

# FRIENDS OF BIG ISSUE NORTH

WINTER 2016

## "THE SUPPORT THAT I GOT FROM STAFF WAS HUGE"

**Marta sells in Manchester city centre. She tells us about moving here and working as a Big Issue North seller.**

"I lived in Romania taking care of my 3 little brothers and 2 nephews at home as I couldn't find work. My boyfriend lives here in England and when I found out I was pregnant, he said to me, 'come to England. I can provide a better life for you here.' So I told my family that I had to move for

work, I left them in Romania. I miss my family very much but life is hard there and now I am alright.

"Selling the magazine was a really good opportunity for me, maybe the only one at that time to earn some money in order to prepare

## Letter from Fay

Welcome to the Friends of Big Issue North newsletter, winter 2016. With Christmas around the corner, it is a very busy time for us, and especially for our vendors as they sell magazines during the frenzy of Christmas shopping.

I wanted to thank all of you who support our vendors throughout the year, and wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy, healthy 2017.

Fay Selvan – Big Issue North Chief Exec



decent conditions for my baby who is due after Christmas. She needs to have a good start in life and hopefully I will be able to continue working to offer her a better life.

"The support that I have got from staff was huge, starting from the very first day when they registered me and explained how things work here, like what I need to do to improve my sales. They brought me to the hospital when I was so weak and vomiting due to the pregnancy. They helped me register to a GP and midwife and every day they take care of me, asking me how I feel, reminding me to take my vitamins and visiting me on my pitch to ask me if I am well.

"I don't have too much time to spare as I try to work as much as I can, but when I get home I cook for me and my boyfriend. I would like to have a TV to watch programs and relax at home but

unfortunately I can't afford to buy one now so I try to rest as much as I can and sometimes I speak on the phone with my family in Romania.

"For now I just hope to be healthy, to be able to earn enough money to buy food, clothes and everything I need for the baby. I hope to have an easy birth as it's my first. I would love to earn enough money to be able to send some money to my brothers at home too.

"I will try to work as much as possible in December as I know people are more kind and generous at this time of year. We don't have too many friends around so on Christmas day I will spend it at home with my boyfriend and hope to have a lovely meal cooked by myself.

"I want to thank all of my customers for all the help they give me by buying the magazine every week. I want them to know that their help is a huge gift, their support means a lot and I appreciate it very much. I wish all my customers all the best for this Christmas, and wish them happiness, peace and health for their families and a happy New Year."



## HOW OUR VENDORS WILL SPEND CHRISTMAS



### Howard - Leeds

I'm not sure what I'll be doing on Christmas day but next year I hope to be able to read my bible all the way through.

Merry Christmas and thank you all for your support this year, I hope it continues through 2017.



### Smurf - Sheffield

"Christmas day will be nothing special, nowhere to go and nothing to do. I'll probably make a big bacon butty and spoil the dogs.

In 2017 I'd like to get a job at a husky rescue centre. I'd like to thank everyone for their past, present and future support. Merry Christmas"



### Ken - Manchester

On Christmas day I will be drinking single malt whiskey in my tent with my dog Bailey, but he won't be getting any!

In 2017 I hope to stay out of trouble and remain class A drug free (6 1/2 years so far).

I'd like to thank everyone for helping me live a law-abiding life, no prison for me ever again!



### David - Liverpool

I will be working on Christmas day. Next year I will try and sell even more copies of the magazine.

I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



### Darius - Sheffield

I will spend Christmas with HARC (Homeless and Rootless at Christmas) and next year I want to go to rehab.

I have an alcohol problem and want to change my life. Next year will be good as I finally have a detox appointment which I've been waiting a year for.

I am so happy that people buy Big Issue North, it means I have somewhere to live and afford rent.

# Tony's training course proves a real life saver

**Tony, who sells Big Issue North in Liverpool, tells us about taking part in a new training course and putting his new skills in action!**

"It's a course to help people who overdose on drugs through an organisation called Change, Grow, Live. I have been trained to spot if someone has overdosed and, if they have, to inject them with this opiate blocker called Naloxone, which can stop them dying.

"I had to do three training sessions, which included learning about how to administer the injection properly. When people overdose, it's important that you inject them in the right place, you see. It needs to be in arm or the muscle in the top of your leg. If you put it anywhere else it would take a lot longer to work. Now I have a box of the medication at home for when it's needed.

"I thought it would be a good thing to take part in. Quite a few people around here have overdosed recently. There's a car park not far away where they use drugs and it has happened there a few times.

"Having someone nearby who is trained in this can make a big difference because it might be that the ambulance takes 10 or 15 minutes to arrive, by which time it could be too late. This injection can help save someone's life.

"A week ago I administered it for the first time. Someone came knocking on my door because they knew I had done the course. A lad round the corner, who I didn't know, had overdosed.

"You can tell when someone has, because under their eyelids starts going blue, and their lips start going blue and they start shaking.

"When I saw him I knew what was happening and so I used the medication on him. I wasn't frightened of injecting him. When it comes to it, because of what's happening, you just do it. The ambulance arrived 10 minutes later.

"It would be good if more people were trained in this. It would take some weight off the ambulance service. I'm thinking of doing some voluntary work at the drugs service - maybe just one to two days a week or something.

"I say to people, young people, if they are just starting to smoke cannabis... well, they might say it will never lead to doing anything harder but I'd say to them it can, believe you me.

"My doctor and support workers were really made up, and so were the staff at the Big Issue North Liverpool office. They really encouraged me to take this course. They are a good bunch. It's a good old organisation, this."





## Liam loving Leeds life

Liam, a vendor who has recently arrived in Leeds from Northern Ireland, tells us how he feels right at home in the city.

"I'm 27. I was backwards and forwards as a child between England and Belfast.

"There was a big family break-up when I was a child and I was looking out for myself by the time I was 16. This is the second time selling a street paper, because I sold The Big Issue in the south of England about six years ago. I was heavy on the drugs last time though. I was on

speed, coke, Es, you name it, apart from smack and crack, which I've never touched and never will. I was selling the magazine to support my habit – that's the truth. But I had a wake-up call in 2010, and I went back to Belfast and teetotalled off everything.

"I was working after that. I'm a qualified fork lift driver, and I was working for five years for job employment agencies. But there wasn't always work and I wasn't getting enough money to pay the rent and it got to the stage that my landlord kicked me out. This is just a month ago. I lost everything that I'd worked for for the last five years. I couldn't get any support in Belfast so I decided to come here to Leeds.

"I was hoping to start again here because I thought I could get a better job. I was supposed to get some money from a previous job which

would have paid for a deposit on a flat but they messed me about, so I ended up selling Big Issue North. I think the people here in the north are a lot more open. I've had a warmer welcome here in Leeds than I have in any other town. I'm doing well at sales and I've got a few regulars.

"I'm living in a homeless hostel at the moment. The guys in the Leeds Big Issue North office got me in there. I'm hoping to move soon though into my own place.

"I'm going to sell the magazine until after Christmas, and with the money I am earning I'm trying to re-educate myself. The staff in the office are helping me get my CSCS card so I can work on construction sites. I need to concentrate on getting my life back together now. I'm making progress. It's slow but sure. But I'm getting somewhere."

## Big Issue North launches online shop

The new Big Issue North shop is now launched!

Visit the shop today, to buy back issues of the magazine, as well as tote bags, calendars and Christmas cards.

We only sell magazines online the week after they've been published. However, when we have copies of the magazine left over at the end of the week, you can now buy these online if you missed out.

And, in a special Christmas deal, you can buy a bundle containing a tote bag, calendar and pack of five Christmas cards for just £12 - the perfect gift for your loved ones over the festive period.

All the money raised from sales in the shop goes back

into Big Issue North. So the money you spend in our shop will help to pay for the magazine's production, and allow us to pay our staff, who work with our sellers on a daily basis, offering support through things such as crisis work, action planning and helping them to access other services.

The magazine's new website is also due to launch in the next few weeks.

The website will have all our news stories, reviews and features – only published once they have been in a magazine sold by our vendors for a week – as well as information about fundraising and events. The address of our website is not changing, and can be found at [www.bigissuenorth.com](http://www.bigissuenorth.com).



[SHOP.BIGISSUENORTH.COM](http://SHOP.BIGISSUENORTH.COM)





# MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS



For many years, Ann, Gerry and Eileen have volunteered for us, sending out the newsletter you're reading right now.

Ann said: "I've been volunteering here for years, sending out the newsletter, and I love it. I've started talking to people in my everyday life about the magazine and the support the people selling it get, trying to explain how it works."

## 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 BITN16 and the amount you wish to donate e.g. £20 to 70070



To make donations by cheque please make it out 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

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It's really easy to raise funds for the Trust with EasyFundraising while shopping online this Christmas. Just remember to set the Big Issue North Trust as your chosen charity and start raising at no extra cost! Go to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) today!

# WE NEED YOUR VIEWS!

In the Autumn edition of the Friends of Big Issue newsletter, we asked for your views on the work we do, and how you feel about the newsletter you receive.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to fill in our survey and asked us questions, and told us their thoughts and what they like to read about.

We've answered a couple of your questions on the opposite column.

We're still keen to hear from more people, so to have your input, please fill in our short survey at [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/US510/](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/US510/).

How can I subscribe to Big Issue North?

We have launched our online shop where you will be able to sign up for 3, 6 or 12 month subscription packages to the magazine.

What regular campaigns do you do?

In our next newsletter we will give a roundup our campaign with the International Network of Street Papers, which runs from 6-12 February. Our involvement pays tribute to our vendors' hard work, and challenges perceptions of poverty and homelessness across the globe.

## Why set up a standing order?

Long-term, regular donations are more cost effective. Regular gifts mean a consistent, predictable income so we can plan and budget better and be more efficient. More of your money goes towards supporting our work as they generate less administration and carry cheaper bank charges.

There are also benefits for you. A regular gift provides you with the reassurance that you are actively helping to improve the lives of Big Issue North vendors.

To set up a standing order please fill out the form enclosed with this newsletter. Thank you.



### THE TRUSTEES

Big Issue North Trust is supported by the Zochonis Charitable Foundation  
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