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

### Background

The Retail Review is important because an engaging and relevant retail space contributes to the provision of a good-quality service for visitors stipulated as follows in the Arts Council Accreditation guidance (Section Three: Users and their experience):

- 'The museum must offer and develop good-quality, stimulating services for users and potential users, in order to get the best out of its collections, resources and local area'
- 'The museum must provide a welcoming, accessible environment, and appropriate services and facilities'
- 'The museum must show that it understands its wider role in the community and its potential to contribute to local priorities'

### Charterhouse Mission

Our mission is to provide housing, care and support for older people in need, whilst sharing our heritage and preserving it for future generations.

### Product Vision

The overall vision for shop products is that they should meet one of these criteria:

- A clear link to the collection, historic rooms, tours, gardens or museum site in general
- A clear link to the local area and London
- Meet a range of price points for all pockets

### Audiences

The museum shop should aim to cater for the following audiences:

- Retired people with an interest in museums
- Families, broadly defined to be groups which include children with parent or other guardian
- Children, including provision for school groups
- Visitors of all ages with an interest in the history of the local area
- History enthusiasts – people with a particular interest in Medieval, Tudor or Victorian London
- Young professionals who work in the local vicinity

### Charterhouse current product ranges

- a) Museum branded products, for example, pens, magnets, tea towels, mugs, and key rings
- b) Tourist gifts, for example, greetings cards, postcards, and general London merchandise
- c) Pocket money gifts such as toys and games – specifically with a link to the national curriculum to appeal to school groups and reinforce the Charity's aim to advance education
- d) Books which cater for general and specialist audiences – for example, 'Charterhouse: The Official Guide' by Dr Stephen Porter, books by individuals with a link to Charterhouse history such as William Makepeace Thackeray, children's books such as the Horrible Histories series, and guides relating to nearby attractions (Museum of London) – to encourage and maintain local partnerships. Three of the Brothers have also written books which we stock in the shop.
- e) General adult range, for example, homeware such as candles, seed products, CDs, decorations
- f) Seasonal homemade merchandise, for example, Christmas gifts, homemade by the Charterhouse chefs and Garden gifts, grown by the Charterhouse Gardeners, wooden bowls made from the cherry and mulberry trees

### Design theme

The design theme should be consistent with the museum mission to increase public access to and enjoyment of the Charterhouse site. It should be:

- Welcoming and friendly
- Non-intrusive and does not detract from a building of historical significance
- Be a venture that staff, Brothers and volunteers can enthusiastically advocate for
- Contribute to an understanding of the site and its history
- Inspire, entice and excite visitors
- Ensure a variety of price ranges for a variety of age groups

## Future Plan

With the reduction in staff and resources following the pandemic, the Museum Manager, in consultation with the Visitor Services Assistants, is now responsible for the shop strategy, ordering of shop merchandise and the design of new product ranges. There have also been numerous supplier issues over the past year due to the covid-19 pandemic.

Despite these challenges, in the last year, the Museum Manager has made the following improvements to the retail experience:

- Created a new online shop with Digitickets
- New opportunities for upselling created online using links between retail products with events and tours during the visitor booking process
- Use of the new blackboard to highlight offers and entice visitors
- Increased space and enhanced shop display with installation of new shelving unit
- Designed and purchased new products
- Formed new partnerships with local artisan craftmakers i.e. Hoxton gardenware

However, there are still many improvements to make and we are currently looking into designing a new 'Talbot Dog Collection' range. This collection will be created using a bespoke design of the Charterhouse Talbot as the main image and will include tea towels, mugs, wrapping paper and many more items.

## Support

The Charterhouse will provide support on the below areas:

- Access to all relevant existing documentation, reports and resources to enable the consultant to conduct an informed review and provide relevant suggestions
- The Museum Manager at the Charterhouse as the main point of contact on a day to day basis. The Museum Manager will provide overall management of this review
- Key team members to attend meetings and provide any requested material ahead of meetings
- Access to the Charterhouse shop and historic rooms when required

## Application

To respond to this brief, the consultant should provide the Charterhouse with:

- A short methodology statement explaining how the brief requirements stated above will be delivered within the timescale required. This should include an anticipated timetable of activities and key dates and examples of your previous work as well as a CV.

A response of no more than 3 pages of A4 should be emailed for the attention of Gabriella Swaffield [gabriella.swaffield@thecharterhouse.org](mailto:gabriella.swaffield@thecharterhouse.org) by **5pm Friday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**

### Budget and Timescale

Please quote the fee you would wish to be paid with a cost breakdown along with your proposal. Please include any other costs for resources in your budget. Please highlight whether you are VAT registered. The fee available for this work is in the region of £2,000. The review must ideally be completed by end of February 2022, although some flexibility will be considered.

### Confidentiality and Data ownership

If you undertake this work you are required to maintain the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which you may be party to in the course of the contract and you are expected to work on behalf of The Charterhouse. All data collected in whatever forms remains the property of The Charterhouse.

If you have any queries about this brief, please do not hesitate to contact us:  
[gabriella.swaffield@thecharterhouse.org](mailto:gabriella.swaffield@thecharterhouse.org)

Gabriella Swaffield

Museum Manager

13/12/21