



Grab a mince pie and have a quick break to read our **Christmas Newsletter**, which includes all the information you need to know this festive period, including Brigstowe's and the HIV Clinic's opening hours, and some useful numbers for when we're closed.

Wishing you joy and happiness this festive season and a great New Year.

See you in 2023,  
**Team Brigstowe x**



## **Brigstowe Opening Times**

Please find below the Brigstowe office opening hours over Christmas and New Year. We will have at least 2 staff members in the office on the days we are open.

Easton Community Centre will be closed to the public from 19th December and will reopen on 3rd January 2023. **During this period, all clients and visitors should ring the office on 0117 9555038 to be let into the building.**

### **Monday 19th to Thursday 22nd December**

**Open 9am - 5pm**

### **Friday 23rd December**

**Open 9am - 4:30 pm**

### **Monday 26th December (Bank Holiday)**

**CLOSED**

### **Tuesday 27th December (Bank Holiday)**

**CLOSED**

### **Wednesday 28th and Thursday 29th December**

**Open 9am - 5pm**

### **Friday 30th December**

**Open 9am - 4:30 pm**

### **Monday 2nd January 2023 (Bank Holiday)**

**CLOSED**

### **Tuesday 3rd January 2023**

**Open As Usual**



## **HIV Clinic Opening Times**

**Monday 26th Dec (Bank Holiday) - CLOSED**

**Tuesday 27th Dec (Bank Holiday) - CLOSED**

**Monday 2nd January (Bank Holiday) - CLOSED**

## **Southmead Pharmacy**

**Christmas Day (25th December) - Open 10am to 1pm**

**Weekends and Bank Holidays - Open 9am to 4pm**

**All normal weekdays - Open 9am to 6pm**

**Patients or their representatives will need to collect their medication from the hospital if a delivery from HealthNet cannot be arranged in time or if HealthNet is not suitable. Please contact Brecon Pharmacy if there are any queries.**

## **HealthNet Medicine Delivery Service**

**During the festive period until 3rd January 2023, this service is closed on weekends and bank holidays.**

**A normal service is offered on other weekdays.**

**The delivery dates must be booked with HealthNet in advance and HealthNet must receive the prescriptions by the cut-off times provided to the department.**

## **Other Support Available**

Brigstowe is not a crisis service and we have limited opening hours, however, we understand that Christmas can be a difficult time. If you have an emergency or need someone to talk to, there is help available over the Christmas period.

Below is a list of organisations who can provide support:

**Samaritans 24-hour helpline (to talk about anything difficult):** [call 116 123](tel:116123)

**Social Services Helplines (Connecting Care):** [call 0800 073 0907](tel:08000730907) or [0117 900 2655](tel:01179002655)

**Bristol Mental Health Crisis Line:** [call 0300 555 0334](tel:03005550334)

**Bristol City Council Homelessness and Housing Advice:** [call 0117 352 6800](tel:01173526800)



## U=U, Viral Load and Blips

### U=U Undetectable = Untransmittable

Having an undetectable viral load means that the HIV virus cannot be passed on through sexual contact. A viral load is defined as 'undetectable' when there is less than 200 copies of the HIV virus per millilitre of blood (copies/ml). This was set out in the 'Partner Study' which found there was no HIV transmission from an HIV positive person who had an undetectable viral load of 200 copies/ml and below.

Most clinics in the UK report a viral load as undetectable if it is below 20-50 copies/ml. However, **if your viral load remains below 200 copies/ml** (the cut-off used in all studies that provided evidence for U=U), **there is no risk of passing HIV to your sexual partners.**

### Viral Blips

Sometimes viral load results can have a slight increase, which is called a 'blip'. Even if HIV treatment is adhered to properly (i.e. taken every day), blips can still happen from time to time but it's usually only a temporary thing.

Blips can happen when a person is fighting another infection, such as the flu or an STI, or having a normal reaction to a vaccine, such as the COVID-19 or flu vaccine. A blip might also happen due to the sensitivity of the testing machines at clinic, or it could be a lab error.

Either way, as long as the viral load remains **under 200 copies/ml** then it is still defined as **undetectable**, and as long as you have been **on treatment for 6 months**, the virus cannot be passed on through sexual contact.

If you have any concerns about your viral load, then please contact your HIV clinician who will be happy to chat with you.



## **Fighting HIV Stigma and Proud: March, Vigil and Rally. New date announced!**

Next spring, we're partnering with 20+ HIV organisations to fight HIV stigma. We'll be gathering from **12pm** on **Saturday 18th March 2023** at Forum Magnum Square, London, to march to Trafalgar Square.

Everyone wanting to fight HIV stigma (allies encouraged to attend) is welcome - whether you have been on many demos or this is your first, please come along. Feel free to bring a friend or two.

Brigstowe will be providing free coach transport there and back.

See how you can get involved by visiting [tht.org.uk/march](https://tht.org.uk/march) or emailing [info@brigstowe.org](mailto:info@brigstowe.org) with the subject 'Stigma March'.





## CALLING ALL RUNNERS!

Do you fancy a challenge in 2023?

Why not run the Great Bristol Run for Brigstowe!

We'd love you to join our team of runners next year. The run is taking place on **Sunday 14th May 2023** and you can choose to run 10k or a half marathon. The route takes you via some of Bristol's stunning views, inspiring history and graffiti murals.

If you run for Brigstowe, we'll book your place and provide help and support along the way, and we'll arrange sponsorship for your running vest from one of our corporate partners.

**JOIN US NOW!** Email [louiseyoung@brigstowe.org](mailto:louiseyoung@brigstowe.org) to find out more or sign up!

## Bristol Celebrates World AIDS Day 2022

World AIDS Day 2022 was a great success this year. **We raised a whopping £9,055 across the week of events!** THANK YOU to all of our supporters, volunteers, clients, corporate partners, and the general Bristol public for uniting in the fight against HIV.

Our hugely successful billboard campaign got everyone talking around town!

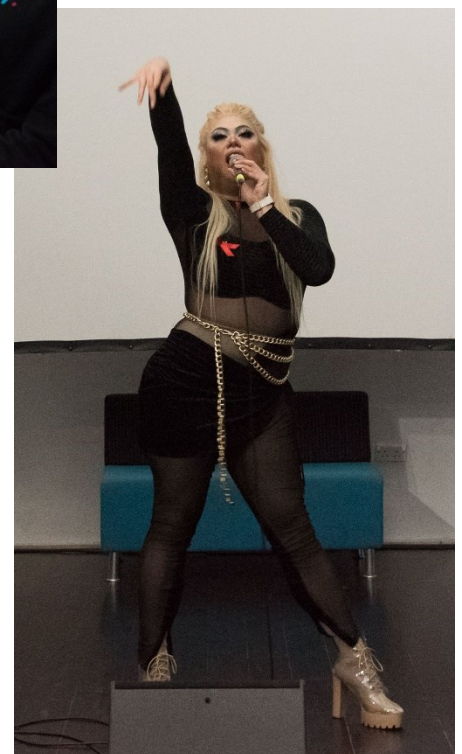


Then there was the raising of the red ribbon flag at City Hall on a typically rainy day. Thanks to Mayor Marvin Rees for your support (and for the invite indoors afterwards to dry off and enjoy a cuppa)!





Aled was our trusty compere at the Celebration Event, which was an emotional and uplifting event. We were all teary-eyed when listening to our inspirational positive speakers, and moved by the wonderful performance from Sing Out Bristol. The night was perfectly rounded off with the exceptionally talented Sum Ting Wong.





We then headed over to local LGBTQ+ venue the Queenshilling for the after party. A Brigstowe fundraiser named 'It's Not A Sin', local DJ icon Pom Pom filled the dancefloor with some epic tunes and local drag performers Manly Mannington, Jersey the Devil and Tess Drive gave us all a show we were not ready for.

Local inclusive rugby team the Bristol Bisons were on hand throughout the evening collecting donations and glittering everybody with red ribbons.

We raised just over £3,000! Thank you to the Queenshilling, the Bristol Bisons but more importantly the biggest thank you goes to everyone who attended and generously donated.





We had two very successful bucket collection in Broadmead and at Temple Meads station, collecting **over £1,000!** Our army of volunteers pulled out all the stops, raising awareness and handing out red ribbons in the cold whilst still smiling. Thanks to Hargreaves Lansdown for sponsoring our fancy red tabards! It was great to see Temple Meads station lit up red, and we were so grateful to Bristol Show Choir and Break Out Voices for lighting up the collections with their incredible performances.

Thank you to all who were involved!





Last but not least, the Remembrance Vigil took place at St James' Priory to mark the end of the campaign and provide a space for the community to remember those we have lost to HIV and AIDS. Thank you to our speakers and The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence for turning up for this important event.







We want to take this opportunity to recognise our long serving staff and volunteers. Below are staff who have worked for 10+ years and volunteers who have been with us for 5+ years.

THANK YOU for all your hard work and dedication.



**Simon Purkiss**

**Trustee**

**5 Years**



**David Henshaw**

**Trustee**

**5 Years**

If you would like to volunteer with Brigstowe, there are many ways in which you can get involved.

Phone us on: 0117 955 5038. Email us at: [info@brigstowe.org](mailto:info@brigstowe.org)

Visit our website: [www.brigstowe.org](http://www.brigstowe.org)



# Become a Friend of Brigstowe

Everyone needs friends and we at Brigstowe are no different.

**Just £10 a month (the price of a cup of coffee a week) could be used to provide transport costs to one of our most destitute clients to access community services.**

To donate please visit:

**[www.brigstowe.org/donate](http://www.brigstowe.org/donate)**

Support people living with HIV and help raise awareness of HIV in Bristol by making a regular monthly donation to Brigstowe.



# Follow Us

## Join in and follow all of the action

Want to join in with our activities and receive our most recent updates? There is a whole host of platforms for you to engage in conversation so follow us now!



**@BrigstoweInfo**



**@BrigstoweInfo**



**@Brigstowe**

