

GROUP IMPACT REPORT

**A BIG Plan, unlocking opportunity
over the next five years**

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A Joint Message from Group CEO & Chair

For over 30 years, The Big Issue, one of the most loved social enterprises in the UK, has been at the forefront of social activism, working to dismantle poverty by creating opportunity. We have supported more than 100k individuals to earn over £144m in collective income through selling The Big Issue magazine, in order to improve their social and economic prospects – staggering figures.

But there is so much more to The Big Issue. Our business is changing lives. Our work in the social investment sector through Big Issue Invest, has seen us support more than 500 social enterprises since 2005; the launch of the Stop Mass Homelessness (SMASH) campaign shows our commitment to working towards social justice and creating positive impact for as many people as possible; and our increased focus on partnerships has led to new initiatives such as the launch of a fleet of Big Issue eBikes in Bristol.

With this diversity of work for the first time, we are publishing an impact report that covers all of our work in 2021. This report demonstrates the impact of our work, but also acts as a starting point for our future, with the launch of our new Big Issue Group five-year strategy. Our new five-year Group Strategy and Mission aims to create innovative solutions through enterprise, to unlock social and economic opportunity.

Our strategic Impact goal is that by 2027, up to 11 million people every year will engage with and be positively impacted by Big Issue Group products and services, whether being supported by the social enterprises we invest in; being part of the positive outcomes and policy changes we campaign for; or directly benefitting from our dynamic and enterprising programmes of work.

Our sub-brands, programmes of work and new initiatives will be focused around our three core pillars, that will act as guiding principles. These are:

- 1. Innovation** - to create new income generating opportunities for marginalised individuals to earn sustainable income.
- 2. Prevention** - work to prevent more people falling into, or remaining in poverty through direct support, campaigning and journalism.
- 3. Investment** - backing individuals and organisations to achieve social, economic, and environmental growth and development.

To reflect our new strategic direction, we are reinforcing our position as **Big Issue Group (BIG)**. This report also sees us launch a new look and feel, new brand logos and a new value proposition.

***Changing Lives Through Enterprise: Creating solutions to unlock opportunities
for people living in poverty to earn, learn and thrive.***

Having emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, we now face a new challenge. In the wake of the cost-of-living crisis and record levels of poverty and inequality, there are now close to 15 million people trapped in poverty in the UK. And it is estimated there are 20m people in the UK unable to access mainstream finance. The work of Big Issue Group is as important now as it was when we first began, 30-years ago.

Thank you for reading our impact report, learning about the work and supporting Big Issue Group.



Paul Cheal – Big Issue Group CEO



Nigel Kershaw – Big Issue Group Chair



Big Issue Group is deliberately constructed to create the greatest level of positive impact for individuals, organisations and communities through our shared mission.

Vision

A world that works for everyone.

Mission

We create innovative solutions through enterprise, to unlock social and economic opportunities.

Value Proposition

Changing Lives Through Enterprise. Our business is changing lives. With 15m people in the UK trapped in poverty, Big Issue Group creates solutions to unlock opportunities for people living in poverty to earn, learn and thrive.



The Big Issue Magazine is a multi-award winning, weekly publication launched in 1991 in response to the growing number of rough sleepers

on the streets of London. While our print magazine has grown into a household name, Big Issue Media is building its digital reach with new innovations through both its website and digital app, and developing its digital subscriptions offer.

Big Issue vendors are offered the opportunity to improve their social and economic prospects through selling The Big Issue Magazine. Vendors come from a variety of backgrounds and face a complex range of challenges associated with poverty and inequality.



Founded in 2005, Big Issue Invest extends Big Issue Group's mission - to build a world that works for everyone - by financing the growth of sustainable social enterprises. Big Issue Invest currently manages or advises on impact funds with a value of over £400 million.



Founded in 1995, Big Issue Foundation is an independently funded registered

charity. It was founded to work exclusively with The Big Issue vendors but is now evolving to support any individual across Big Issue Group, connecting them to the vital support they need to enable them to rebuild their lives and determine their own pathways to a better future.



The aim of Big Issue Ignite is to build on our history and experience of supporting Big Issue vendors by offering a wider range of self-

help opportunities and employment programmes for marginalised and excluded communities and individuals to earn a legitimate income and develop their skills.

The first new project to launch is Big Issue eBikes Bristol, creating new employment opportunities in the city. Work is also underway developing Big Issue Recruit, where Big Issue Group will work with key partners to support individuals into employment and training.



Big Issue Shop offers a platform for social trading that makes ethical shopping a truly accessible option.

We are supporting ethical producers and designers to reach a wider group of customers and enabling them to achieve even greater social and environmental impact.

The Parliamentary Office Of Lord John Bird

In 2015, John Bird joined the House of Lords with a life-peerage. Lord Bird holds an important position to campaign for many of the key issues of social justice that Big Issue Group is fighting for. Lord Bird has spearheaded the cross-party Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill in recent years.

Big Issue Group - 30 Years of Impact

From our beginnings as a homeless street magazine in London to growing into a national organisation offering services as diverse as direct frontline interventions to social investment, The Big Issue has always existed to serve those most in need. For 30-years The Big Issue has been creating positive impact for our customers.

How we have supported Big Issue vendors with magazine sales since 1991:



Total vendors
105,000



Total Sales
220 MILLION



Total income for vendors
£144 MILLION

We have supported Big Issue vendors with the following number of interventions in key wrap-around support areas:¹



Housing Support
25,000+

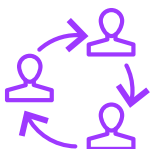


Healthcare Support
32,000+



Financial & Digital Inclusion
30,000+

How we have supported social enterprises with investment since 2005:



Current Investees
(2020/21)
153



Total Customer Reach
(2020/21)
1,160,000



Total Historic Investees
500



AUM + Advisory
£400 MILLION

¹Data based on records since 2011

Big Issue Group's New Five-year Strategy

15 million people in the UK live in relative poverty² and this number is predicted to grow due to the ongoing cost of living crisis. Big Issue Group is setting out a new five-year strategy to support a greater number of individuals, organisations and communities in need, delivering creative solutions to unlock social and economic opportunity for people trapped in poverty.

Delivered through 3 strategic pillars:

Innovation

Creating innovative solutions and income generating opportunities for marginalised people.

Prevention

Offering direct support to help individuals avoid poverty while influencing, through campaigns and journalism, for meaningful social change.

Investment

Investment and lending opportunities for sustainable business, focused on delivering positive social and environmental impact.

Our new strategy will enable us to deliver an even greater level of impact for marginalised individuals, communities and organisations over the next five years and in 2027 we aim to achieve:

By 2027, we aim for up to **11 million people every year to engage with Big Issue Group products and be positively impacted by Big Issue Group services**



8.5 million

people engaging with our print and digital media, through our website and purchasing from vendors.



1.5 million

end customers benefiting from our investments.



60,000

people engaging with and supporting our campaigns for social justice and reduced inequality.



1 million

people benefiting from the positive outcomes and policy changes campaigned for by Big Issue Group.



57,000

people directly benefiting from the services on offer from Big Issue Group. This includes Big Issue vendors, individuals in need accessing our support services, individuals using our employability programmes and the jobs created and supported through our investments.



3,600

consumers shopping ethically with Big Issue Shop.

² Joseph Rowntree Foundation, "UK Poverty 2022: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK", <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2022>

Message from a Big Issue vendor

“ Before I sold The Big Issue I was living on the streets. I’d had a flat but was forced to leave. I ended up sleeping rough and begging but I thought to myself, “I can do better than this”. I’d had enough and I wanted to change my lifestyle, so when I heard about The Big Issue I went and signed up. The Big Issue kept me going, it was my reason to get up in the mornings. But that all changed with COVID-19 when Big Issue sellers couldn’t work through lockdown. That period was so tough and I struggled with my mental health, if it hadn’t been for the support of The Big Issue I don’t really know how I would have got through it.



I wouldn't have been able to keep the heating on at home, or even buy food to eat, if it hadn't been for the financial support The Big Issue gave to vendors. Knowing that Big Issue staff were there to speak to over the phone also meant I never felt too isolated while stuck in my flat.

It's great to be back out selling and seeing my regular customers now though, but things are tough. Before the pandemic I could be selling 15 to 20 copies on my good days; but now I'm struggling to sell two or three copies some days. Things are slowly getting better, but the streets are still quiet, and everyone has a lot of financial worries of their own right now, so it may be a while yet before I'm selling as many magazines as I want to be.

This year, The Big Issue are going to be supporting me to get my first ever passport which I can use for ID; and who knows, maybe

even travel the world someday! I also got support during lockdown to buy a laptop and The Big Issue are supporting me to develop my digital skills through the Financial & Digital Inclusion programme. I've become a really keen writer in the last few years and I'm using my laptop to do that.

It's really fantastic that The Big Issue are able to offer us vendors support beyond just selling the magazine, there are real opportunities to develop new skills and the staff are really helpful here in Cardiff.

If it wasn't for The Big Issue I dread to think what situation I'd be in now: still on the streets, in prison or maybe even worse.

- Mark is a Big Issue vendor in Cardiff and sells at Queen Street Station.

OUR WORK & IMPACT IN 2021



Pillar 1 – INNOVATION

Big Issue Group's work in this pillar builds on our entrepreneurial heritage; supporting our vendors to become 'micro-entrepreneurs' by generating a legitimate income through magazine sales.

We will continue to work with vendors to increase their income and achieve their potential every way that we can. Beyond our vendors, we will be innovating even more ways to help unlock social and economic opportunities for individuals and enterprises.

The Big Issue Magazine Vending

Life for Big Issue vendors in 2021 started in very a similar way to 2020: unable to earn a legitimate income as the UK faced a new period of COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown. Between January 1st and April 11th, vendors were unable to sell magazines on the streets of the UK and The Big Issue pivoted our service and support offer to help vendors

through this difficult time (more details of this support on pg. 18).

With lockdown restrictions lifted as of April 12th 2021, Big Issue vendors experienced their longest period of selling without restrictions since the start of the pandemic; 38 weeks from April 12th through to the end of the year.

During these 38 publication weeks in 2021...

The Big Issue worked with 3,296 individuals across the country.

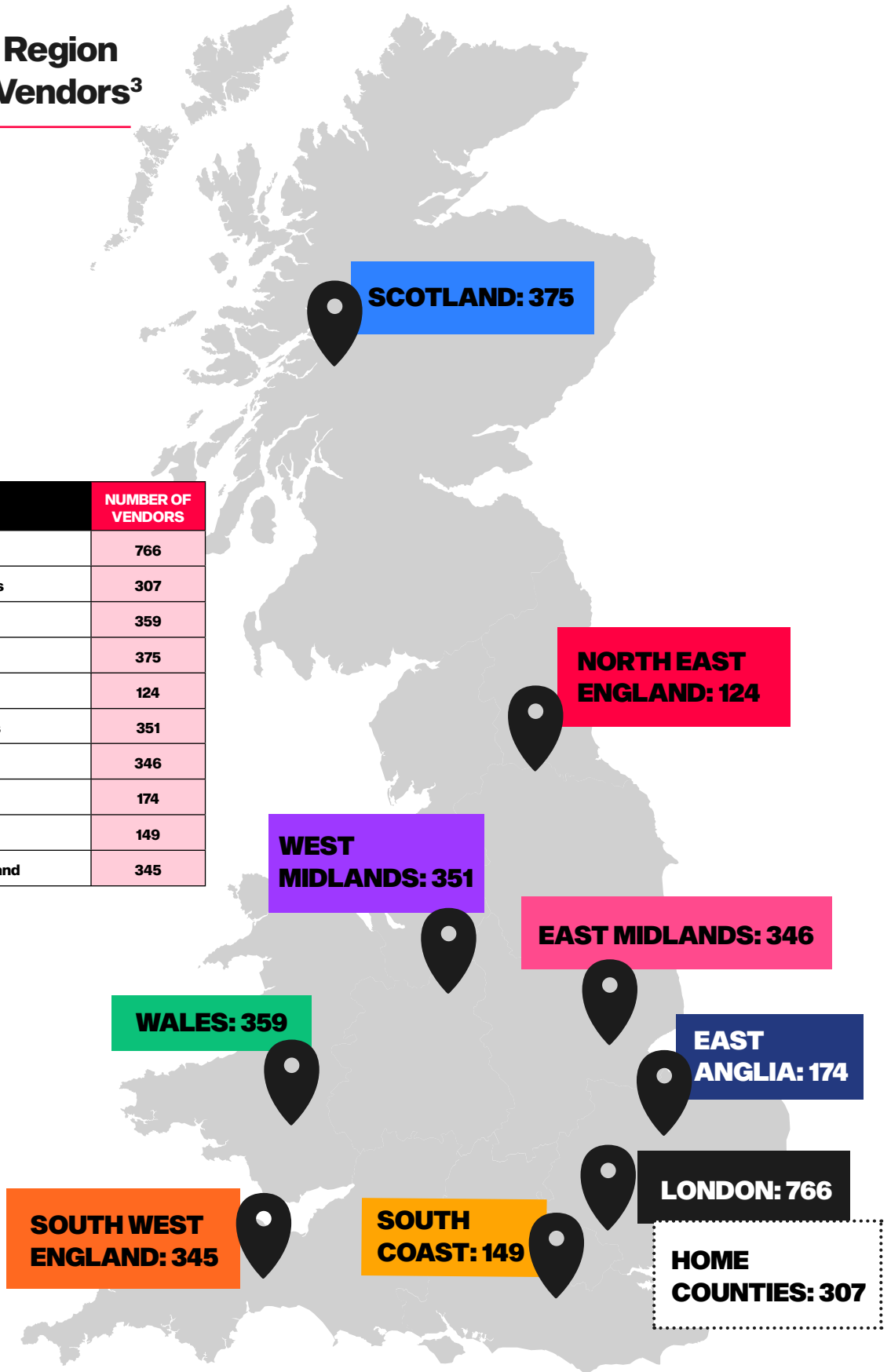


**Collectively,
Big Issue
vendors sold
1,655,703
copies of
the magazine
in 2021, an
8% increase
in sales on
2020.**

Offering the opportunity to earn a legitimate income is how we take the first step in ensuring our vendors are financially included. But we are pushing the work around financial inclusion further by supporting vendors to maximise their sales and income by being able to accept cashless payments while on their pitches, providing vendors with 'online sales training' and hosting an online subscription 'with a vendor' mode (learn more on pg. 14).

Distribution Region Number of Vendors³

REGION	NUMBER OF VENDORS
London	766
Home Counties	307
Wales	359
Scotland	375
North East	124
West Midlands	351
East Midlands	346
East Anglia	174
South Coast	149
South West England	345



³ Central Hub for each distribution region – East Anglia, Cambridge; East Midlands, Nottingham; Home Counties; operated from London; London; Finsbury Park; North East England, Newcastle; Scotland, Glasgow; South Coast; Bournemouth; South West England, Bristol; Wales, Cardiff; West Midlands, Birmingham.

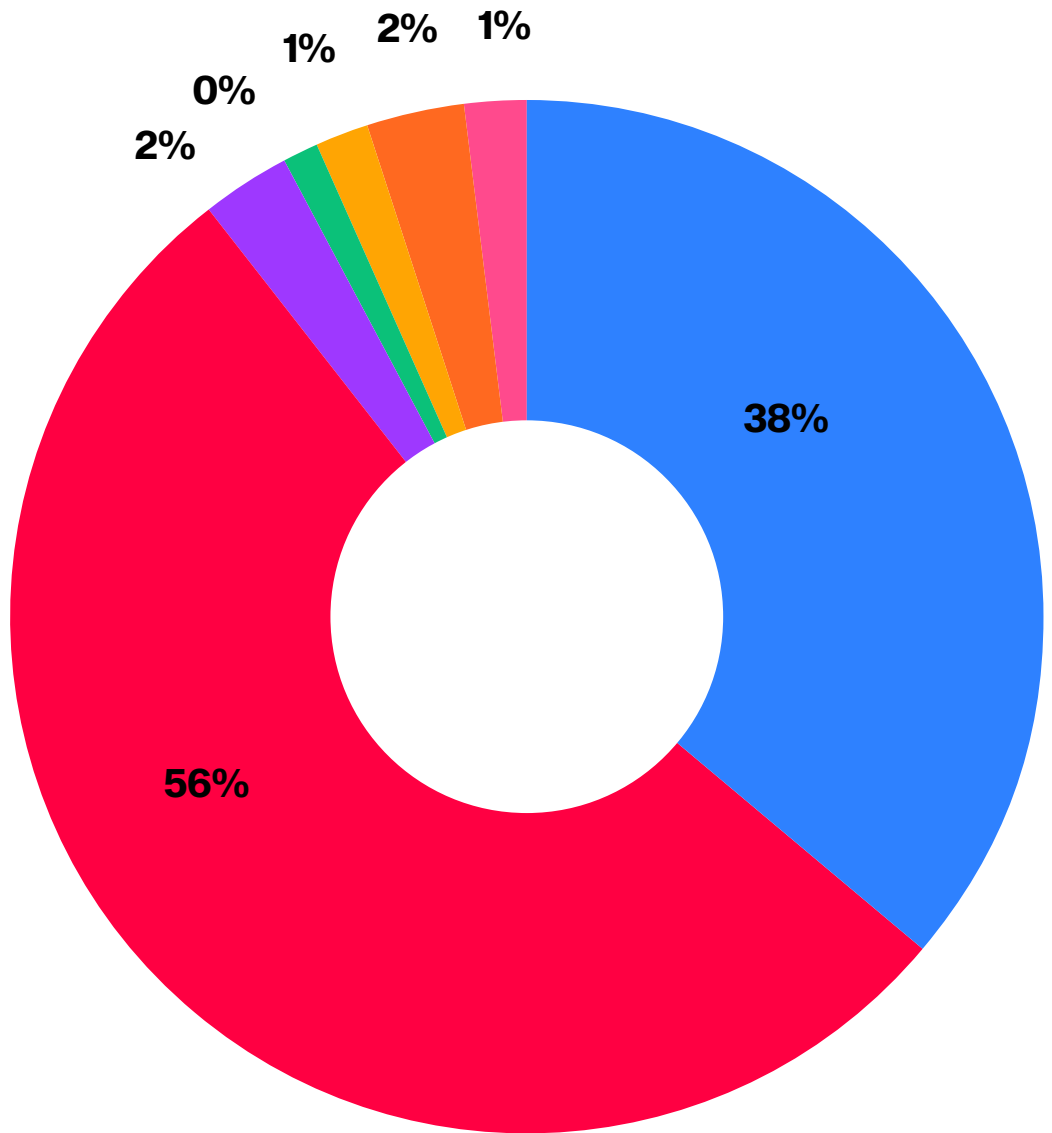
Who The Big Issue Magazine is supporting

The Big Issue continued to work with some of the most marginalised and excluded individuals and communities in 2021.

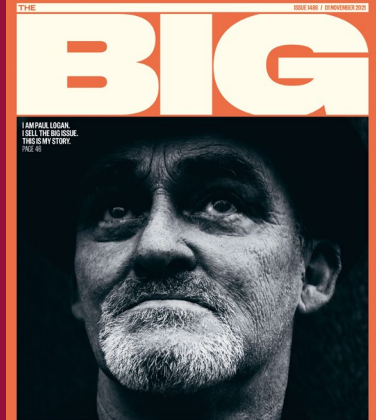
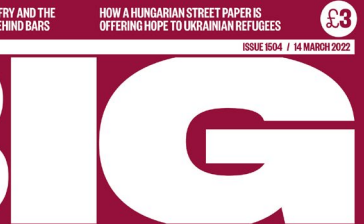
Ethnicity of Vendors in 2021

- Roma or Traveller
- White - Any
- Black - Any
- Asian - Any
- Mixed or Multiple ethnicities
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Note 1: Based on data for 3,061 vendors⁴



⁴ Groupings based on the ONS grouping of ethnicities in line with protected characteristics monitoring. Roma or traveller separated given majority of category within the data.



Gender Count



Female
1,362 | 44%



Male
1,701 | 55%



Prefer not to say
2 | 1%

Note 2: Based on data for 3065 vendors

Housing Situation⁵



Housed
1,302 | 63%



Homeless or at risk
630 | 30%



Rough Sleeping
145 | 7%

Note 3: Based on data from 2,077 vendors

⁵ Housed category includes: Homeowner, Owner/Occupier, Private Rented, LA/HA, Supported Accommodation and On-site traveller. Homeless or at-risk category includes: Family/Friends, Hostel, Hotel, B&B, Squat.

At the start of 2021 the Big issue magazine increased the cover price from £2.50 to £3 and staggered the increase in purchase price for vendors. This meant that vendors could make an additional 50p (25p of profit) for every magazine they sold at the new price. Even with continued low footfall, Big Issue vendors had an improved year, for both sales and income, in 2021 when compared to 2020.

Total Vendor sales and profit compared between 2020 and 2021

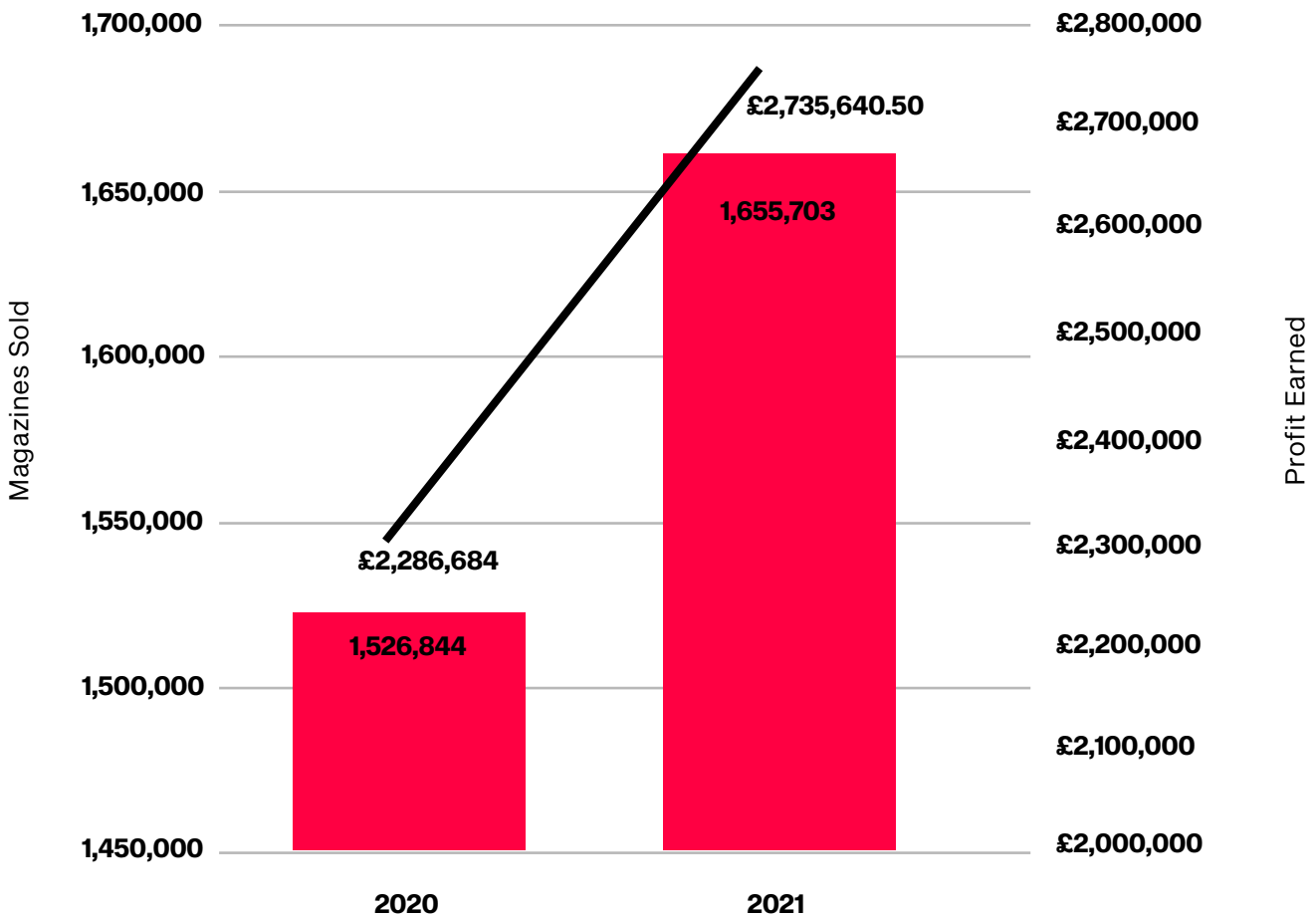


Figure 1: Increases in both sales and vendor profit between 2020 and 2021

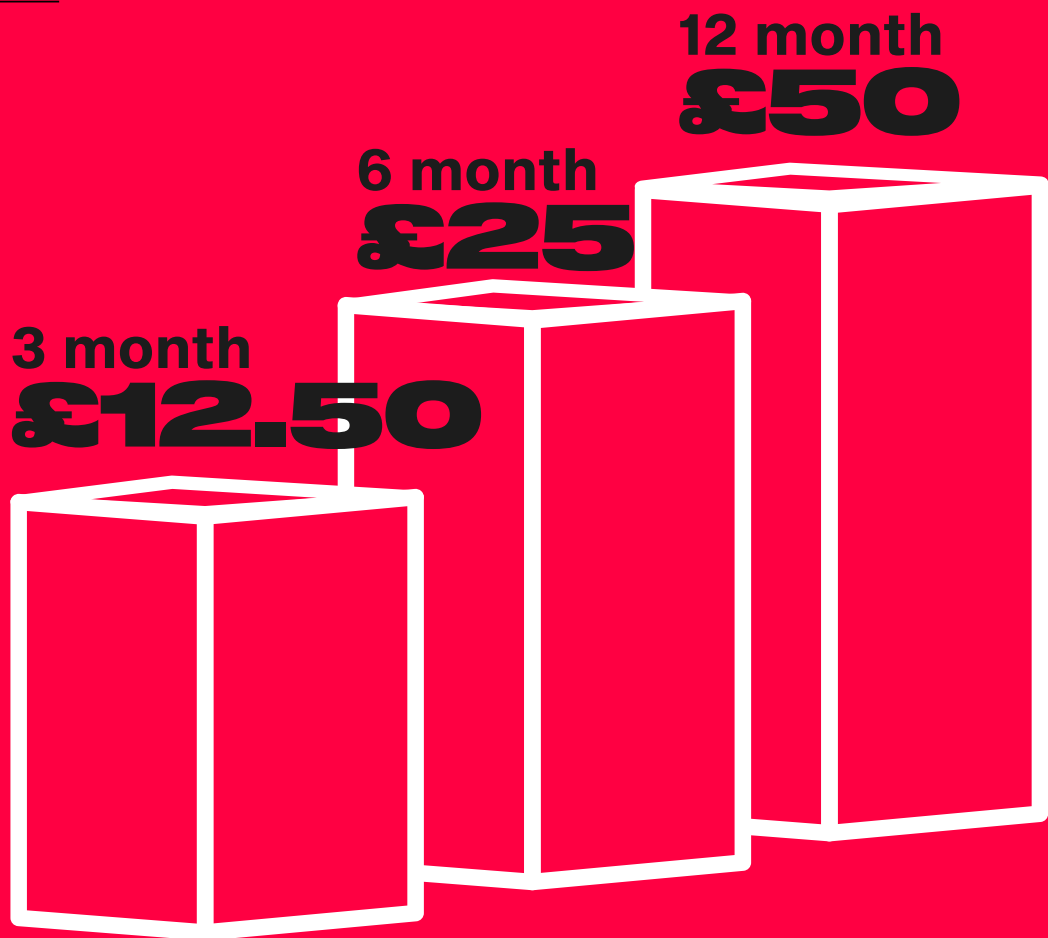
This rise in sales, combined with the increased cover price of the magazine, lead to collective **net income for vendors exceeding £2.7 million**, a 20% increase on 2020 (Figure 1). Although this appears to be a substantial amount, it equates to average vendor earnings of **£830** each, in 2021.

Although these figures show a strong boost to sales from 2020 to 2021, they are **52% down on the 3.4 million sales achieved in 2019, prior to COVID-19.**

This significant decline in sales is a consequence of the new, post-COVID sales environment. To best support vendors, The Big Issue has adapted to many of the new macro-level changes driving this decline: increased levels of home working, falling town and city centre footfall, the growing propensity for contactless payments, growth of work in the gig economy and a continued shift towards consumers engaging with journalism and media digitally.

An online subscription to The Big Issue was launched in late 2020. 50% of the net profits from subscription sales are directed to a specific vendor chosen by the subscriber.

For every subscription taken out or renewed vendors receive:



Vendors signed up for subscriptions

477

Existing subscriptions renewed

564

New subscriptions taken

930

Income generated for vendors

£11,443

In our 30-year history The Big Issue has existed to offer any individual who needs it, the opportunity to earn a legitimate income. The benefits of selling The Big Issue for the most vulnerable can go far beyond the cash in their pocket. In a recent piece of research⁷ The Big Issue has collected data to show how becoming a vendor can have a significant impact upon a person’s general wellbeing (Figure 2).

Vendor General Wellbeing scores based on length of engagement with The Big Issue

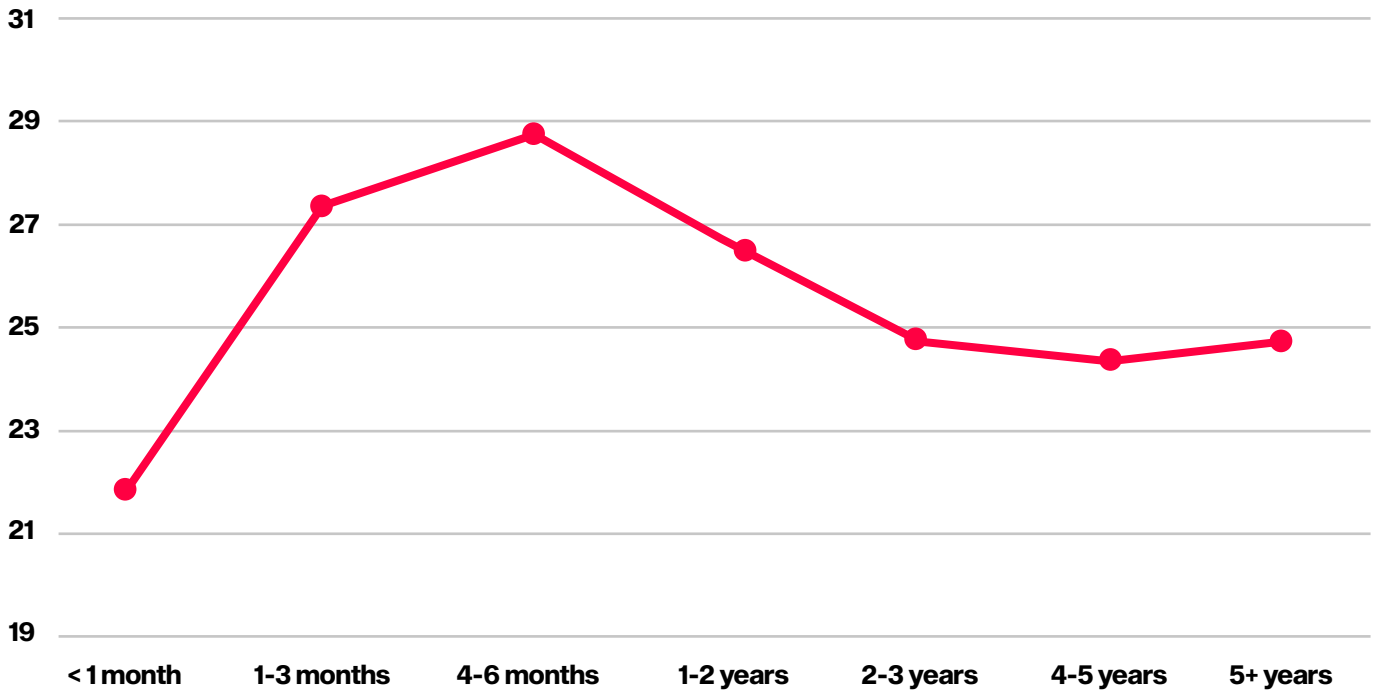


Figure 2: Vendor general well-being levels plotted against vendor’s length of engagement with Big Issue services⁶

On average, Big Issue vendors achieved a score of 25.30 which is only slightly lower than the mean score of 25.38 of the Understanding Society Wave 7 National Dataset.⁸ This indicates the positive impact engaging with The Big Issue has on vendors; particularly when considered in relation to the average score of new vendors (less than one month engaged) of 21.58.

It indicates that selling The Big Issue magazine not only allows vendors to earn an immediate, legitimate income, it also improves their general wellbeing.

⁶ Research into the Social Return on Investment of The Big Issue’s frontline operations
⁷ Wellbeing scores calculated using the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale for a sample of 65 vendors.
⁸ <https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/dataset-documentation/wave/7>

BIG ISSUE SHOP

In 2021, Big Issue Shop continued to back independent creators and social enterprises whose products aim to create a positive impact on the world. As well as selling Big Issue products, **the Shop worked with 50 unique creators in 2021** and enabled them to grow both the reach of their products and the impact they create. Here are two of the creators using The Big Issue Shop to grow.

2021 Data



Unique Shop Traffic
62,000



Number of Unique Shoppers
2,262



Number of Orders
4,354



Average Order Value
£29.41

Neema Crafts

Neema Crafts provides training and employment opportunities for over 120 people with disabilities in the Iringa region of Tanzania. It also aims to change negative attitudes towards people with disabilities in their communities. Many people with a disability in Tanzania face discrimination or stigma, and the centre provides dignity and hope for many people who previously relied on street begging or were hidden away at home.

The centre has eight craft workshop areas, a therapy unit for disabled children, an award-winning cafe, a conference centre entirely staffed by deaf people and a welcoming guesthouse jointly run by the local Mother's Union.



Pillar 2 – PREVENTION

Big Issue Foundation delivers against the mission of Big Issue Group by supporting vendors to achieve social, health, housing, education, financial and digital inclusion, as well as employment outcomes alongside the opportunity to sell the magazine.

Moving forward we will be increasing the number of outreach workers across the UK, to meet the rapidly growing need for our services and will broaden the reach of our direct support beyond vendors alone to anybody facing poverty and exclusion who asks for our help.

In addition to this direct support, Big Issue Group feels a responsibility to help address the systemic failures and that cause individuals and families to fall into poverty. With our campaigning arm and our journalism, we will fight for social justice and equality through mass awareness and policy change. By influencing these large societal changes, we can ensure the development of robust systems that mean those individuals seeking our direct support only need to seek it once.



COVID-19 Support for Vendors

During this time Big Issue Foundation adapted its delivery model to offer support services remotely to vendors, offering critical financial and wellbeing support. During the period between January – April 2021 Big Issue Foundation provided:

1,403 vendors with £415,000 of financial support,

in the form of emergency grants and vouchers for essentials like food and fuel when unable to sell.

1,781 vendors with 4,820 support and wellbeing phone calls,

to help address their immediate needs, particularly those around mental and physical health.

As of April 2021, and the end of the last period of lockdown in the UK, The Big Issue magazine, together with Big Issue Foundation, supported vendors with £1.3 million of financial support and more than 8,000 support and wellbeing phone calls throughout the entire COVID-19 pandemic.

We would not have been able to offer this financial aid to vendors without the generous support of our corporate, trusts and foundation donors, our subscribers, our loyal regular donors, and the thousands of individuals who stepped forward in a time of great need and contributed donations. Thank you.

Topics of support phone calls to vendor

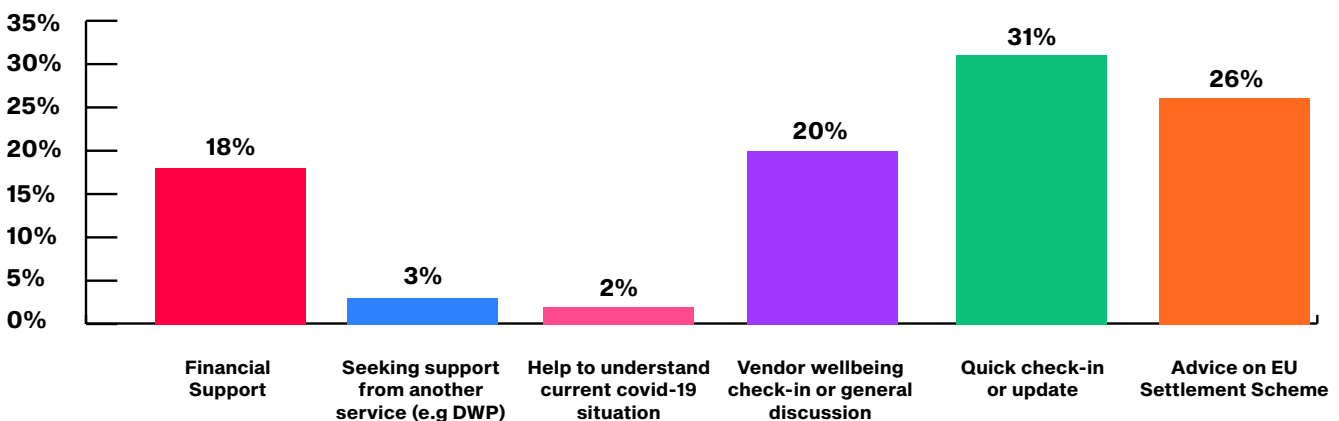


Figure 3: Purpose of support calls held with vendors during lockdown in 2021



Vendor Wrap Around Support

Big Issue Foundation’s wrap around support facilitates and brokers access to the critical services, resources, and opportunities that individuals need to find a sustainable pathway out of poverty and build better futures. Our partnership work is critical to our success. We work in partnership with many social services providers, third party organisations and local and national businesses to support individuals across seven pathways towards sustainable change:



accessing and maintaining
secure accommodation



securing the essentials
(food, clothing, fuel)



health, mental health
& addiction



participation (citizenship,
language, and networks)



financial and
digital inclusion



education and
training



pre and in
employment support

In 2021/22, a total of 1,311 Big Issue vendors engaged with the Foundation’s wrap around support, including:

232 people experiencing homelessness were supported in finding, accessing, and maintaining a secure and stable home. All are now thriving in their homes.

421 people with unmet physical and mental health needs were supported to access the care and treatment they needed through our assertive referral process.

130 people accessed our lockdown emergency mental health service which provided weekly check-ins for those who were most at risk during this period

574 people engaged with our debt and money management service to develop financial resilience and digital literacy, including opening their first bank account, understanding, and accessing the right benefits, securing support with debt issues, and understanding how to manage finances and save.

123 people were connected to local and national training and education opportunities to take a step forward towards their employment aspirations.

Looking forwards, Big Issue Foundation has increased the number of Vendor Outreach Workers employed to support Big Issue vendors across the UK and will, for the first time, deliver wrap around support to vendors and others who need it in Scotland and Wales. We will continue to increase the number of Outreach Workers and through them grow service provision in the places it is needed most. We will ensure that everyone engaged in Big Issue Group social ventures is able to access Foundation wrap around support to empower them to move forward to a sustainable future and out of poverty.

Big Issue Foundation will also continue to innovate and test new preventative programmes. In the coming year, our wrap around support will expand to include an even greater focus on closing the digital gap for those in poverty, new interventions to accelerate access to mental health for those who need it, and a bigger push than ever against fuel poverty.



Fuel Bank Foundation Partnership

In 2021, we partnered with the **Fuel Bank Foundation**, to ensure vendors retained their access to fuel and understood how best to manage both payment and use. The work of Big Issue Foundation has shown that vendors can often face difficulty in navigating and funding top-up fuel systems to retain a fluid supply of energy in their homes.

The Fuel Bank Foundation work for a world in which people can afford the energy they need and by working together we were able to expand both the reach and depth of the support provided, enabling us to prevent fuel crisis. **349 people and their 569 children in emergency fuel crisis**, were supported through access to Energy Advice and emergency fuel vouchers thanks to this partnership. This support enabled them to continue to keep their lights and heating on and continue to cook food in their homes.





At year-end 2021, we have supported a total of 915 vendors to be able to accept cashless payments with 654 vendors accessing a smartphone alongside skills training to make the most of cashless sales.

Financial & Digital Inclusion

The frontline teams of Big Issue Group and Big Issue Foundation rapidly accelerated their work around Financial and Digital inclusion during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. By the end of 2020, together we supported 500 vendors to be able to accept cashless payments for magazines using a contactless card reader.

This work often includes supporting vendors to gain an official piece of identification⁹ and open a bank account. Our Financial and Digital Inclusion work continued at pace in 2021. Over the course of the year, we supported a further 415 vendors to go cashless by setting them up with contactless card readers (see Figure 3).

Our thanks go to Citi Foundation in particular, for their financial support of Big Issue Foundation over the last two years, which enabled us to deliver this work. We continue to support our cashless programme to ensure all vendors who want to operate cashless can do so.

Big Issue Foundation has ensured digital and financial literacy extends into accessing online product offers, access to vital digital support services, and has worked with vendors to support debt and online money management.

Around 40% of vendors selling The Big Issue magazine can now accept cashless payments.

Big Issue Foundation's financial and digital literacy programme builds on the cashless programme by supporting vendors to become digitally and financially confident. This enables us to engage harder to reach non-English speaking vendors in our cashless and other digital and financial inclusion and peer to peer mentoring programmes.

Big Issue Group have partnered with Lloyds and HSBC to ensure the process of opening a bank account is as straightforward as possible for Big Issue vendors. Our work has shown that vendors can often face difficulty when attempting to navigate financial systems, even when trying to open the most basic of accounts.



LLOYDS BANK



HSBC

⁹ Official identification for the purposes of this work is a birth certificate, driving licence or passport.



Around 40% of vendors selling The Big Issue magazine can now accept cashless payments.

Growth in vendors supported to take cashless payments throughout 2021

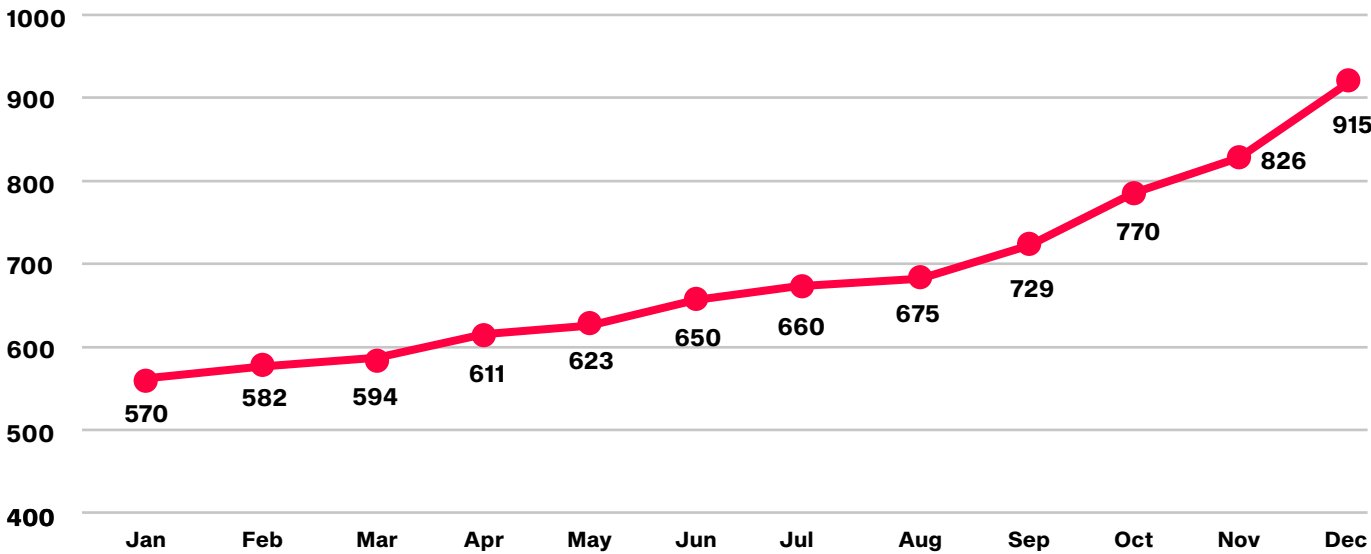


Figure 4: The increasing number of vendors supported to accept cashless payments throughout 2021

“The first thing people ask is ‘can I pay by card?’



National Databank Partnership with Telefonica O₂

Many of the individuals we work with find themselves without easy access to digital services that many of us take for granted. To boost the digital inclusion of vendors, in 2021, The Big Issue partnered with mobile network provider O2 to give vendors access to the National Databank (an O2 initiative set up with digital inclusion charity Good Things Foundation).

Through the National Databank, vendors can access 7GB of free mobile data. This data has been key in enabling vendors to make the transition to accepting contactless payments because the card readers require the use of mobile data. O2 have pledged to support 200 Big Issue vendors with 1,400 GB to go cashless.

The partnership has already had a significant impact on the lives of vendors. The Big Issue

vendor Lavinia relies on access to data to be able to sell magazines contactless and she has seen more and more customers ask for the option:

“Having the card reader has helped me to get through Covid,”

“I have everything – the card reader and the app – but if you don’t have data you can’t sell.”

“If you don’t have data and someone comes with their card it’s very sad to have to turn that custom away.” says Lavinia, 30.



Vendor Support Fund

The Vendor Support Fund (VSF) enables vendors to access financial support when money is a significant barrier to success. All vendors are required to complete a short application form to access the VSF, clearly outlining what the fund will be used for and what impact this will have on their lives. Vendors are asked to contribute a discretionary amount – typically 20-50% – towards the total cost. During periods of lockdown restrictions, we did not require vendors to make this contribution. These are some of the ways the VSF helped vendors in 2021/22:

£90

helped Phil to buy the tools he needed for his new job, and to cover his first **two weeks of travel costs** so he could start his new job and before he was paid by his new employer.

£132

helped Eleanor to **hire a van and driver**, so she could move her furniture into permanent accommodation; without this she would not have been able to move **her belongings to her new home**.

£68.45

helped Peter to travel to London so he could attend his **sister's funeral**. **Without this support, he would not have been able to attend.**

£96

helped Marcellus buy **basic kitchen equipment** for his new home after a period of rough sleeping.

£15

helped Evie gain a copy of her **Northern Ireland birth certificate**. Formal identification is a first step to inclusion.

£148

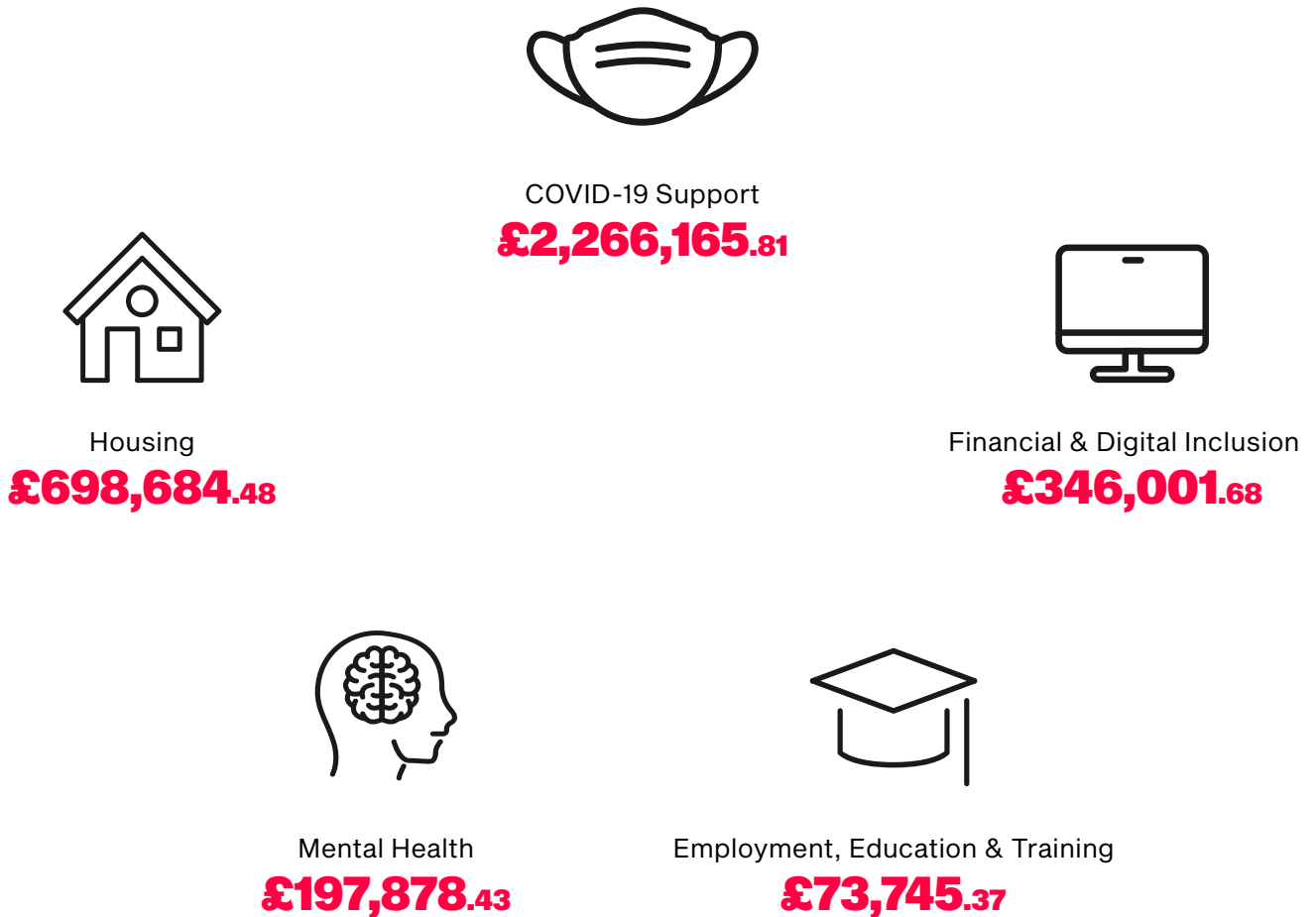
helped **John to replace his broken glasses** when he was not eligible for a free replacement pair and was unable to see.

Social Return on Investment

In late 2021, Big Issue Group undertook its first ever Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis in collaboration with the Institute for Social Innovation and Impact, covering the 2020/21 financial year. The research examined the social value created by The Big Issue across its frontline work during the COVID-19 pandemic with specific focuses on our support in the following areas: COVID-19 emergency support; housing; financial and digital inclusion; mental health; employment, education and training; and magazine sales.

Our research shows that during the height of the pandemic Big Issue Group created £4.92 million¹¹ of social value through our work with Big Issue vendors. Our agile response to the pandemic allowed us to deliver high impact support to vendors while ensuring the future of the organisation.

Value created in key impact areas:



This first iteration of our SROI research gives Big Issue Group a great starting point for applying this social impact valuation methodology beyond our work with vendors in future years and will allow us to start to fully understand the social value created right across BIG, on an annual basis.

¹¹ This is a net figure after applying discount for attribution, deadweight, drop-off and displacement

BIG ISSUE MEDIA

The last year has seen huge change within The Big Issue editorial department. It has marked the biggest shift since the magazine's founding. This involved relaunching bigissue.com, redesigning and overhauling The Big Issue magazine, and changing our editorial policy to both reflect this era of massive political and social change; our platforms are now places to influence positive change and outcomes. Our 30th anniversary has provided the perfect moment to retool and refocus so that The Big Issue is ready for the next 30 years.



Having launched a new website in September 2021, Big Issue have set an ambitious target of achieving 1 million unique users per month. To do this, we have created a new editorial policy and identified five key pillars upon which our digital output will be built. These are **Housing, Environment, Employment, Activism** and **Politics**. [Bigissue.com](http://bigissue.com) aims to be the first port of call for our readers on these subjects, and to do this editorial output has shifted to a digital first model.



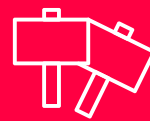
Housing



Environment



Employment



Activism



Politics

To serve this model we recruited five new members of the reporting team, including a Digital Editor. Bigissue.com is a news-led site, driven by stories broken by The Big Issue, rather than by others. It is a place for unique perspectives through our opinion columns, written by our regular and irregular contributors, a place to show the full range of access The Big Issue has always had with some of the biggest global names, and a place to shape the nation's conversation.

The new look **bigissue.com** was designed to function better on all devices, particularly mobile. It has also become the landing place for all parts of Big Issue Group, rather than sending readers to disparate sites, something that previously split potential readership. Following data analytics, we can be nimble in our content decision-making, serving the interests of readers, adapting with SEO to reach more and new readers, and using our editorial expertise and experience to create new content.

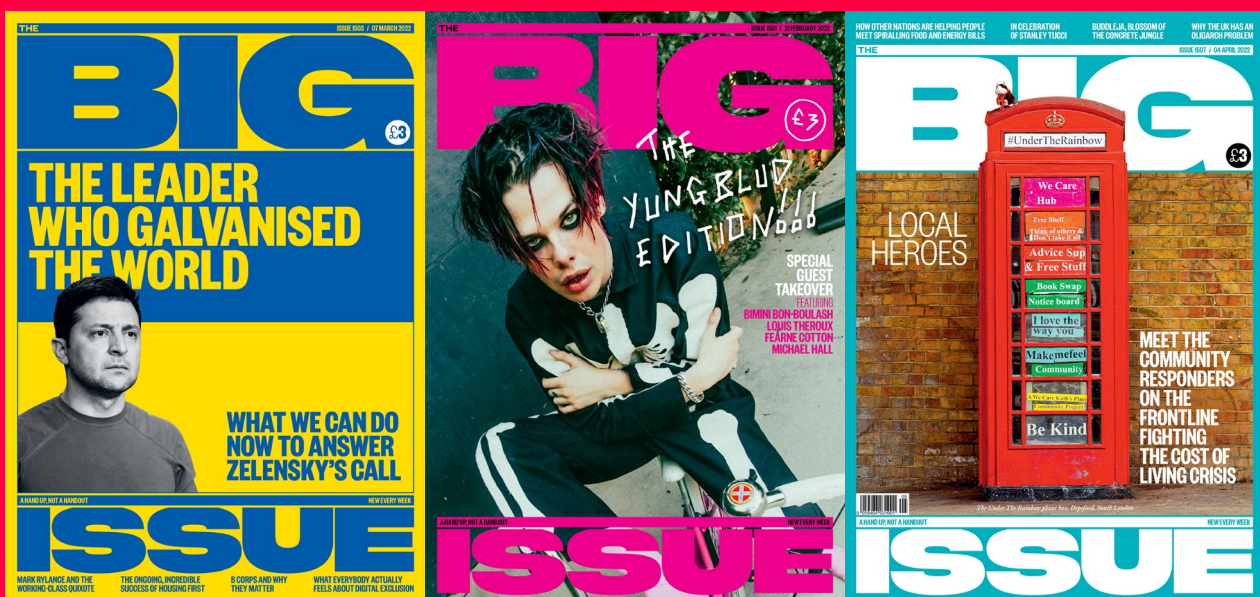
In 2021, **bigissue.com** reached **3.37 million** unique users: a **50% increase** on the number of unique users in 2020.

As well as developing The Big Issue's digital offer, The Big Issue magazine has been fully redesigned to be a more contemporary and in tune with the changes in society, as well as allowing more space to carry digital-first content and show the links between all editorial platforms.

Throughout 2021, celebrated designers **Matt Willey** worked on the change, with editor **Paul McNamee**, Group CEO **Paul Cheal** and founder **John Bird**. The result has delivered a very different magazine.

There is a new frontpage masthead. A bespoke font family called Big Issue Fat was created. The very new look and feel is continued throughout, with new sections including The Dispatch, a lively collection of news, views and other elements led by content from bigissue.com; The Bulletin, a place to share inhouse Big Issue achievements; Global Roundup, a space to celebrate what other street papers around the world are doing, and a new Culture section.

Everything is geared to show The Big Issue's renewed energy and focus on fighting for all those facing poverty and uncertainty.



Corporate Supporters Programme

Big Issue Group Corporate Supporters Programme extends our mission by bringing together organisations that share our commitment to creating a more equal society and supporting those most in need. From affordable sponsorship and subscription packages that fund our core work, through to bespoke and tailored media partnerships, corporate partners play a vital role in supporting our mission.

Here is what current supporters say about the programme:

“ Supporting The Big Issue through corporate subscriptions enables Barratt, a builder of affordable homes, to contribute to the important work The Big Issue does to fight poverty and homelessness and raises awareness for our employees and visitors”

– Barratt Developments



“ The University of Westminster is honoured to be a supporter and subscriber to The Big Issue. Through a corporate subscription we have been able to become part of the amazing story that is The Big Issue, while also building a mutually beneficial relationship into the future for both The Big Issue and the students and staff at the university, while of course being provided with copies of a high quality and unique magazine”

– The University of Westminster





Campaigns

Today For Tomorrow

The coronavirus pandemic showed we need more long-term thinking and planning in Government. The 'Wellbeing of Future Generations' Bill will help tackle threats such as the climate crisis, poverty and future pandemics head on.

Today For Tomorrow is a cross-party campaign powered by The Big Issue and the Office of Lord Bird which aims to create public support for the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill and raise awareness of the impact of the climate crisis on future generations. At the heart of The Big Issue Group mission is the drive for economic and social prosperity to exist for all now and for future generations; this means promoting a just transition and a green economy now.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill, which is being led through Parliament by The Big Issue founder, Lord Bird, and is co-sponsored by Simon Fell MP aims to achieve the goals below:

Key aims of the Bill

- Work to prevent problems, including the climate crisis, poverty and pandemics from happening, and not just deal in emergencies.
- Give current and future generations a voice in decision-making, and protect them from global threats.
- Deliver a new, sustainable vision for the nation that prioritises our environmental, social, economic and cultural wellbeing.



Stop Mass Homelessness

The Stop Mass Homelessness (SMASH) campaign is focused on eliminating the threat of becoming homeless as we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic and face a mounting cost of living crisis. SMASH has three key aims:

1. Address the rent arrears crisis

During the pandemic, around £360 million was built up in rent arrears in the private rented sector, putting hundreds of thousands of people at risk of potential homelessness.

The Big Issue believes everyone deserves the safety and security of having a roof over their heads. During 2021 SMASH worked hard to push the government to start addressing this crisis.

“successfully campaigned for the government to commit £380m to support those with rent arrears”

By the end of the year and thanks to the hard work of the campaign, the government had committed £380 million to enable local authorities to start alleviating the pressures of rent arrears and supporting individuals and families to avoid homelessness.

2. Stop unfair evictions

The Government suspended no-fault evictions during the pandemic and promised that no-one would lose their home due to Covid-19 poverty. But after the suspension was lifted, we saw

cases hitting the courts at alarming rates and a failure of the Government to keep their promise.

An investigation into evictions in courts found that in a third of cases Covid-19 poverty was referenced. Despite the Government’s promise, judges were legally obliged to serve eviction notices.

These are just some of the ways that renters are being let down by the current system. We need the Government to bring forward a Renter’s Reform that works for everyone.

3. Invest in sustainable jobs and training

Hundreds of thousands of people were put on furlough or lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic, leading to loss of income and risk of homelessness.

We need to see investment in sustainable jobs and training, to get people back into work and to future proof the job industry. Keeping people in meaningful, paid employment will help people to afford their homes both now and in the future.



Big Issue Breakthrough Programme

Big Issue Group recognises that we are in a position to open routes into industries that are often very difficult to access and therefore lack diverse voices in leadership and the workforce. The pandemic has increased inequality in educational and employment outcomes, so we created Breakthrough: a brand-new talent and training programme for young people keen to embark on careers in hard to access industries that the Big Issue works in. Breakthrough is backed by the Department of Work and Pension’s Kickstart scheme and has been created specifically to offer opportunities to 16–24-year-olds from under-represented and less privileged backgrounds.

The first Breakthrough programme, launched in October 2021, focuses on the media industry. The programme supports four young people over six months to gain skills in multiple aspects of journalism, including digital, social, video, audio, design and writing. While on the programme,

participants will also be contributing to The Big Issue’s print and digital media publications by writing stories and creating content tackling themes such as homelessness, climate change and diversity, equality and inclusion.

Measuring the success

Overall KPIs

- No. of young people completing the programme
- No. of graduates gaining onward employment
- No. of young people achieving their personal learning objectives
- Measurable increase in the self-efficacy of candidates
- Measurable improvement in industry specific skills
- Overall programme satisfaction

What the breakthrough cohort have achieved:

- Started The Big Issue's **Tik Tok account** and are producing and managing the content shared on the platform.
- Used their newly learnt journalistic skills to produce numerous stories and pieces of content for The Big Issue's **website**
- Worked to a 70-20-10 model of learning:
 - 70% on-the-job experience - producing content for The Big Issue.
 - 20% informal training - feedback, coaching and mentoring from The Big Issue team and external mentors, networking and online learning.
 - 10% formal training - bespoke lessons, seminars and workshops focusing on key journalistic skills

Eliza Pitkin is part of the Breakthrough programme's first cohort and this is the story of her experience so far.



I'm a 24-year-old trainee journalist at The Big Issue. My passion and career history has been centred around filmmaking. After the pandemic, I really struggled to place myself in a job, until I came across the Kickstart programme, Breakthrough.

My awareness of The Big Issue was limited. I knew it was a magazine on the streets, and I highly admired how it was distributed by people in compromised circumstances...

When I joined the programme, I was invited into a welcoming space where the altruism and beating heart of The Big Issue flowed through every single person that worked there. Creativity and kindness must be in the water. I was really inspired by how progressive the content is, and you never lose a sense of the importance of people less advantage.

I've learned a lot regarding how to write articles and how to really engage viewers and readers. It's also taught me how to keep on top of trends and how to reach out to experts and influential people for interviews."

Pillar 3 – INVESTMENT

Big Issue Group aim to grow the work of Big Issue Invest in the coming years with the launch of multiple new funds, while also investing more resources in community development projects across the UK that draw on the many aspects of BIG's work.



Big Issue Invest – Championing impact first investing¹²

Last year Big Issue Invest supported 184 social enterprises across the UK with £39.7 million Assets Under Management (AUM) at March 2021.

To deliver against the mission of Big Issue Group, Big Issue Invest supports social businesses and charities to deliver social, economic and environmental impact across the UK and abroad. Our investees supported over 1.16 million people¹³ across the UK in the financial year 2020/21.

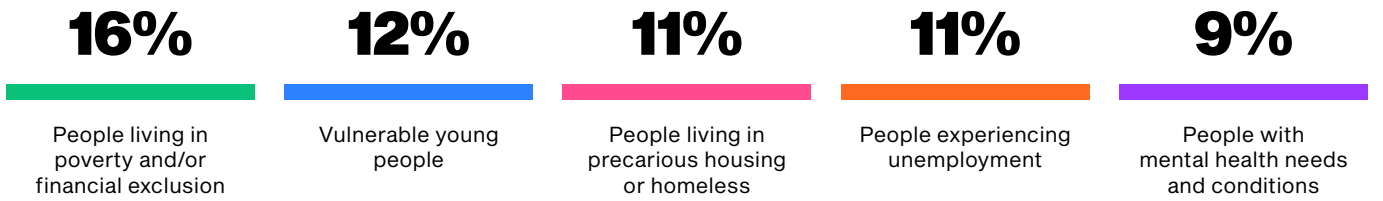
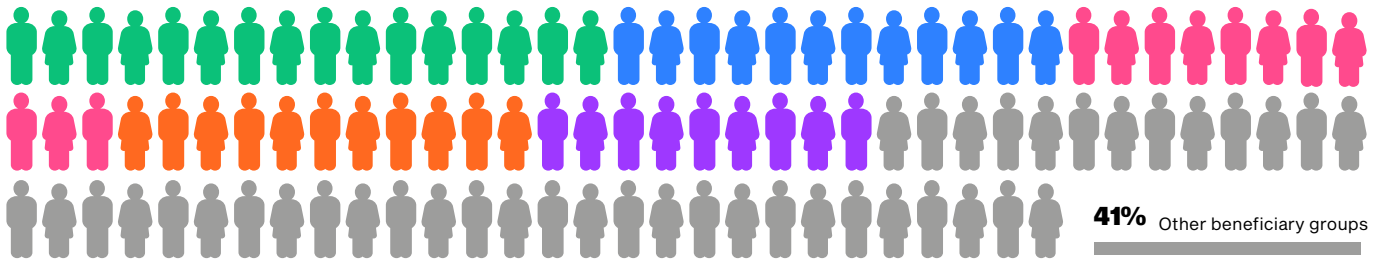
The top 5 UN Sustainable Development Goals contributed to by our investees were:



¹² Reporting period for Big Issue Invest data is financial year 2020/21

¹³ Calculated based on sampled data response of 48 investees to the annual impact survey providing nearly 90% confidence with 10% +/- margin of error on calculation

Our investees supported over 1.16 million people across the UK*¹² in the period. The 5 primary ‘beneficiary groups’ support by our investees are:¹⁴



*Request full methodology by contacting Big Issue Invest

Our investees deliver impact in a number of different ways. Using a taxonomy developed by UnLtd,¹⁵ Big Issue Invest investees deliver impact in the following ways:



Where are our investments

Head office - region	Total committed	% of portfolio	Total number of investments
Greater London	£18.2 million	42%	56
West Midlands	£5.3 million	12%	11
North East	£2.5 million	6%	18
Yorkshire and the Humber	£2.5 million	6%	10
South East	£1.3 million	3%	12
South West	£2.5 million	6%	12
Scotland	£5 million	12%	25
North West	£3.6 million	8%	23
East Midlands	£0.4 million	1%	6
East of England	£1.7 million	4%	9

¹⁴ For a full list of UN SDG alignment and similar full details on the impact methodology, see appendix- BII Impact Report 20/21

¹⁵ <https://www.unltd.org.uk/our-work/research/findings-10-understanding-social-business-models-in-the-employment-sector/>



Our Existing Funds and Projects

Early Stage Venturing

Accelerator projects supporting early stage social enterprises to access expert mentoring and training alongside £50,000 patient debt to support start-ups to innovate, test and launch their ventures.

Social Impact Loans

£10,000 to £150,000 of patient loans supporting organisations across the UK to grow their impact and strengthen their organisations.

Outcomes

Investment Fund

Social Outcomes Contracts and Social Impact Bonds from £125,000 up to £1.25 million to support innovative projects tackling poverty and complex challenges with partners across the UK.

Social Enterprise Investment Fund

Loans and equity investments from £250,000 to £3.5 million supporting the growth, innovation and development of social purpose organisations across the UK.

The London Affordable Housing Project

A £10 million facility from the Greater London Authority offering loans from £50,000 to £3.5 million to community organisations, social enterprises, charities and small housing associations to build, purchase and/or renovate empty homes to create quality affordable housing in London.



Investee Case Study – Wolverton Community Energy

Wolverton Community Energy is a registered community benefit society whose vision is to enable Wolverton to generate and control its own energy resources.

Wolverton Community Energy has successfully implemented projects to support the provision of sustainable energy in Wolverton and Milton Keynes. This includes investigating the opportunity for initiatives such as solar power, air source heating, biomass and hydro power as well as leading local insulation and energy efficiency projects.

Wolverton Community Energy has already generated over 1.5m kwh of solar energy from 350kWp, equivalent to saving over 600 tonnes of carbon emissions. This is equal to the total CO₂ emissions for 150 homes in England every year.¹⁶

Big Issue Invest provided £240,000 investment to Wolverton Community Energy and helped them kick off their first community fundraiser. Wolverton Community Energy generates and provides affordable and clean energy to businesses and the community in Wolverton and Milton Keynes.

The organisation has multiple solar sites located on social enterprise buildings and provides low cost energy to social sector organisations. The organisation leverages this income to deliver additional community energy programmes that increase access to affordable and clean energy.

50% of profits goes to supporting local businesses to increase energy efficiency, cut carbon and contribute to the local economy.

50% of profits goes to local community projects to alleviate fuel poverty, including improving energy efficiency in local homes.



¹⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/energyefficiencyofhousinginenglandand-dwales/2020-09-23>



WHAT

Generating and creating local ownership of affordable clean energy for the Wolverton and Milton Keynes area.



WHO

The primary customers are:

those living in communities directly impacted by climate change or environmental degradation



HOW MUCH

Over **100 customers supported** to access energy that avoids 600 MTs of carbon by using local and green energy sources. Wolverton Community Energy supported Wyvern School to install LED lights **reducing energy bills by 50%** and contributing to pupil wellbeing.



CONTRIBUTION

Big Issue Invest provided **£240,000** to Wolverton Community Energy to support them to supply local businesses directly with cheaper, greener solar generated on their rooftops.



RISK

External Risk:

Wolverton Community Energy operates in a competitive and growing market



Impact Investing for Everyone

Big Issue Group aims to transform society by creating a finance system that works for all. We believe that ordinary people have the power to make a big difference and that everyone should have the opportunity to put their money to work towards a better world.

Working closely with our partners who manage people's savings, pensions and other investments our mission is to change the world of finance for good, so that ordinary people can see what their money is doing and can use their money to address the major social and climate challenges of our time alongside the opportunity for financial returns.

We help to create new investment opportunities that address these challenges, providing expert advice to help our partners better understand and measure the difference they achieve. We provide independent reporting on the impact of investments that allows people to see whether those who are making the decisions on their behalf are really "walking the talk" in terms of their commitment to bringing about real, positive social and environmental impact.

Threadneedle UK Social Bond Fund*

In 2014 we co-established the Threadneedle UK Social Bond Fund, the first of its kind to combine social and financial returns. The fund provides finance in the form of loans to companies, charities, local authorities, and governments to achieve specific social objectives, such as more affordable housing, or meeting the needs of the financially excluded. In 2021, the fund managed over £399 millions' worth of loans, investing over £14 million to support the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Climate Solutions Fund (MACS)*

With climate change disproportionately hitting disadvantaged people and communities first and hardest, we established a climate fund with Aberdeen Asset Investments to allow people to direct their savings towards supporting climate solutions such as renewable energy, low carbon and energy efficient technologies and sustainable solutions in transport, water, agriculture and buildings.

The Big Exchange*

Because we believe that everyone should be able to use their money to make a difference no matter how small the amount, we built the UK's first ever impact investing website in 2021 where funds are rated for their impact on people and the planet. The Big Exchange provides the public with easily accessible information on investment options with transparency on where their money is invested and gives them assurance that they are investing in line with their values and beliefs. It now offers 58 funds from 18 asset managers who manage in excess of £70 billion. It has seen strong customer growth with 40% of customers being first time investors and we are proud that 50% are female investors.

Our plans

In the near future we plan to create more impact opportunities that are accessible, understandable and transparent for everyone. We will be co-launching a global inclusive growth fund that allows people to invest in companies that address widening social and economic inequalities in places and for people most in need through their employment practices, products and services, impact on local communities and their environmental practices.

We are also currently developing a health inclusion fund that seeks to address the inequalities in health we see growing globally. This fund will aim to go beyond familiar health solutions such as medicines and healthcare by supporting solutions addressing the wider social factors such as housing, employment and education that play a major role in preventing unequal health outcomes from arising in the first place.



*Capital is at risk when investing and neither financial, social or environmental returns can be guaranteed.

Please remember that when investing, making money is not guaranteed and your capital is at risk. The Big Exchange (TBF) Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Big Exchange Limited. The Big Exchange (TBF) Limited is an Appointed Representative of Resolution Compliance Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FRN 574048).

Social Enterprise Support Fund I (SESF I)

In August 2021, Big Issue Invest successfully completed the delivery of a COVID-19 emergency grants programme, the Social Enterprise Support Fund (SESF). The programme was delivered by a consortium of five organisations: Big Issue Invest, Key Fund, Resonance, School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) and UnLtd, and was financed by The National Lottery Community Fund.

SESF offered grants ranging from £10,000 to £300,000 to enable social enterprises to continue the provision of essential services to those most impacted by the pandemic, and to survive a financially devastating period of repeated national and local lockdowns.



1,300 applications to the programme



618 grants awarded to social enterprises



118 of whom were supported by Big Issue Invest with £3.2 million

The SESF was designed with a commitment to promoting diversity and equality within the social economy sector and the consortium partners have integrated measurement tools into the joint applications portal to monitor key equality and diversity metrics.



63.6% of grants awarded to organisations led by people with lived experience¹⁷



16.9% of grants awarded to organisations that were Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic led
(23.3% amongst BII grantees)



2.5% of grants awarded to LGBTQ+ led organisations
(4.4% amongst BII grantees)



15.3% of grants awarded to disability led organisations



56.8% of grants awarded to female led organisations

¹⁷ The consortium committed to issuing circa 30% of all grants to organisations led by people with lived experience

AWARDS WON 2021

Highlights of the awards won across our editorial content, Marketing & Communications, response to the COVID-19 crisis, vendor inclusion programme and social investments.



Campaign	Awards
The Big Issue: Raising Profiles	<p>7x One Show awards, including Gold's for SOCIAL MEDIA: Innovation in Lockdown & DIRECT MARKETING: Digital & Online - eCommerce</p> <p>6x Cannes awards, including a Grand Prix for CREATIVE E-COMMERCE: Market Disruption</p> <p>3x D&AD awards, including a Yellow Pencil for E-COMMERCE: Use of Social Networks</p> <p>2x Creative-pool Gold awards for Social and Social Good</p>
The Big Issue: COVID-19 Appeal	<p>4x PPA award wins, including Campaign of the Year and Team of the Year</p> <p>INMA Highly Commended award for Outstanding initiatives in response to the COVID-19 crisis</p> <p>PRCA award for Response to COVID-19 crisis through PR</p>
The Big Issue Magazine	<p>PPA Scotland inducted Paul McNamee into their Hall of Fame</p> <p>The British Society of Magazine Editors named Paul McNamee Editors' Editor of the Year</p>
Big Issue Group	<p>B-Corp Best for the World: Customers, recognising BIG in the top 5% globally in the impact area of customers</p>
Big Issue Invest: Impact Report 20/21	<p>Winner of Pensions for Purpose Best Impact Report Content award</p>
Big Issue Invest: Fund Management	<p>AI Publishing named Pete Flynn, Chair of the BIG Issue Invest Fund Management Board, Chairperson of the Year</p>
Big Issue Foundation	<p>Winner of DMA Data & Marketing Association's Best Thoughtful Marketing Campaign award</p>
The Big Exchange	<p>Boring Money Best for Sustainable Investing 2022</p> <p>Boring Money Best for Sustainable ISA 2021</p> <p>Ethical Consumer Best Buy</p>

Future Work and Impact in **2022 and Beyond**



For Big Issue Group to deliver against our five-year strategy, grow as an organisation and reach the 11 million individuals we aim to engage with and impact by 2027, we need to build on all the work already highlighted in this report and use our learnings, knowledge and experience to develop and launch new initiatives, projects and programmes that reach and support the most excluded people in the UK.

Here are a few of the key initiatives we will be looking to build up in the coming year and beyond.

Big Issue eBikes

Throughout 2021, Big Issue Group worked hard, in partnership with Norwegian company, Sharebike, to create its newest venture: Big Issue eBikes.

The Big Issue eBikes scheme is the first of its kind and will recruit and retrain unemployed and vulnerable people in local communities and provide them with access to support and services to improve their lives. All employees will be paid a Living Wage.

The scheme is also designed to meet environmental needs and encourage healthy living in each of its locations, by reducing congestion and encouraging people to cycle.

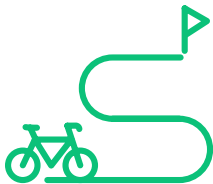
The first Big Issue eBikes scheme has launched in Bristol, early 2022, after receiving a £450,000 investment from City Funds, a Bristol-based impact investment fund run by Bristol & Bath Regional Capital (BBRC) and a loan of £170,000 from the Charities Aid Foundation.



500 bikes in the initial Bristol fleet



9 Real Living Wage¹⁸ Jobs created in Bristol



1900 fewer car trips everyday thanks to scheme



Targeting 70% of workforce to be recruited from vulnerable, marginalised and excluded backgrounds



An additional 10 high impact jobs created with the launch of each additional fleet of **500 eBikes.**

With the first fleet has launched in Bristol, Big Issue eBikes is already preparing its next scheme with plans in place for a launch in Aberdeen. This second scheme would see a fleet of approximately 450 bikes on the streets of Scotland's third largest city, with up to 12 Living Wage jobs being created.

¹⁸ as set by the Living Wage Foundation - <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/>

Launching New Investment Funds

In the coming years, Big Issue Invest plans to launch a number of new investment funds to enable even more social purpose organisations to get off the ground, grow and develop while maximising impact. Three of these future funds are:

- **The Growth Impact Fund** - Equity, equity-like and patient debt investments combined with technical assistance and grant funding from £50,000 up to £1.5 million to support diverse-led organisations tackle inequality across the UK.
- **Fund IV** - A unitranche debt fund providing tailored investment support to social enterprises and charities aiming to purchase housing, premises or similar assets to grow their social impact.
- **The Impact Champions Project** - Patient debt funding building on the success of Social Impact Loans to provide between £10,000 and £150,000 of flexible debt funding to social enterprises providing core solutions to poverty

Growth of the Breakthrough Programme

With the first Breakthrough media programme having proved a huge success, the second media programme began in March 2022, with a new cohort of young people keen to break into the media industry who will be focused on creating stories and content in line with the aims of the Future Generations campaign.

Given that Big Issue Group operates across multiple industries, planning has also begun on Breakthrough programmes for the sales, marketing and programme operations sectors, in addition to media. This will enable The Big Issue to offer an increased number of training opportunities to young people in a wide range of employment sectors, while still utilising our in-house expertise and experience.

The growth of Breakthrough in the next two years

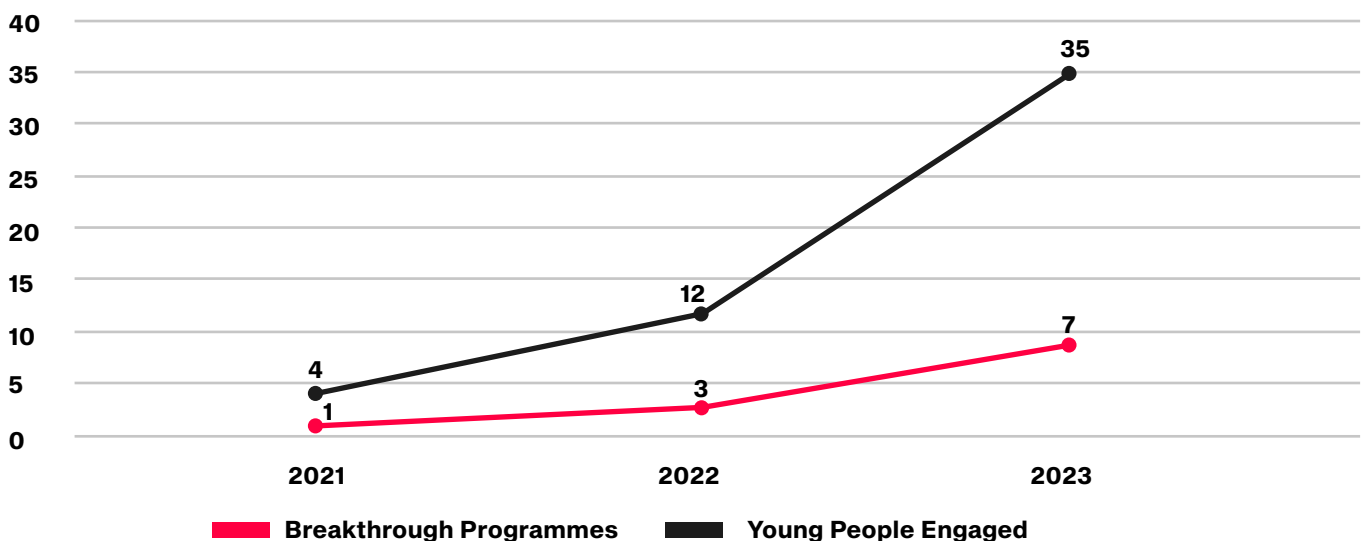


Figure 6: Plans for the growth of Breakdown including the number of annual programmes and the number of young people taking part

Employability Pathways and Partnership

In the coming years Big Issue Group will be doing more than ever before to support people into employment with tailored support, training and job readiness programmes. These partnerships, pathways and programmes will remain inclusive of, but not exclusive to, Big Issue vendors in the future as Big Issue Group looks to reach as many individuals in need as possible. Here are two programmes we are already developing:

Network Rail

In partnership with National Rail, Big Issue Group has been developing sales pitches inside railway stations across the country that allow vendors to sell in a safe and secure location while also supporting them with training and employment opportunities at the host station and across the wider network.

We currently have sales pitches established at London station Victoria, Euston and Paddington as well as Glasgow Central. We are working with Network Rail on the development of up to a dozen additional station pitches across the UK. Of the 15 vendors who have historically sold magazines within station pitches, five have moved onto stable employment, three within Network Rail and two through contacts made on their pitch.

To make best use of these opportunities and to deliver the maximum benefit to vendors, we have built a 12-month employability training programme which will see a Big Issue vendor utilise a station pitch for this period while receiving wrap around support from Big Issue Group to build up their employable skills through training. During this time, vendors will also receive additional professional support from station staff.

Upon completion of the programme Big Issue Group and National Rail will work to support the vendor into employment, ideally in a role at their given station.



Partnerships with Thames Water & Balfour Beatty

Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, The Big Issue is committed to supporting a broader range of individuals and we are capitalising on the relationships we have built over the past 18 months. With a diverse coalition of businesses and third-sector organisations supporting us, we are aiming to create a greater range of opportunities for marginalised people.

Amongst our partners are Balfour Beatty and Thames Water, with whom we have developed bespoke pathways into work for excluded people, including Big Issue vendors and others who are distant from the labour market. To capitalise on the opportunities that these pathways represent and support the people we work with to access them we will be employing new staff to undertake needs assessments, support candidates through a specialist training and recruitment process and provide ongoing wraparound support once candidates are placed in work.

We aim to support 20 individuals into work in the first year after launch.

Big Issue Foundation services

To underpin our strategy and scale up to provide wrap around support to all vendors who need it, as well as to new Big Issue Group enterprises, we will continue to extend our support across the UK by increasing our number of outreach workers over the next five years to meet the growing and critical need for our service.

Our new peer mentoring programme driven by quality data and evidence will quickly replicate, flex, and scale our wrap around service to include new constituencies. We continue to grow our local partnerships and alliances across most of the UK and will work to build on this community agency to create local innovative solutions and pathways for our vendors and other individuals looking to work themselves out of poverty.

By 2027, every vendor and individual engaged with Big Issue Group will know about and be able to access expert wrap around support from the Foundation.

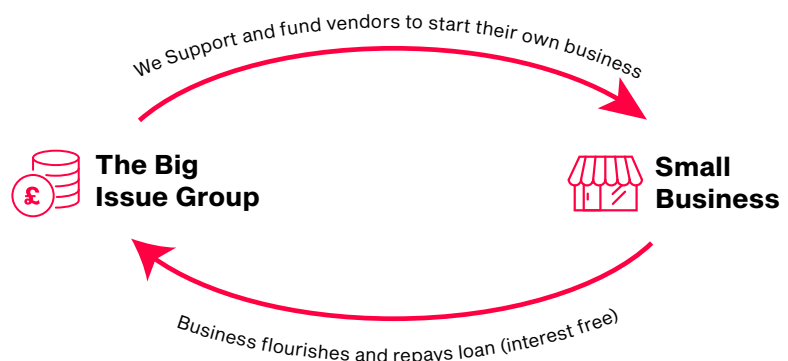
Vendor Enterprise Programme

The Vendor Enterprise Programme is a new initiative aiming to provide Big Issue vendors with the opportunity to start their own small business by providing them with investment, grants and mentoring to help make their aspiration a reality.

Vendors entering the programme will receive extensive support from staff and will also be matched with business mentors, to provide support with all aspects of business development.

Each vendor on the programme will receive an interest free, repayable loan of **£5,000** and a grant of **£2,000** to underpin the development of their business and assist with emotional and wellbeing support.

We aim to support 8 vendors through the programme in the first year after launch.



Conclusion

This report has shared the work of the Big Issue Group across the UK in 2021. As Big Issue Group and the customers we serve recover from the pandemic, we launch our new strategy with a mission to create innovative solutions, through enterprise, to unlock social and economic opportunities.

To deliver on our mission, we hold our ethos of 30 years in developing enterprises solutions that give ‘a hand up, not a handout’. Our newly established three pillars will enable Big Issue Group to deepen our impact with the people and organisations we work with and to create new solutions to bring social and economic prosperity to all.

In 2021, our work with our vendors of The Big Issue magazine delivered nearly £5 million of social value even while vendors were unable to sell the magazine throughout the year. We launched a diverse range of new projects and services such as Breakthrough jobs, Big Issue e-Bikes, our online magazine subscription service and the Big Issue Invest Social Enterprise Support Fund. 2022 onwards will see us work towards over 11 million people accessing and benefiting from these services and many more.

If you'd like to learn more about our work now, go to the Big Issue Group website at **www.bigissue.com** or reach out to us at **impact@bigissueinvest.com**



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