

Creating choice and opportunity for people who are homeless and marginalised...

The Empty Shop Sale Events

With sale events, the Empty Shop Manchester and a pop-up shop in Manchester's Northern Quarter, it's been a busy but rewarding few months for our retail team!

While we catch our breath, we need to give thanks to all the amazing people who donated items through The Empty Shop in Manchester Arndale. The incredible 2.2 tonnes of donations we received are either being sold to raise funds for Mustard Tree or given directly to those in need. On selected Saturdays throughout 2015 we will be holding sale events where you'll have the opportunity to purchase your favourite items from The Empty Shop. If you spotted something you like or you just want to get a bargain and do some good at the same time, our first sale is taking place on Sunday 14 June at [Nexus Art Cafe](#).

The Freedom Project

The Freedom Project has got off to a good start in 2015. We have had 75

new starters join the project since January, gaining work experience and access to personal and vocational training while on the 20-week programme.



The project includes access to one-to-one mentoring from a volunteer mentor from a local business or the community. Mentors meet with participants each week to provide a listening ear and encouragement to help them move forward with achieving their self-set goals.

Our weekly Ready for Work Club has also made a great start this year, with 15 skills mentors helping our participants with CVs, online applications and interview skills. Anthony, one of our current job club members says, "It's been great having a mentor to get help with

my applications and advice on what employers are looking for. Coming to the Ready for Work Club takes a lot of the stress out of job searching on your own." A big thank you to all our mentors, including those from Carillion construction, DWP and First TransPennine Express, for all your help and support this year.

The Freedom Team is delighted to welcome Sanna Manir as a new Project Coordinator as of January 2015. Sanna will be taking a lead on supporting project participants with pathways towards employment.

Welcome to the Team, Sanna

Sanna has a deep rooted passion support individuals overcome personal barriers and find stability to move on in their life so when she saw the role of Freedom Project Coordinator, she felt it was the perfect job for her.



As a young activist, Sanna has developed strong beliefs about working together to make a positive

difference and better the community. Recently, she was selected as an Upriser for a Leadership Programme which entails delivering a social action campaign in Manchester. Sanna loves playing football and exploring countries to experience different culture and history.

Welcome to the team, Vikas

We are delighted that after many years as a very effective friend and supporter, Vikas has agreed to join our board of trustees.



He brings a huge amount of expertise and experience in both the business and charitable sectors. Vikas started his first business at age 14 and is currently the Managing Director of Swiscot Group, a global textiles & commodities trading business. He is also Visiting Professor of

Entrepreneurship with MIT Sloan on their European MBA Programme in Lisbon. Vikas is engaged to Rachel, is a very keen amateur photographer, and he lives in the city centre. We are very much looking forward to the extra dimension that he will bring as we rise to the challenges of growth and sustainability.

Health & Wellbeing Project

Nearly 12 months ago in recognition of the health inequalities that our clients experience we proposed to refurbish and establish a dedicated space within Mustard Tree's Ancoats base as a Health and Wellbeing Suite.

A facility that would create choice and opportunity for Mustard Tree clients and promote access to;

- Regular exercise opportunities
- Healthy living advice and support
- Main stream health services
- Alternative therapies.

With the help of our supporters, partners and volunteers we have made great progress with a fabulous space equipped and open for business and beginning to deliver our objectives.

As always progress depends on the joint efforts of so many people, but a

particular thank you goes out to our supporters at Parsons Brickerhoff for funding the refurbishment work, our partners Street Soccer Academy for running a keep fit pilot for us, and to our wonderful volunteer, Claire, who having consulted with our clients has started to fashion a programme of activities promoting health and wellbeing.



The next phase involves seeking further funding to establish and sustain the activity as a core part of the choices and opportunities that we are able to create for our clients as they endeavour to make progress in life.

James Story

Before joining Mustard Tree I was sat at home doing nothing. I found out about Mustard Tree's Freedom Project and I saw it as an opportunity not to miss. Now I'm doing something

which is giving me new skills, and I'm really enjoying the job I do.

In the 3 months I've been on the project, I've been given the opportunity to be a warehouse supervisor helping to organise furniture collections and deliveries. In this role I feel I'm developing my leadership skills. I'm supporting different people, deciphering their skills and helping to bring the best out of others. Since being part of the project my outlook has improved and I feel totally different about myself.



I've improved as a person both physically and mentally. I guess this is from being a valued member of a team, the responsibilities I have, and the trust placed in me. Each day I'm coordinating up to 30 people across the warehouse. At the end of the day it gives me a big sense of satisfaction to be helping make a difference.

Before coming to Mustard Tree I had run out of motivation to look for work. The Project has brought it back. Since being on the project, I'm not looking for work because I have to, but because I want to! I'm also physically fitter as a result of the project - working in the warehouse a good substitute for going to the gym!

I would love to get a job in warehousing, or something similar. I feel I've massively built my skills and look forward to using these in a paid role in the future.

Food Donations Needed

Each day, we provide our Freedom participants, volunteers, staff and guests a free lunch, serve people on the soup run every Friday night and provide food parcels to people who are in desperate need.



Whilst the provision of food and drink is essential, we use the various paths mentioned as an opportunity to listen to and befriend those to seek our support. Many of our clients struggle with mental health issues or

addictions, so we are able to provide care and support in a practical way to people who often feel marginalised and unappreciated. Unfortunately, we are running very low on food; if we run out, it means we can't feed those most in need. Please consider donating some of the items from this list, or better still, how about organising a food collection at your work? If you work within the food industry and think you can help, please get in touch. Life is going to get considerably harder for the people who use our services so your support is essential and appreciated.

Challenge Manchester

Challenge Manchester is a brand new fundraising event that will take place between September 2015 - May 2016. It involves four exciting challenges and four local charities, one of which is Mustard Tree.

What's it all about? You choose a charity to donate to; Manchester Dogs Home, Challenge Cancer, Duchenne Now and Us, then you pick a challenge; Peak District Challenge, High Rise Abseil, Crystal Maze, and "Get Out Of Here" and get people to sponsor you. Are you a local business that would like to have a positive impact on the local community?

Visit the [Challenge Manchester website](http://www.mustardtree.org.uk) for all the details and information on how to get involved.

Adrian writes

"We are grateful to all our friends, volunteers and supporters who make our work possible. If you believe that you are able to help us in more ways, I would love to hear from you; info@mustardtree.co.uk. The regular donations of food, time and money are the life blood of this charity; please do help us to do more."

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