

Young people bring new ideas to market

HAND-PAINTED shoes, pomegranate rice and fruit jelly to go, and snazzy original artwork – if you want to introduce bright new ideas on to markets, then get young people involved.

And that's exactly what happened on Saturday, May 11, when the first ever National Youth Market took place in Albert Square in the heart of Manchester.

Not even the unseasonably cold weather and heavy rain could dampen the entrepreneurial spirit of more than 70 young traders aged 11 to 21 who travelled from all over the country to take part.

They punted their wares like seasoned pitchers and made the groundbreaking event an inspirational success.

The National Youth Market was part of the Young Trader youth enterprise programme run by the National Market Traders Federation and Live UnLtd, a youth initiative delivered by UnLtd, the leading provider of support to social entrepreneurs in the UK.

It was delivered in partnership with Manchester Markets.

At the heart of the market were 20 groups of 11 to 15 year olds who had received an award of up to £500 from Live UnLtd to trade on the market. They honed their selling skills the day before at a training session at Manchester Town Hall organised by the NMTF and delivered by Mike Evans from The Retail Group.

The market was bolstered by the presence of around 20 16 to 21 year olds who were either previous award winners of Live UnLtd or traders



from Stockport's Teenage Market, which was established by Tom Barratt, 18, last year.

Joe Harrison, Chief Executive of the NMTF, said: "This was the first time young people from all over the country had gathered together to trade on one market. We were all blown away by the enthusiasm and effort the young people put into every aspect of their trading – from the diversity and originality of their products and displays, to their dogged selling and engaging with shoppers."

Joe said it was widely recognised within the industry that new blood was needed on markets, and this pioneering initiative showed what young people could bring to the marketplace.

The young stallholders were selling everything from sweets and confectionery to hand-made cards, hand-painted shoes, vintage fashion,

jewellery, cup cakes and cosmetics.

Amber Lea, 13, Grace Hughs, 13, Cora Higgs, 12, and Megan Edwards, 13, from Macclesfield were trading as The Candle Company selling a wide range of products from home-made fudge and chutneys to planters and garden ornaments.

Grace said: "We started The Candle Company through our business studies classes at school and we took a stall on The Treacle Market which takes place on the last Sunday of every month in Macclesfield."

The girls found out about the Live UnLtd initiative and got a grant to extend their product range and trade on the National Youth Market.

Alex Dunston, 14, and Bekah Britten, 15, from Blackwood in the Welsh Valleys also set up stall through their business lessons at school.

"We looked at shoes and wondered why they

were all quite uniform," said Alex. So they bought white pumps and pastel fabric dyes and created their own colourful designs to sell on the National Youth Market.

Georgia Townsend and Kate Ransom, who are both 14 and attend Wolsingham School and Community College in Weardale in the north east, opted for novelty t-shirts and jewellery. They were raising money to attend an international conference in Derry, Northern Ireland, promoting conflict resolution through the arts.

Jasmine Khobiary, 12, from London, was inspired by her mum's emphasis on healthy eating to sell fruit jelly and pomegranate rice.

"I took part in an apprentice selling event at school and that gave me an itch to want to get involved in trading," said Jasmine.

"I googled trading for young people and discovered Live UnLtd and plans for the National Youth Market," she added.

The diversity, enthusiasm and professionalism of the young traders made the task of judging the competition for the market's best young trader a

challenging one.

In the end the judges awarded the accolade to 15-year-olds Erica Grinkeviciuti and Kavita Kaur from West Bromwich, who were selling cosmetics and beauty essentials.

"We love cosmetics and beauty products that make people feel better about themselves," Erica said.

The girls would love to turn their passion into a business after they leave school – and what better place to make their dream a reality than a market.



Junaid Shahzad, Samrah Shahzad, Sanna Shahzad and Mumal Shahzad proved great pitchers as they sold their hand-made cards



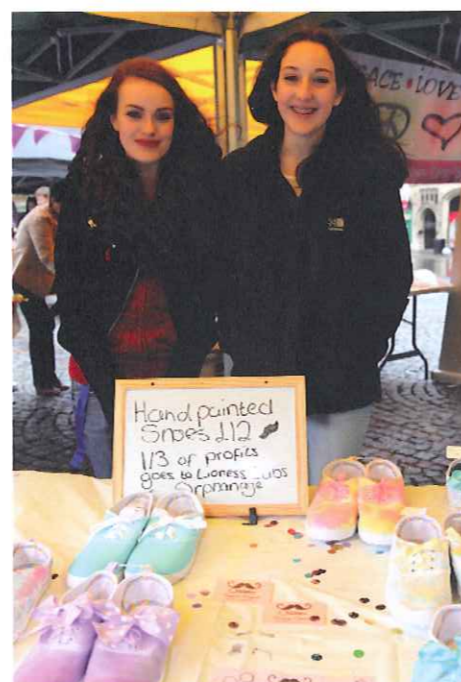
Jasmine Khobiary's imaginative healthy foods proved a popular offering on the first ever National Youth Market



Georgia Townsend and Kate Ransom sold novelty t-shirts and jewellery



Erica Grinkeviciuti (centre left) and Kavita Kaur from West Bromwich who sold cosmetics on the market were named best young traders. They were presented with their prize of theme park admission tickets by NMTF National President Michael Nicholson (centre right) and President-Elect John Dyson (left)



Alex Dunston and Bekah Britten were selling their hand-painted shoes



The training session delivered by The Retail Group



Amber Lea, Grace Hughs, Cora Higgs and Megan Edwards from Macclesfield ran a busy stall selling everything from candles to chutneys