



VOICES FROM THE STREETS:

READ FIRST HAND WHAT OUR VENDORS HAVE TO SAY

“The Big Issue helps a lot of people who are on the streets or have circumstances hindering them. Me – it’s helped me quite a lot. I’ve sold for 3 years on and off and within that period I’ve been able to survive without a proper job or resulting to crime. I thank the Big Issue for all the support it has given me and the other vendors. Since I have been selling the Issue I have met some really nice people, staff and vendors. I’d also like to thank my customers”

“THE BIG ISSUE HAS KEPT ME OUT OF TROUBLE; GIVEN ME A STEADY LIFE AND I NOW HAVE NO WORRIES IN THE WORLD. IT HAS TAUGHT ME TO RESPECT THE VALUE OF MONEY”



“I have been selling the Big Issue for four years. I approached the Big Issue after six years of sleeping rough and relying on begging. Selling The Issue is helping regain my confidence. I don’t beg anymore. And it just makes it worth getting up in the morning.”

“About 2 and a half years ago I was really stuck and on the street – at my wits end! I had literally no money for over six weeks and then a nurse at the local health centre made 2 calls that saved my life! The first was to the Salvation Army for an emergency bed. The second was to the Big Issue. Since then I have moved from temporary to permanent accommodation, sorted out my finances and established a routine (I now get up at 6am every morning to get to my pitch by 7am). The Big Issue has also made a massive improvement to my self esteem and mental health – I’ve started talking to people and socialising again and most importantly realised that I am a human being. I have been dry for over a year now and even started volunteering at a local church helping other people; in fact this was arranged by one of Big Issue customers”

“I became homeless following the painful break down of my marriage and after sleeping rough in several cities I ended up in London in 2004. I turned to The Big Issue as a last resort. The Big Issue Foundation helped me to get off the streets and into a hostel and after a few months I was given the opportunity to be a Vendor Coordinator. The Big Issue has helped me sort my life out so it is great to be able to help other Vendors out. ”

“I am Polish. I’m sitting in a garden. It’s a lovely day in April. I’m resting from study during my Easter holiday. All around me a dinner party for my boyfriend is finishing. Bliss! All this wouldn’t be possible without help from The



Big Issue Foundation. It was a year ago that I came to Great Britain. I’d got myself a job interview. I didn’t get the job. I’d arrived in the UK and now I had no job and no means to earn a living. Luckily my boyfriend knew The Big Issue offices in Birmingham.”

“In the past few months my life has started to change for the better. This is due in no small part to the efforts of The Big Issue Foundation in Bournemouth. My life has been all about drug addiction for the last thirty years but I genuinely feel I’ve made inroads into tackling the problem – both with help of the Foundation and through my own hard work.”

“I TRIED TO CHANGE FROM JOB SEEKERS ALLOWANCE TO INCAPACITY MYSELF AND LOST 6 WEEKS OF PAY... THE BIG ISSUE FOUNDATION SORTED EVERYTHING OUT, AND I HAD BACK PAY TOO.... THEY EXCEEDED MY EXPECTATIONS.”