



Customer Case Study
The Children's Society

**The
Children's
Society**

**Helping to reduce single-use
plastic in charity retail**

Supporting children and protecting their planet

Protecting the planet for future generations is central to The Children's Society's approach to care and support.

The organisation recognises that environmental responsibility goes hand in hand with its mission to improve children's lives.

With a long-standing commitment to reducing its carbon impact, the Charity's network of more than 100 shops plays a vital role in their sustainability goals. By reusing and repurposing donated textiles and household items, the retail estate prevents valuable materials from going to landfill saving an estimated 900 tonnes of CO₂ every year.

Transforming Children's Lives Since 1885

For over a century, The Children's Society has worked to create better futures for all young people through support, advocacy, and empowerment. As part of its vision for a brighter future, the organisation has set an ambition to become carbon-zero. Measures such as energy-efficient lighting across the retail estate, recycling schemes, and trials of low-waste packaging all contribute to this goal.



The Challenge

While the Charity had already taken steps to reduce its environmental footprint, it was keen to go further, particularly in cutting single-use plastic across its retail operations. One of the biggest contributors was the large volume of single-use plastic sacks required to manage customer donations in all 100 stores. Reducing this was a priority both for environmental impact and for operational efficiency.



The Solution

Acopia has partnered with The Children's Society for more than a decade, supporting a range of plastic-reducing initiatives such as sugar-beet-based alternative bags for life and Velo clothing tagging attachments made from recycled post-consumer waste which can be fully recycled.

Building on this, Acopia invited the charity to take part in trialling a new innovation designed specifically for the charity retail sector, the Velo Reusable Transfer and Storage Sack.

Made from recycled plastic content and engineered for repeated long-term use, the Velo Sack was designed to streamline donation handling: receiving, sorting, storing, and transferring stock between other stores. Robust enough to hold 6 - 8kg, featuring a heavy-duty zip, and available in colour-coded options for storing seasonal items, the sacks remove the guesswork from stock management.

Helping to manage donations in
100 stores





The Results

The Children's Society trialled the new Velo Sacks across a selection of shops, where they were quickly embraced by staff. Following a successful trial, the sacks are now used in almost all of the charity's stores, eliminating thousands of single-use plastic bags each year and significantly improving the donation management processes.

Environmental stewardship and safeguarding children's futures are fundamental to The Children's Society. The introduction of Velo Sacks, alongside other carbon- and plastic-reducing initiatives strengthens the charity's position as a leader in sustainable retailing. It also provides a credible point of difference when working with local authorities, charity partners and wider stakeholders.

Velo Sacks

are eliminating thousands of single-use plastic bags each year for The Children's Society and significantly improving the donation management processes.

Store feedback has been overwhelmingly positive:



We're delighted to be using Velo Sacks in our stores. It was absolutely the right step to take and has transformed how we manage donations. The colour-coded bags make sorting and storing items incredibly straightforward and they've given a real boost to our sustainability credentials.

The fact that these bags can then be recycled at end of life and turned into waste bins in children's playgrounds really brings the sustainability story full circle, turning waste into something that benefits children in their communities.

Patricia Cook, Retail Support Manager
The Children's Society

