

# Can you provide PPE to help Big Issue North vendors back to work?

Wednesday 20 May, 2020

We are approaching our tenth week since Big Issue North was pulled from the street for the first time since its foundation in 1992 for the safety of our vendors and customers. As the weeks have gone by, many people have adjusted to new living and working conditions under lockdown. For our vendors, however, the future remains entirely uncertain.

Each week, we are reviewing the latest advice to try to determine when it will be safe for our vendors to return to work. At present, we do not feel that a return to work would be in the best interests of our vendors or customers. When the time is right, though, we want to ensure that vendors and their customers are as safe as possible.

To do this, we need the help of members of the public. We want to ensure that all of our vendors have a face shield and reusable face mask before they return to work. We are asking anyone who has a 3D printer or sewing skills, and some time and resources, to help us out by making some PPE for our vendors. Anyone who is interested in helping out can get in touch by emailing us at [fundraising@bigissueinthenorth.com](mailto:fundraising@bigissueinthenorth.com)

To facilitate a safe return to work, we will also have to buy other reusable forms of PPE, such as gloves. As cash can carry germs and exchanging cash require being in close proximity, we also want to enable cashless payments for all of our vendors. This will require purchasing contactless card readers, as well as ID for vendors who do not have any and do not currently have a bank account.

On top of allowing vendors to return to work safely, we hope that these investments will also help our vendors to increase their sales in the future as our society becomes increasingly cashless.

In the meantime, many of our vendors also continue to rely on our hardship fund to cover their cost of living. For vendors who are or who live with someone who is particularly vulnerable, this reliance may continue until there is a vaccination.

We therefore need support more than ever. Anyone who would like to make a donation can text **HARDSHIP** to 70970 to give £5, or go to [easydonate.org/HARDSHIP](https://easydonate.org/HARDSHIP) to give as much or as little as they can afford.

Customers can also continue to support the magazine buy buying issues or taking out a subscription at [shop.bigissuenorth.com](https://shop.bigissuenorth.com), buying digital issues from [issuu.com/bigissuenorth](https://issuu.com/bigissuenorth), or picking up a copy during their weekly shop at Sainsbury's, McColl's, Co-Op, Asda, One Stop, Morrisons, Waitrose or Booths.

Anyone looking for a mask for themselves or a loved one can also support Big Issue North by buying one from MancMade Clothing, who are donating £1 from each sale to our vendor hardship fund. The cotton masks are custom made and available in six sizes, designed to fit over filtered masks and containing pockets for filters for additional safety. They are available at [etsy.com/uk/NattySewardSo/listing/796040494/fabric-face-mask](https://etsy.com/uk/NattySewardSo/listing/796040494/fabric-face-mask)

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### Big Issue North

T. 07870 509 965

E. [fundraising@bigissueinthenorth.com](mailto:fundraising@bigissueinthenorth.com)

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