



Summer is on it's way, despite the weather telling us differently!

As the days are getting longer and restrictions are easing hopefully we can all get out and enjoy some much needed time in the sunshine with our friends and loved ones.

In this edition we will be providing you with the usual updates, introducing new members of staff and highlighting the incredible work of our Volunteers as Brigstowe celebrates Volunteers' Week 2021.

Team Brigstowe x



JEN



Hi, I'm Jen, the new Admin & Finance Assistant.

My role is to support the work of our Office Manager Sofia, and to organise the All-In programme.

I'm really pleased to be part of the Brigstowe team, and back in the charity sector after working for a wine importer for a few years. Before that I had a few different finance and admin roles in charities.

I've been living in Bristol for eight years, loving the music scene, djing and putting on gigs. I'm finishing a part-time Masters in Travel & Nature Writing which has been challenging, but in the best way.



Hannah



I am Hannah and am joining the Advice and Support team.

I have worked in the charity sector in Bristol for a few years, most recently at CHAS (Housing Advice Service) and previously at Shelter and Bristol Law Centre.

I am excited to join Brigstowe and looking forward to getting to know everyone, I have heard really great things from everyone I have spoken to about Brigstowe.



In my free time I do some traditional upholstery, lampshade making and things like that, as well as getting out with my dog Lili, and my niece and nephew.

Universal Credit Update

The Government added £20 per week to all Universal Credit claimants during COVID-19. This extra payment is due to stop from September 2021. Be aware that this amounts to an approximate loss of £86 per monthly payment.



Housing Update

Under COVID-19 regulations, landlords are still expected to give tenants six month's notice, instead of the usual two months. If you are served notice get advice on your rights.

Remember- If you or someone you know is or will be affected by the change in Universal Credit payments, you are served notice or need advice on any other issue please do get in contact with us. Our Advice and Support team are here to help.



Telephone: 0117 9555 038

Email: info@brigstowe.org



The Tree of Life

The Tree of Life is a therapeutic tool to help better understand your own personal story.

Using 'The Tree' as a metaphor for life - the roots representing origins, the trunk personal strengths, the branches hopes and the leaves represent important people for us. Arts, music and storytelling are all used throughout the process. Through this tool we explore ourselves and what is important to us.

The aim is to increase confidence, social support and to aid recovery from difficult times.

CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Yes! A Tree of Life Group will begin end of June/July and we would love for you to be involved. **Please get in touch with us to express your interest by Wednesday 16th June.**

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The group consists of seven sessions of 90 minutes each. It will be during school hours and will be run by Judy and Agata who are experienced Tree of Life facilitators.

You will be asked to engage in the Tree of Life process, thinking about your story, hopes, strengths and people.

It is entirely up to you how much you want to share about yourself but anything you do talk about will remain confidential within the group.

WHAT'S EXPECTED OF ME?

We would like you to be able to commit to all 7 sessions for the Tree of Life Group. We believe this will give the best experience for everyone involved.

Before the group begins, we would like you to meet with Agata. This gives her the chance to get to you know you and gives you the chance to ask any questions you may have.

WHERE?

Easton Community Centre.

IS THERE A COST?

The sessions are entirely free and travel expenses will be covered.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided on the day.

If you are interested in joining the Tree of Life group please contact Brigstowe on 0117 9555038 and ask for Jen or email info@brigstowe.org

In conversation with Clare our HIV Peer Support Coordinator and 2 of our Mentors; Aer & Monica.

Aer & Monica are very chatty and fabulous people. Below is an abstract. To read the article in full or to find out more information on peer mentoring, visit-

<https://www.brigstowe.org/help-support/1-1-peer-support/>



Aer

Clare: How long have you been mentoring and how many mentees have you had?

Monica: 4 years, and I'm on my 8th mentee.

Aer: Only about two years and two mentees so far. Thinking about something Monica said earlier, it's definitely reached out more widely into my life. Doing the mentoring and the skills and the confidence that has given me has meant there have been times when I've been able to support someone outside of my Brigstowe volunteering, and I've realised that essentially what I've done is a little bit of mini mentoring. That's just happened naturally and it didn't seem weird and I didn't feel

worried or anxious about it, because I know I can help and I know I can be confident doing it, and they will be comfortable speaking to me because we have shared experience. It would be interesting to ask the other mentors how much it becomes a part of who you are and what you can do.

Monica: Yes definitely. I've incorporated many skills that I got from the training in my daily life and when interacting with other people.

Clare: So the skills you've got from mentoring, it's actually spreading out into other areas of your life?

Aer: Yeah it's reached out into bits of my life that I didn't really think it would. Certainly at work, I think I'm a better manager because of the mentoring. It's just taught me and built so many of the skills that are part of being person-centred, listening and being able to provide that pastoral support.

Monica: Yes, I've noticed it in other aspects of my life. I listen more than I used to before, I am more self-aware now, whereas before I might have interrupted someone while talking or told them what to do without me being aware of that. I am also more receptive. I definitely use all those skills and "tools" in my normal life.

Aer: In the same way, we as mentors get as much from the mentoring process as the mentee does and we learn from them. Delivering the training refreshers, already things have come up that we've thought about or the discussions that have been had, it's not just been about repeating stuff off a script.

Clare: What have been the main themes you've helped mentees with?

Aer: Confidence is a huge thing.

Monica: Yes, definitely with confidence! And seeing HIV as just another part of your life, not something that makes you. It's just there. Simply another part of you. No better, no worse.

Aer: Being able to trust themselves that they do understand and they are in control. That they can manage this and they can do what they want to do and be who they want to be. That confidence in who they are.

Monica: I was also thinking: helping with first-hand knowledge, because as many things as you might read on the internet it's not the same when someone tells you, having a relationship is not a problem, or I haven't used condoms for years. I find it very powerful when someone shares those things first hand rather than "I've read..." or "I've heard someone saying...". Sharing knowledge in a peer mentor relationship has been great for me and for what I've seen with the persons I've mentored, has also been great for all of them. Knowledge is power at the end of the day.

Aer: One of the things that has really stood out for me is seeing how once a mentee starts to feel more relaxed and confident in the mentoring relationship, how HIV threads through all different aspects of their life and how their personal experience of HIV can relate to and touch on so many things that perhaps I would never have thought might be in any way connected to why they would come to mentoring. It really brought home the uniqueness of the individual experience of HIV, that you can deliver a set of tick box things which are important, around this is a website where you can look this up, this a booklet that will tell you about HIV, but actually we are unique individual human beings and our experiences of HIV are unique and will thread through our lives in ways that are completely different from each other. There are common touch points and like Monica said, there are elements of my experience of living with HIV that will resonate with my mentee even if it's not exactly the same. As a mentor that's a big part of how I then learn because I see reflected in their experience things that I've experienced and in that mirror I learn something new because I can now see it slightly differently. I can take something back from that which helps me grow.



My name is Chandra. I am a 71 year old woman who is passionate about helping others. I believe in equal opportunities, regardless of race or gender. I am passionate about complimentary therapy; the power of touch and healing from within ourselves, physically, mentally, spiritually and holistically. I enjoy the fresh air, wildlife and helping others.

I got involved with Brigstowe after meeting a representative at a Bristol Older People's Forum. It took me some time but I decided, why not?. After all, I have type 2 diabetes and I'm interested in knowing more about diabetes and how other people feel after being diagnosed. I applied to be a Peer Mentor and did the training.

As a volunteer, I enjoy meeting new people and helping them to live well with diabetes and how to look after themselves in a positive way. It also gives me a different perspective on life.

Being a mentor is both challenging and rewarding. Before I meet a mentee, I often think, am I going to be able to help? Will we be able to bond and work together as a team? However, once we start our meetings I enjoy setting out what they want to gain from the mentoring and how best to achieve their goals. It's also rewarding just to see a smile on their face, and how the mentee's body language relaxes as our meetings progress.

Advising my mentee on how to improve their diet in a manageable way, encouraging them to exercise even a little and seeing them improve is brilliant. Talking about diabetes is also a great way of expressing how we feel and sharing makes us feel more positive about the condition.

Being a mentor makes me feel closer with people from different backgrounds within my community. Listening and having a laugh together, giving ideas and getting positive feedback makes the experience so worthwhile.

If you're thinking about becoming a Peer Mentor or would like help managing your type 2 diabetes, please do speak to Robyn on 0117 955 5038 or email diabetes@brigstowe.org. Come on in, the door is open!



Why I volunteer for Brigstowe

I was diagnosed mid 2017 following on from a routine sexual health screen and I don't think I've used the phrase "I'm OK" more in my life! Although it was usually enough to slow the flow of questions from friends, it was exhausting having to educate, explain and receive the looks of sadness in their eyes whilst trying to come to terms with my diagnosis myself, leading to my confidence taking a massive knock.

Following on from a recommendation from a friend I asked the Hospital to refer me to Brigstowe for support and accepted the offer of a peer mentor. The fear of meeting him that first time quite quickly turned into relief when I saw not sadness but understanding in his eyes. For 6 months we talked, laughed, and learned from each other all about HIV and how actually I wasn't going to be just ok, but was going to be thriving and living well with HIV.

The confidence I got from speaking with him also led me to joining one of the Recently Diagnosed Groups, where meeting others going through the same as me and learning from volunteers who had been living with HIV for a while left me with a spring in my step!

Shortly after I joined the Campaigns volunteers as I wanted to get involved and give something back. Again, my nerves were certainly on edge for that first meeting but the more than warm welcome and embrace of the other incredible volunteers meant I soon found myself marching at Pride and handing condoms out at St Pauls. A year later I became a peer mentor and volunteer at the annual Recently Diagnosed Group. Through all these roles I have learnt so much not only about HIV and other people's stories, but about myself and how I can live well with HIV. Volunteering enables me to engage with the amazing HIV community as well as to help other people along their journey's – as other volunteers have and continue to help me along mine.

There are so many reasons I could put down as to why I volunteer, but the main reason I volunteer with Brigstowe will always be so that I can give back to the wonderful HIV community that was there for me when I needed help most and continues to be there for me along my own journey.

Matt



Alison, one of our Trustees lets us know why she got involved with Brigstowe

I have been a trustee of Brigstowe for 10 years and valued every moment of it!! I became involved as I am passionate and motivated about their cause - to support people living with or affected by HIV

and because I felt I had skills that would help .

It has been great to see how the charity has expanded from solely helping positive people, to playing a role in the wider health field including sexual health work with African & Caribbean heritage communities and peer mentors who are a vanguard in the diabetes field. Also, we now fight stigma and provide training to various organisations like the police and fundraise.

Where do I start with the benefits of being a trustee?

As a small charity it's a vital role and I feel I'm making a real difference to the individuals and to Bristol on lots of levels which is rewarding and has the bonus of helping mental wellbeing

The staff and clients and volunteers are a delight to work for and with, we are all valued and the inclusive positive atmosphere is uplifting . I feel part of the family of Brigstowe. I have met people from all walks of life from fellow trustees who are professors and care workers to supporters who are lawyers and drag queens. I have been involved in projects as diverse as putting in bids to rewriting policies to setting strategic goals to promoting Pride and the Red Run (HIV sponsored run in East London).

I am proud of the impact and difference we make and the amazing flex we have shown: to such an extent we now play a vital role in Bristol's Fast Track City initiative (<https://www.bristolonecity.com/fast-track-cities/>) and are part of a collaborative project called Common Ambition Bristol.

I have gained valuable experience and new skills in leadership, strategic and personal development, it has exposed me to the sobering reminder of the real world of finance and I am growing personally and professionally.

It's a win -win opportunity I cant recommend enough.

At this moment in time we are not currently recruiting for Trustees.

Vote for Brigstowe at ASDA Bedminster throughout June & July

A promotional poster for the ASDA Foundation's 'Green Token Giving' campaign. The background is a light teal color. At the top, there's a sun and clouds. The ASDA foundation logo is in the top center. Below it, a green banner says 'Green Token' and 'Giving' is written in large, stylized letters. A small silhouette of a family is below the word 'Giving'. In the center, a white box contains the text 'Please vote for us!'. Below this, the prize amounts are listed: '1st Place = £500' and '2nd & 3rd Place = £200 each'. At the bottom, a purple banner says 'Visit Asda.com/green-tokens for more info'. The bottom of the poster is decorated with a pile of green tokens, each with the ASDA logo. The hashtag #AsdaFoundation #GreenTokenGiving is at the bottom, with a small note 'Terms and conditions apply.' below it.

ASDA foundation

Green Token

Giving

Please vote for us!

1st Place = £500
2nd & 3rd Place = £200 each

Visit
Asda.com/green-tokens
for more info

#AsdaFoundation #GreenTokenGiving

Terms and conditions apply.

1. Visit: asda.com/green-tokens
2. Select 'Bedminster' from the drop down menu
3. Click 'VOTE' under the Brigstowe column

Research Opportunity



NUFFIELD DEPARTMENT OF
PRIMARY CARE
HEALTH SCIENCES
Medical Sciences Division



FUNDED BY

NIHR

National Institute
for Health Research

Taking part in the study will involve being interviewed about your experiences of living with HIV and deciding how to feed your baby. This could include discussing:

- your thoughts and feelings around infant feeding
- how you made decisions
- where you got information to make the decision
- if and how you are/were supported
- anything else you would like to tell us.

We are interested in talking to women and birthing parents living with HIV who are pregnant or have a child under one-year old.

If you would like to take part, a researcher can arrange an interview by phone or online.

After the interview, we will give you a shopping voucher to say thank you for your time.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS

NOURISH-UK STUDY

Would you like to take part in a study about your experiences of **deciding how to feed your baby while living with HIV? This will be used** to develop a Healthtalk web resource for new mothers and birthing parents living with HIV and healthcare professionals.

Contact us: call, text or email

+44 (0)7385466115

bakita.kasadha@phc.ox.ac.uk

Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health
Sciences, University of Oxford

Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road,
Oxford, OX2 6GG

www.phc.ox.ac.uk/nourishUK

Study approved by Berkshire Research Ethics
Committee 12/SC/0495

We will publish the study findings on www.healthtalk.org, an award-winning website that provides access to the **experiences of others who have faced the same concerns**. On the website you can read, hear or watch the accounts of people describing their experiences of many different health conditions.



Healthtalk is used to help support others going through similar experiences, and help train doctors, nurses, midwives and other health professionals to understand infant feeding decisions for new mothers or birthing parents living with HIV.

The Researchers



Bakita Kasadha



Tanvi Rai



brigstowe

Local HIV Services

Great Bristol Run Bristol 10k

Join us on 19th September 2021



To sign up or to find out more
info please email:

janemcgoldrick@brigstowe.org

or call **0117 9555 038**

Your support will help people
living with or affected by HIV in
your local community.

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Kilburn Street
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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-



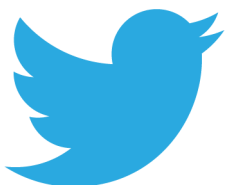
93.2FM between 7-8pm. Missed the show? Don't worry you can catch up either on ShoutOut's website or on ours.

www.shoutoutradio.lgbt/www.brigstowe.org

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