



**The sun is starting to shine and the first blooms of the year are opening, signalling a bright fresh new start to 2021.**

**In our Spring newsletter we welcome 3 new members of the Brigstowe Team as well as the usual updates.**

**Stay safe, stay positive and lets all work together for one fabulous Summer**

**Team Brigstowe x**



# Everybody's been talking about...



Attracting 18.9 million views, It's A Sin is All 4's "biggest ever instant box set and the most binged series to date". It has also contributed to more than 17,000 HIV tests being ordered during National HIV Testing Week, more than double the total for last year.

Still available to watch on All 4 (Channel 4's on demand service), the series written by Russell T Davies, examines the lives of a group of young gay men who are hit by the outbreak of the AIDS epidemic after they move to London during the 1980s and spanning a decade. Together they endure the horror of the epidemic, the pain of rejection and the prejudices that gay men faced throughout the decade.

Our Fundraising & Comms Manager Aled shares his thoughts:

After many tears, being taken on an emotional rollercoaster and eating much chocolate after the episodes, in my opinion It's A Sin is a triumph!

It's A Sin has definitely spoken to the collective grief and trauma the LGBTQ+ Community feels. So many elders no longer with us, we need shows like this to ensure their stories never get forgotten. It also highlights the power of allies and how important all of our chosen families are.

HIV is very different in 2021 with many of us living long and healthy lives. The shadow of the 80's that still lingers on is the shame and stigma we feel and still have to deal with which is excellently portrayed (episode 5 for one epic monologue).

Remember, this is one story of HIV not THE story. Moving forward, we need to be including women, trans and gender non-conforming folk by raising their voices, including them in research and giving them spaces at the table so ring fenced funding is allocated. We need to ensure that communities are involved in the design and implementation of any campaigns aimed at them. Lastly, we need to spread the message of U=U! Remember that the H in HIV stands for human so when we talk and listen to people living with HIV we need to be human in our responses.

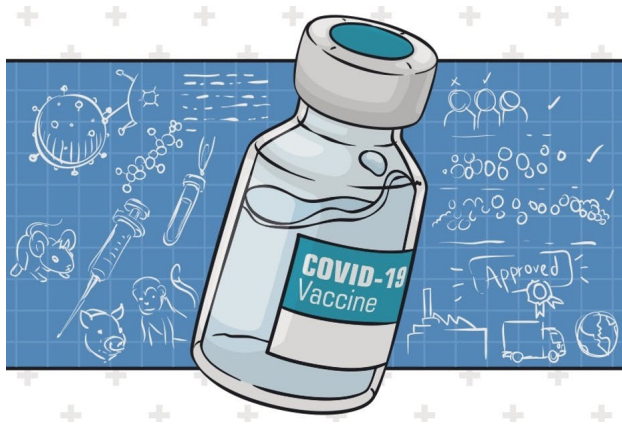
I will end with this..... **#BeMoreJill**



Hi, I'm Robyn – the Peer Support Coordinator for our type 2 diabetes peer support service. Back in November I moved from London to see what all the fuss was about in Bristol. I'm originally an Essex girl but I'm feeling very much at home here! I've been working in the charity sector for several years, starting in community and corporate fundraising but moving into volunteer management when I realised working with people was the favourite part of my job. In pre-Covid times, I loved travelling to new places. In fact, my time living in Australia was cut short due to the pandemic, so I'm very much looking forward to going back and exploring more of it when we're all allowed out of our houses! I'm a bit of a bookworm, so at least being confined to my house during the lockdown has allowed me to get stuck into some books.







# Update

THT along with others in the HIV sector and across the political divide have been campaigning to change the vaccine rules for people living with HIV.

People living with HIV are in phase six of the rollout—after people aged 65 and along with those with a number of other conditions, before the rest of the population.

However, there was a problem with the original rules. Only those individuals who have shared their HIV status with their GP would be included in phase six. Not everyone has, for a number of reasons, the major one being stigma.

Towards the end of February the guidance in England changed and is now:

## **COVID-19 Vaccination of citizens who are HIV positive**

The Green Book is clear that people living with HIV, at all stages of infection, should be offered COVID-19 vaccination due to the associated immunosuppression. These individuals, because of their underlying health condition, are part of cohort 6 for COVID-19 vaccination as defined within the JCVI guidance.

It is expected that the majority of patients will be invited for vaccination by their general practitioner. However, it is known that a small proportion have declined sharing their HIV status with their GP. Under these circumstances, HIV clinics should continue to engage with individuals and encourage and support them to share their HIV status with their GP. There are wider health benefits of this, beyond their HIV care or access to COVID-19 vaccination. In the event that the patient declines for this to occur, the HIV clinic should facilitate vaccination in accordance with Immunisation Against Infectious Diseases (the Green Book), most likely via a local vaccination hospital hub.

In Bristol, if you do not have a GP or have not informed your GP of your diagnosis then please speak to the Clinic Nurses at Southmead. They will then refer you to a local vaccination hub.

If you need any assistance or support please contact the office on 0117 955 5038 and we will be happy to help

Nobody has to have the vaccine but THT & BHIVA (British HIV Association) strongly recommend that everyone who is offered it accepts it.

## HIV Treatment Update - Dual Therapy

HIV medication has come a long way, and we are a far cry from the original medications with their large doses and life limiting side effects.

The history of HIV medication has been about balancing the need for drugs powerful enough to control the virus with the impact of these treatments on the person taking them. Original drugs would need to be taken multiple times during the day, and could be unbearable for the patients using them. We luckily now live in a time where most patients take their medication once a day and where side effects, if experienced at all, are often limited to the beginning of a new pill regime. For those who experience more significant side effects, we are lucky to have a range of possible treatments that allow people with HIV and their medical professionals to find a regime that will be able to be taken long-term.

Most current regimes are a combination of 3 HIV medications, supporting the immune system by blocking the ability of the HIV virus to hijack our red blood cells and stopping it from reproducing. These combination therapies may be in the form of a single pill, or multiple pills. For many people taking them, the single-pill triple combination regime has been the gold-standard, including everything we need in a single pill (even if that pill was a size that made it look like it was designed for a horse, I'm looking at you Triumeq!). Things are developing further and there is now recognised evidence of the effectiveness of dual therapy.

Dual therapy includes only 2 medications and has been proven to be an effective regime. The two drugs involved, dolutegravir and rilpivirine (*Juluca*) or dolutegravir and lamivudine (*Dovato*), are not new, but have been included in triple drug regimens for years. They have been proven as effective in HIV suppression and with low instances of side effects, as well as saving money for the NHS. The only issues for many is that until recently, dual therapy needed to be taken as two separate pills, which for many has been less convenient than single-pill regimes. The good news is dual therapy is now available in Bristol as a single pill. This means that those who wish to can receive effective treatment with fewer drugs, reducing pill burden, and minimising the risk of future side-effects from long-term antiretroviral use.

As always, the best medications you can take are the ones you are comfortable with, in order to make sure you manage your condition well. Just like other medication not everyone may find the drugs in dual therapy suit them. If this is the case then all of the other treatment options are just as effective. If you are interested in transferring to the new single dual-therapy pill, speak to your HIV specialist at your next appointment, and they will discuss whether it's right for you.



Sean Hourigan– Development & Training Coordinator





Hi I'm Aisha-monic the new Common Ambition Bristol (CAB) co-ordinator. Having volunteered and then worked in the HIV sector for a number of years my passion is addressing inequalities within the sector and that is why CAB is the perfect project.

I am born and bred in Cardiff so Wales will always be in my heart. Recently I lived in Brighton for 2 years and moved back at the start of lockdown (the first one!)

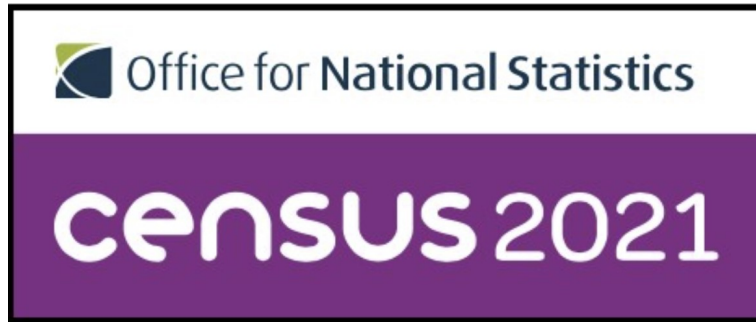
In my spare time I'm a Plus size Pageant queen having competed in 5 pageants and currently title holder of Miss Voluptuous Cymru. I can't wait to compete in an international competition in



Nashville later this year.

I believe in female empowerment, equality and community.

Common Ambition Bristol is a major 3-year project working with people of African and Caribbean heritage to increase HIV testing, reduce HIV stigma and generally improve sexual health.



As you may be well aware the next Census for England and Wales will take place on Sunday 21 March 2021. The Census is a survey that happens every 10 years and gives us the most accurate picture of all the people and households in England and Wales. For the first time it will include questions on sexual orientation and gender identity. The data the Census provides underpins the planning and funding of public services and community organisations. Therefore ensuring that the count in Bristol and the surrounding areas is as accurate as possible is of paramount importance. Local authorities receive the resource allocations and funding they are entitled to from central government based on the Census. Census information is used to understand the services we all need, including transport, education and healthcare.

You must complete the Census by law. If you do not, or supply false information, you could be fined up to £1,000. Some questions are clearly labelled as being voluntary. It is not an offence if you chose not to answer these.

You will receive a letter in the post including your household access code and more information on how to complete the Census. Only the householder needs to complete the form for the household. This is the person who owns or rents (jointly or singularly) the property. If you want to answer separately from the people you live with or request a paper form you can contact the Census Support Team.

If you have received your letter and need support completing then please contact your support worker in the usual way or call the Brigstowe office on: 0117 955 5038.



## **The deadline for the EU Settlement Scheme is 30 June 2021.**

If you are living in the UK and you are a EU, EEA or Swiss Citizen or you are a family member of an EU, EEA or Swiss Citizen then you need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to continue living in the UK.

Apply to the EU Settlement Scheme online: <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

### **Who can apply?**

EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who are in the UK.

You can apply to the EU Settlement Scheme if you're from the EU, European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland and you were living in the UK by 31 December 2020.

Even if you have lived in the UK for many years or you have a UK permanent residence document that is valid after 30 June 2021, **you still need to apply before 30 June 2021. If you have children you need to apply for them separately.**

You do not have to apply if you have indefinite leave to remain or enter or if you are now a British citizen.

Family members of EU, EEA and Swiss citizens

If you are not an EU, EEA or Swiss Citizen, but your family member is you should check if you can apply to the EU Settlement Scheme. If you can apply then you must do this before 30 June 2021 to protect your rights in the UK.



You might be able to apply if both of the following are true:

- Your EU, EEA or Swiss family member was living in the UK by 31 December 2020
- Your relationship with them started before 31 December 2020 – unless your family member is a Swiss citizen

Even if you have a residence card or a permanent residence card as the family member of an EU citizen that states that it is valid after 30 June 2021, **you still need to apply before 30 June 2021.**

#### **You still need to apply if:**

- You were born in the UK but you don't have British citizenship– if you are not sure, there is information on how to check on the Government's website: <https://www.gov.uk/check-british-citizenship>
- You have a UK 'permanent residence document'
- You are a family member of an EU, EEA or Swiss citizen who does not need to apply - including if they're from Ireland
- You are an EU, EEA or Swiss citizen and your family member is a British citizen

#### **Information about applying**

Government leaflet

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/924361/HO\\_EUSS\\_Important\\_Information\\_Leaflet.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/924361/HO_EUSS_Important_Information_Leaflet.pdf)

Video from Bristol Law Centre with clear information

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6TRLaKMW24&feature=youtu.be>

#### **Where to go for help in Bristol**

St Paul's Advice Centre: <https://www.stpaulsAdvice.org.uk/>

North Bristol Advice Centre are also offering advice and support: <http://www.northbristoladvice.org.uk/our-services/eu-settlement-scheme>

Clare Peacock– HIV Peer Support Coordinator

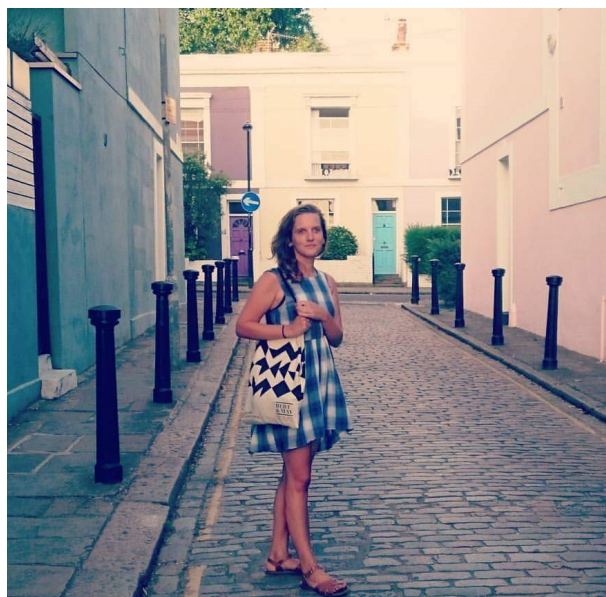




Hello! I'm Jane, the new Fundraising Officer and I'm really excited to be part of the team at Brigstowe!

I've been working in the charity sector for over five years now. I moved from London to Bristol over two years ago to be closer to my boyfriend and we now have a little one year old. I'm really happy living in Bristol and I couldn't imagine living anywhere else at the moment.

When I'm not changing nappies or catching up on sleep I enjoy running. I've taken part in lots of races and even finished a marathon, which I still can't quite believe. I also enjoy baking. Even though I'm no Paul Hollywood I find it really relaxing and I love the reward of a sweet treat.



## **We need you!**

Bristol's much-loved running event returns to the city's streets in 2021, and this year

it's all about the celebration. The route takes in the vibrant waterfront, follows the beautiful Avon Gorge, and passes iconic landmarks such as Clifton Suspension Bridge.



This is the year Brigstowe celebrates turning 25, so with that in mind we are looking for 25 runners!

### **Great Bristol 10k**

### **25 Runners for 25 Years**

**Event date: Sun 19th Sept 2021**

### **Interested?**

If you want to register your space with Brigstowe, please get in touch with Jane ASAP. The spaces we have will be allocated on a first come first serve basis.

**T: 0117 955 5038**

**E: [janemcgoldrick@brigstowe.org](mailto:janemcgoldrick@brigstowe.org)**



**If you're not a runner, don't worry, below are some other examples of how you can support us**

### **Become a Friend**

Being a friend of Brigstowe means a regular monthly donation. Monthly giving enables you to spread your donations throughout the year. This is funding we can count on and plan for allowing us to make long-term commitments. Visit [www.brigstowe.org](http://www.brigstowe.org) or call us!



**Facebook/Instagram–** Have a birthday coming up? An easy way of raising money is to add the donation feature on Instagram or start a fundraiser on Facebook asking people to donate for your special day. As an example, Aled last year raised £600 on a birthday fundraiser!



**Amazon Smile–** Shop on Amazon? Use Amazon Smile, set Brigstowe as your charity and Amazon will donate a % of the cost of the product to Brigstowe at no extra cost to you





# BUSINESS SUPPORT

For Non-EU Migrants in South West  
& West Midlands

Our FULLY FUNDED Programme Offers



1-1 Business &  
Entrepreneurship Support  
from business experts in  
various industries

Advice & Training Modules  
on Product Development,  
Ecommerce, Marketing,  
Social Media, HR, Customer  
Acquisition & Retention

No time limit or cost,  
even if you are already on  
a government programme  
or supported by another  
organisation

Help exploring self-  
employment, setting up a  
business or supporting an  
existing business



Contact: 07745732511  
Dwayne.Deer@ach.org.uk

Individuals with the right to live and work  
in the UK, who are not UK or EU passport  
holders qualify for this free service.

Find out more: [www.ach.org.uk](http://www.ach.org.uk)



The awarded grant is part funded by the European Union Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Making management of migration flows more efficient across the European Union.

# Follow Us

## Join in and follow all of the action

Want to join in with our activities and most recent updates then there are a whole load of platforms for you to engage in conversation.

Join us for our monthly podcast. Aired on the first Thursday of every month on ShoutOut- The LGBTQ+ show on BCFM-



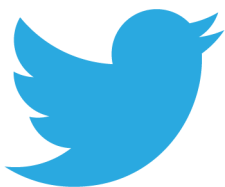
93.2FM between 7-8pm. Missed the show? Don't worry you can catch up either on ShoutOut's website or on ours.

[www.shoutoutradio.lgbt](http://www.shoutoutradio.lgbt)/[www.brigstowe.org](http://www.brigstowe.org)

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