

FRIENDS OF BIG ISSUE NORTH

SUMMER 2018

Regular visitors to Manchester might recognise Dave, who has sold Big Issue North in the city centre for a number of years. However, Dave's been taking time off since Christmas with some health concerns, and has just come back vending this spring.

Selling the magazine on the streets all day can leave vendors feeling stressed, and the complexities of their lives – managing money worries, housing concerns and more – increases the chance of both physical and mental health concerns. At the end of 2017, things had got on top of Dave.

Dave said: "During the last 12 months I have been under a lot of pressure. I've had some financial problems and a lot of health problems, things like chest infections, which kept me off work and added to the stress.

"All of this led to me having a nervous breakdown just before Christmas. I don't remember much about the actual breakdown. I was at home when it happened. A friend of mine called the police because I was a danger to myself. I came close to committing suicide."

Like many people, especially men, Dave was reluctant to show that he was struggling with his mental health.

He said: "I knew that my mental health was deteriorating but I didn't let it show. A lot of my customers didn't realise what kind of stress I was under. People don't see it, what's inside, especially if you come across like I do as all happy and outgoing. I tried to cover it up and not show people by smiling all the time but inside it was killing me."

Dave's recovery from his breakdown was slow, and he kept in touch with our staff throughout. Our staff work

Support gets Dave back on track

with vendors to make sure they are able to access health and wellbeing support – we did so 61 times between January and March this year – and acting as a friendly face and listening ear to vendors.

"I'm getting professional counselling. I have had some very good support from Big Issue North. It was important for me to know that I could come back and sell again when I recovered, to see the people who know me from selling the magazine.

"I am 100 per cent pleased to be back selling the magazine properly, it's been a couple of difficult years but I have had such great support from a lot of people. It feels like 'Manchester loves you'.

"I am hoping that my life will turn around. I feel like there's light at the end of the tunnel. My plan is to get that caravan that I have always wanted and to retire to North Wales in the next couple of years."

As he continues to recover and manage his mental health, Dave knows that without his regular customers, things could be much worse.

"Life has been an uphill struggle ever since I was a child. But I feel that I have a family now, not just in Big Issue North but in the broader circle of my customers who have all helped me out over the years.

"I want to say a special thank you to all the people who have been helping me. Without all that support I would never got through another year."



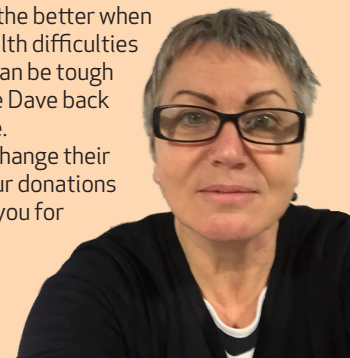
To make a donation to Big Issue North Trust, and enable us to support more vendors like Dave, please take two minutes to complete the attached form.

Letter from Fay

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter!

In this edition, we want to tell you about Dave, and how he has managed to change his life for the better when faced with mental and physical health difficulties – and how we supported him. Life can be tough for our vendors, so it is great to see Dave back working and able to earn an income. None of our work to help vendors change their lives would be possible without your donations of money, time and skills, so thank you for your ongoing support.

Fay Selvan,
Big Issue North Chief Exec



AROUND THE REGIONS

Our vendors are getting creative for the annual **MANCHESTER** Day Parade, on 21 June. Vendors and staff are creating their float and costumes to take part in the parade, which has a very apt theme for Big Issue North – ‘Word on the Street’.

Visitors to **LIVERPOOLS** Africa Oye festival will be able to pick up a copy of Big Issue North at the day, as the organisers of the world music festival have kindly offered a local vendor the chance to sell on site. Africa Oye is free, and takes place from 16-17 June.

Big Issue North will be meeting passengers at **BOLTON** train station on 30 July, sharing information about our vendors and the way we work to support them. If you're in the area, come and say hello!

MANCHESTER Victoria vendor Stefan Nan took part in the Manchester half marathon last month, raising money for Big Issue North Trust. Stefan completed the run in a very impressive 1 hour 44 minutes, and has raised more than £500 so far. To donate, visit justgiving.com/stefan-nan-2018.



Money matters

In recent weeks, we've been talking to vendors and getting their views on why money matters – and how Big Issue North Trust makes a difference.

First, we spoke to Alan, a vendor in Settle, who has recently been supported to get a card reader, and take cashless payments.

In order to enable vendors to use the readers – first trialled last year in Leeds and York – we make sure that they have a bank account set up, and support them to do so if not. Then, we take vendors through the process of setting up an online account with iZettle, who make the readers, and train them in how it works.

Alan said: “My first four sales, people didn't have cash on them, but they actually paid by card! It's been brilliant – easy and no fuss. I'm hoping to boost my sales by quite a lot.”

Another way in which Big Issue North staff support vendors with their finances is to support them to claim the benefits they're entitled to. As vendors are self-employed, there are a range of benefits they can access, but navigating the system can be daunting.

Ian, who sells in Wetherby, said: “This is a proper job. I get my working tax credits now. The staff in the office helped me sort out the paperwork. It took six months for the tax credits to come through but in the end I got back pay as well. It's great because they top up the money I get selling the magazines.”

Of course, the biggest difference that Big Issue North can make to a vendor's life is enabling them to earn an income, and to gain all the self-esteem and confidence that goes with that.

Between March and May, Big Issue North supported vendors with their finances 55 times, including:

- 24** tax issues
- 18** benefits issues
- 4** debt management issues
- 1** bank account set-up
- 8** general finance issues

Andrew, a Sheffield vendor, summed it up best: “Everybody has life problems but there's nothing better than someone trying to work for their money. I know you can earn a lot more money begging – I've seen the difference. What the Big Issue North guys get compared to what I had when I begged – it's like pennies versus pounds. But I don't want to beg anymore.”

Puppet Rebellion launch Street Noise 2018

Indie rock outfit Puppet Rebellion have been announced as the latest act to play a Street Noise event in support of Big Issue North Trust.

The band, whose debut album *Chemical Friends* was released last November, will play at Night & Day Café in their hometown of Manchester on Thursday, 5 July.

The show will be the second Street Noise event, following a sell-out performance from Frank Turner at the O₂ Manchester Ritz last August.

All profits from Street Noise events goes to Big Issue North Trust, and is used

to change the lives of Big Issue North vendors.

Henry Rogers, Puppet Rebellion's drummer, said: “We are very excited to be playing at Street Noise for Big Issue North, helping raise awareness and support for the invaluable work they do to help those in need change their lives.”

Street Noise is a regular series of events to raise money for Big Issue North Trust – watch this space for further announcements throughout 2018 and beyond.

Tickets are available at www.ticketweb.uk.



FIVE STAR CARE FOR FOUR-LEGGED FRIENDS

One Big Issue North office turned vets clinic in May, when Liverpool University veterinary students saw a chance to use their qualifications to make a difference to vendors' lives.

The vets give back to the homeless and vulnerable community of Liverpool, providing free care for dogs and pets. With a range of services available, from micro-chipping and vaccinations to grooming, the care provides vendors with the opportunity to keep their dogs healthy – giving them peace of mind.

A dog can mean so much more to those who have hectic lives – sometimes it's the only thing that remains constant.

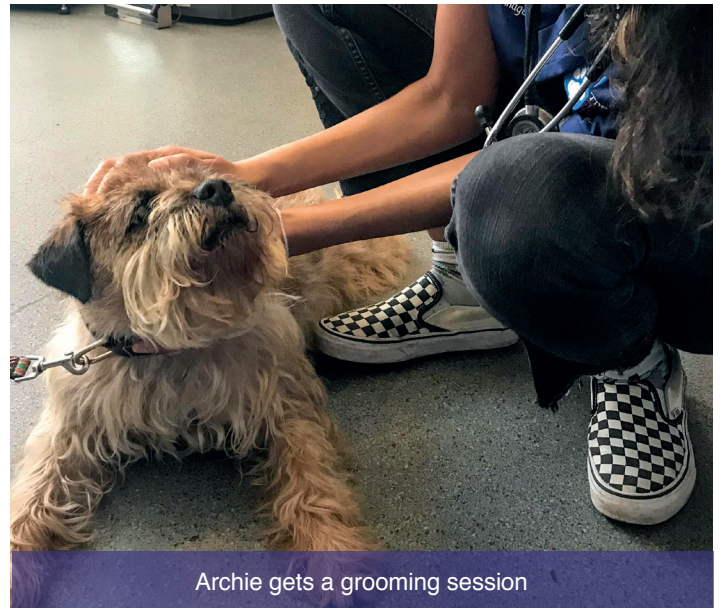
Angharad Griffiths, Liverpool service coordinator, explains that the first clinic

was a success: "Trusty Paws is a great addition to our office; it's wonderful that vendors can access this care. Dogs get five star treatment along with lots of love from vets and staff!

"The clinic also gives us the perfect opportunity to check in with vendors, addressing any needs they have. Vendors can often be in a rush to get their magazines and make some money for the day, so the clinic is brilliant as vendors are encouraged to take a break and have a chat while their dog is having treatment."

Big Issue North vendor Les was told about the clinic by staff and was pleased, as he struggles to manage his money at times, often leaving nothing for veterinary care for his dog Smudge.

Along with treatments, Les asked if the vets could



Archie gets a grooming session

provide him with a lead and collar as his are old and worn. He's excited to pick this up at the next clinic as he's scared the lead will break

and Smudge will run away. Les explained: 'I'm terrified he will get run over – he's my best mate, a gentle giant!'



The BIG Trip

Big Issue North is planning a BIG trip to raise funds for its vendors and needs your help. We have one BIG ask – go on holiday.

Yes, that's right, you can help our vendors, simply by booking your trip using Easy Fundraising (www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/bigissuenorth). Easy fundraising lists more than 2,700 retailers who have signed up to donate a percentage of every purchase you make. That means when you buy a holiday, summer clothes or insurance, you can raise funds for Big Issue North Trust from your couch, without spending a penny extra!

Supporting us through the summer comes in three simple steps, and you can jump on board at any stage:

1. Book holidays and buy any items you need through Easy Fundraising, selecting Big Issue North Trust as your chosen cause.
2. Take a picture of your Big Issue North in the most unusual locations and share it on social media, using #TheBIGtrip and tagging us (@bigissuenorth)
3. When you've finished topping up your tan, don't forget to donate your loose foreign currency through Leftover Currency. They take leftover holiday money off your hands, convert it back to pounds, and pass it straight onto us. You can find them at www.leftovercurrency.com.

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH US

We love to keep in touch with our supporters, keeping you updated on our vendors' progress, and how your donations are changing lives.

However, with recent changes to data laws, we need your permission to send you regular updates.

Please take two minutes to fill out our keep in touch form enclosed in this newsletter, and return it to us in the pre-printed envelope provided with this newsletter. Or you can confirm your subscription online at eepurl.com/dtq6LP.

Thank you for your continued support.

Settle stories hear our tale

In March, we were delighted to be involved with the 2018 edition of the Settle Stories Festival.

Nestled into the heart of the Dales, Settle boasts scenic views and community spirit. This first came to our attention when the town's residents took their local vendor, Alan, under their wing.

Speaking about the town, Alan said: "It's got a real community. I've made more friends there in a few weeks than I have ever made in my life. I made the three-hour journey to get there on the bus every day because it's such a good place. I'd love to move

there the people are great."

Settle Stories was keen to have real-life stories to go alongside its programme of traditional performance storytelling. With our team delivering a talk on the support we provide to those vulnerably housed or with little means to income. The talk featured our special guest Alan - and who can tell our story better than one of our vendors?

After the talk, we moved into a gazebo in the town square, explaining more about our work to the festival-goers. We were again joined by Alan, who was selling the magazine using his new cashless payment machine.

To request a talk for your organisation, event or community group, please email fundraising@bigissueinthenorth.com

How to donate

We are so grateful to everyone who donates to us, if you haven't donated already, here are some ways to support our vendors.

To set up a standing order to support our vendors please fill in the form enclosed with the newsletter or call 0161 848 2420.



You can also donate by mobile phone, just text BITN18 and the amount you wish to donate e.g. £20 to 70070



Please make out donations by cheque to Big Issue North Trust and send it to 463 Stretford Road, Manchester, M16 9AB.



For more ways to raise funds for us please contact fundraising@bigissueinthenorth.com



We need you!

Raise vital funds for free when you shop online with **easyfundraising**.org.uk

It's really easy to raise funds for the Trust with EasyFundraising while shopping online. Just remember to set Big Issue North Trust as your chosen charity and start raising at no extra cost!

Go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk today!

Smile and fundraise for Big Issue North Trust

You can now raise funds for Big Issue North Trust every time you shop on Amazon – and it won't cost you a penny.

Amazon have launched a new simple and automatic way for you to support our charity – Amazon Smile. Simply visit smile.amazon.co.uk every time you shop, and search for Big Issue North Trust when asked to select your chosen charity.

You'll only have to do this once, and then every time you shop through smile.amazon.co.uk, 0.5% of what you spend will come straight to Big Issue North Trust. You'll find the same prices, selection and shopping experience as amazon.co.uk, just with an extra warm feeling every time you shop.

Don't forget, you can only raise money for us if you shop at smile.amazon.co.uk, so save it in your bookmarks to make sure we don't miss out!

From bake sales to skydives, if you're fundraising to support us, please get in touch to see how we can help! Email fundraising@bigissueinthenorth.com to see how we can support and publicise your venture.

BIG ISSUE NORTH SHOP

Buy something BIG.

Take a look at our shop for photographic prints, canvas tote bags, back issues and more.

All profits made from our shop are reinvested back into Big Issue North, ensuring we can continue to support people to earn an income.

shop.bigissuenorth.com

THE TRUSTEES

Big Issue North Trust is supported by the Zochonis Charitable Foundation
The Trustees of The Big Issue North Trust are: Fay Selvan • Edna Robinson • Mark Fitzgibbon • Angela Young
The Big Issue in the North Trust is a Big Life charity (Registered Charity No. 1056041)
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