



A life is not rebuilt in a moment.

You can help change someone's life today. Help a vendor take the first steps towards a more positive future, from just £5 a month.

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The Big Issue Foundation
3rd Floor, 113-115 Fonthill Road
London N4 3HH

020 7526 3458
foundation@bigissue.com
www.bigissue.org.uk

The journey to becoming a Big Issue vendor is seldom straightforward. Few of us expected we'd be selling the magazine. I'm so very grateful for the big hand up that's been extended by people like you. Can you offer a helping hand to more Big Issue vendors today?

April 2019

Dear first name,

My Name is Bill. I was a Big Issue vendor in Bournemouth for six years. But my journey started long before then.

I'd been running a pub in Kent when I had a nervous breakdown. I'd worked four years without any time off and I just couldn't take it anymore. Handing in my notice was the only option left. But I didn't just lose my income. I lost my home, too. You see, my flat came with the job. Suddenly I was homeless.

I didn't have anywhere to go so my dog Chloe and I set off on a long trek around the South Coast. We slept wherever we could find shelter. Eventually we found a cave where we stayed for six months. It's not everyone's cup of tea but we quite liked it, actually. Unfortunately, some of the locals didn't see it our way and we had to leave. By the time we arrived in Bournemouth we were ill, exhausted, and penniless. It was then that we first came across the Big Issue family.

I saw a vendor in town and asked him if there were any safe spots to put up a tent for the night. He showed me where he was staying and told me about the support The Big Issue Foundation provides to people who are homeless. I thought I might as well give it a go and so the next day I went in and met Liam, the main Service Broker there at the time.



Bill Webb, Bournemouth

Your donation could help a Big Issue vendor access the much-needed health and well-being services they need today. Give once or set up a regular donation of £5 a month.

Liam was very efficient and also very friendly and understanding. He prioritised our health, arranging for me to see a doctor so I could get a prescription for some essential medication that had run out, and he also organised a check up with a vet for Chloe.

Next Liam persuaded me to attend the blood borne viruses drop in clinic. Long story short I found out I had Hepatitis C, which attacks the liver. I was offered treatment, but they wouldn't go ahead with it until I was securely housed because of the severe side effects.

Liam had already helped me to have my Employment and Support Allowance reinstated and I was slowly building up my micro business selling The Big Issue, but I didn't have enough for a deposit, let alone to furnish a flat.

Continue overleaf

Yes, I want support more Big Issue vendors to become rising stars today!

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Text 'BILL 5' to 70085 to donate £5 and opt into marketing communications.

Alternatively, you can text WEBB 5 and donate £5 without opting in to marketing communications.

I would like to make a donation of: £880 £886 £888 Other £

- Please tick this box if you would prefer not to receive a thank you letter
I enclose a cheque/voucher made payable to The Big Issue Foundation
Please debit my MasterCard/Visa/CAF Charity Card (Delete as appropriate)

Card No
Start Date
Expiry Date
Security No
Signature
Date

Make your gift worth 25% more at no extra cost to you giftaid it

I would like The Big Issue Foundation to reclaim the tax on all qualifying gifts of money I have made in the past, present and on all future donations I make from this day forward until I notify you otherwise. I confirm that I am a UK Tax Payer and that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax to cover the amount that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for each tax year (6th April to 5th April, currently 25p of tax for every £1 I donate), it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

I am not a Tax Payer

Thank you for keeping in touch!

Your support changes lives, thank you. We will continue to only contact you in the ways you want and keep your data safe. You can change your mind at any time by calling 020 7526 3458 or by emailing foundation@bigissue.com. See our privacy statement at www.bigissue.org.uk/privacy.

The Big Issue Foundation excels at building links with all the other providers in town, which means they know exactly where to refer Big Issue vendors to get the best possible support.

Incredibly, The Big Issue Foundation came to the rescue by liaising with other providers and dipping into the Vendor Support Fund to come up with enough money to help me move into my own place.

That's when I started to really rebuild my life. The Hep C treatment was successful, and I was getting involved with as many opportunities through The Big Issue Foundation as I could. I took part in several accredited courses and regularly spoke to nursing students at Bournemouth University about my experiences of living on the street. I was always building on my skills and there was even some career progression, with a promotion from vendor to vendor coordinator. Things were looking up!



My heart sank when I found out the landlords wanted to sell our flat. Determined not to fall after all the progress I'd made, I found myself another place to live but it didn't work out and suddenly Chloe and I were back in the tent.

I'm not going to lie, it was difficult. You don't expect things to go backwards when you're working so hard to move forwards. You start wondering if there's any point. But the team at The Big Issue Foundation was brilliant. They reminded me of how far I'd come and encouraged me to keep fighting. And I'm so glad I did because once again we're safely housed in our own little place with heating and furniture and a secure roof over our heads.

**Help support more Big Issue vendors to access safe and secure accommodation from just £5 a month.**

But that's not where my story ends. You see, The Big Issue never let me stop talking! Whether standing on a stage in front of 300 people at The Big London Night Walk kick-off; delivering workshops to students; or chatting with every kind of customer you could imagine – public speaking has been a big part of my journey.

So, when a local brewery advertised for a tour guide it was a no-brainer. I'd become a confident public speaker, I've always loved beer (as opposed to lager), and I'd like to think I know a thing or two about it from my time working as a publican.

**I now have a job at Southbourne Ales. I take groups of visitors around the Victorian-inspired taproom and talk them through the craft beers we make here in Bournemouth. Perfect.**

I've been determined to give back to this life-changing organisation every chance I get. I've walked half-marathons on cold, rainy nights; raised money for several events and told my story in front of hundreds of people in the name of The Big Issue Foundation. No ask is too big, no task too much if it means flying the flag for the people that kept me going through the darkest times.

I marked the end of my vending days by giving back my tabard in April 2018. Less than a year later, in March 2019 I won the BH Stars Rising Star Award for my work at the brewery.

Thank you so much for helping me get here; thank you so much for not letting me give up.

Yours sincerely,

Bill and Chloe

**P.S. I hope you can help other Big Issue vendors find their purpose and learn some vital skills along the way. People like you can change lives. You can support more Big Issue vendors like me to become rising stars with a gift of £5 a month today. Thank you.**

**Other ways to donate...**



Online, go to [www.bigissue.org.uk/BillWebb](http://www.bigissue.org.uk/BillWebb)



Mobile, text **BILL 5 to 70085**



Phone, call Rhia on **020 7526 3458**

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 I am not a Tax Payer

I would like to make a monthly gift of: **£5**  **£10**  **£20**  Surprise us **£**

I prefer my gift to be made on the: **1st**  **OR** **15th**  starting  MM  YY

Full name and postal address of your bank/building society

To: The Manager (insert bank name) Bank/building society

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Name(s) of account holder(s)

Branch sort code Account number

Reference (Office Use only): [G4]

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Originator's identification number 9 7 3 6 0 4

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Please pay The Big Issue Foundation direct debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with The Big Issue Foundation and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

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Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some type of account.

