

# street life

VENDOR AND HOMELESSNESS NEWS

## Charitable tendency

Johnny Marr talks exclusively to **Kelly Mattison** about the release of his single in aid of homeless charity Centrepoint

**Johnny Marr has released a solo single in aid of Centrepoint, the charity supporting young homeless people aged 16-25.**

Marr, former guitarist with the Smiths and now a member of the Cribs, has recorded a cover of Rabbit Mackay's *Tendency To Be Free*, a 1960s garage rock cult anthem originally released on the album *Passing Through* in 1969, the year Centrepoint was founded.

"I looked at a lot of songs from that period and there's a few I liked but nothing grabbed me too much," says Marr. "I didn't want to do a well known song. A friend of mine suggested *Tendency To Be Free* and I really liked it. I didn't know it until recently."

Marr was pleased when the charity initially approached him as he felt it was an opportunity for him to help out in some small way.

"Homelessness is awful for some unlucky people. The nights are too hard and the days are very lonely, and on and on it goes," he says. "As a culture we've become too used to it. I think it's important to do what we can, even if that's just saying: 'Hello, I see you exist.'"

Marr's single will also feature on Centrepoint's new compilation album, *1969: Key To Change*, which features other recording artists such as Hard Fi, with the Stooges track *1969*, Ian Brown with a remix of *In*



**Marr: homelessness seems to be about "relentless hardship"**

*The Year 2525*, Bernard Sumner's new band Bad Lieutenant with *In The Ghetto*, Mick Hucknall with *Chains of Love*, and former Squeeze musician Jools Holland with Ruby Turner covering Billy Preston's *You Are So Beautiful*.

The album release celebrates

**"The nights are too hard and the days very lonely."**

the 40th anniversary of the charity, which at any one time supports 800 homeless young people with a range of accommodation and support services in London and the North East.

As well as providing

accommodation, Centrepoint also helps young people turn their lives around by gaining essential life skills, tackling their physical and mental health issues and moving into education or employment.

All of the funds raised from the new album will go towards tackling youth homelessness through the initial provision of a safe home and all the support required to achieve independent living.

Marr says: "I wonder how it must feel to face the day, especially for the young homeless. It seems so lonely.

"We all have an idea about the homeless needing to find somewhere safe and dry to sleep at night but we don't often think about how it must be to have no real contact day after day if

you're on the streets. The homeless seem to be avoided by the general population. It's relentless hardship."

About Centrepoint, Marr says: "I think it's so good that some people care enough about the young homeless to give their time and resources. We live in a world where everyone seems more and more pre-occupied and I admire people who have compassion and who do something practical about it. These things give you more faith in human nature."

**Download *Tendency To Be Free and 1969: Key To Change* at [centrepoint.fairsharemusic.com](http://centrepoint.fairsharemusic.com). Half the profit from downloads from [Fairsharemusic.com](http://Fairsharemusic.com) goes to your chosen charity.**