

## Spring has sprung!

And here at Brigstowe, we're super excited for some warmer days ahead. We hope we can **PLANT A SEED** of inspiration with our latest edition of the newsletter!



This issue celebrates lots of our wonderful people; from staff to volunteers to our partnership colleagues. We have some brilliant events coming your way this summer so get those dates in your diary! And we also have a call for new Friends of Brigstowe - if you know anyone who wants to support us, please ask them to get in touch, we'd really appreciate it.

Enjoy, and thanks for reading, Team Brigstowe x

# SUMMER EVENTS



## Bristol 10k & half marathon

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023, Bristol City Centre  
First wave starts at 9:25 am

We have an incredible team of runners who've signed up to run either the 10k or the half marathon to raise vital funds for Brigstowe! Come and cheer them on at the top of Union Street (by the Pride crossing); please arrive from 9:45 - 10 am.

**Do you want to run, too?** We have a few spots left so email [info@brigstowe.org](mailto:info@brigstowe.org) if you want to take on the challenge!



## Bristol Pride

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2023, Bristol City Centre

There's just 3 months to go until Bristol Pride and we're looking for marchers to join the Brigstowe team! We will meet at Castle Park from 10 am to organise ourselves ahead of the Pride Parade. Email [info@brigstowe.org](mailto:info@brigstowe.org) to sign up.



# ALL IN EVENTS

## **Brigstowe's Summer Celebration!**

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2023

9:45 am - 3 pm

Chantry Community and Arts Centre, 52 Castle Street,  
Thornbury, BS35 1HB

This is Brigstowe's annual celebration event for clients, volunteers and staff in the grounds of Chantry Community and Arts Centre. Come join us for a day of relaxing in the award-winning gardens with entertainment and a luxurious lunch. This event is not to be missed! It's free of charge and fully wheelchair accessible.

Meet at Easton Community Centre, BS5 6AW at 9.45 am and return around 3pm.

## **Friends & Family Workshop**

During the next year, we will be looking at running a Friends & Family Workshop. This workshop provides a friendly and safe environment for family, friends and partners to learn more about HIV, ask questions they may otherwise be too afraid to ask, and share experiences.

If you are interested in attending this session please register your interest by calling us on 0117 955 5038 or emailing us on [info@brigstowe.org](mailto:info@brigstowe.org).





**to our incredible  
volunteers who have  
worked with us for  
more than 5 years!!**

## **Emily Cawston—HIV Peer Mentor**

Brigstowe, Brigstowe! The staff, the volunteers, and everyone involved are some of the most amazing, courageous and wonderful people I've ever met!

I first came to Brigstowe at the end of 2016. I had received my HIV diagnosis that summer and had spent 6 months kidding myself that I was coping fine, I was still going to work and still going to social groups and, to me, life was still moving forward. But what I didn't know at the time was that I was spiralling down a pit, not truly understanding my diagnosis and in the back of my mind thinking that, 'I'm in my 20s



and I'll never have a fulfilling relationship again.' It was then, after 6 months of misleading myself and not facing my fears, that I hit the bottom of that pit. I didn't know who to turn to: I couldn't speak to my family (my Mum had just been diagnosed with breast cancer and I didn't want to put a burden on them), and I couldn't speak to friends (what would they think of me).

And then, when my hopes were lost this absolute force of good showed up like a gift from the heavens, my guardian angels - Brigstowe.

They were my hand and my support when I needed it the most. They taught me to understand and really own my diagnosis. They armed me with knowledge and confidence. They showed me that my life was going to be as wonderful as it always had, even better!

When I was feeling low - they were there.

When I didn't know how to speak to my friends and family about my status - they showed me how.

When I carried and birthed my son - they were cheering me on.

When I went through financial hardship - they were a guiding light.

When my relationship fell apart - they were there to support me and pick me up again.

When I lost my Mum to breast cancer - they were there to cry with me and comfort me.

It's the best feeling knowing that they will always be there through thick and thin.

So, why on Earth wouldn't I want to be a part of this group of angels? This is why I volunteer and have proudly done so for over 5 years now. There is nothing I wouldn't do for this beautiful group of people and I couldn't think of a better way to spend my time.

Brigstowe - thank you for being a part of my life xxx

---

## **Ashley Hawken—HIV Peer Mentor**



I came to Brigstowe in 2018 because I needed help. I went to the Newly Diagnosed group and then had a mentor which really helped.

I am now a Senior Mentor, positive voice speaker, peer facilitator, and I am on the Campaigns group.

Brigstowe has been the making of me and I do what I do to give back the help I received.

I hope I can help other people like me. I have enjoyed my time with Brigstowe and hope to do so for many more years to come.



## welcome TO THE TEAM

Hey, I'm Phoebe! I have just started working at Brigstowe as an Advice and Support Worker.

The majority of my working life was in Adult Social Care,

where I managed teams who supported Adults with Learning Disabilities. I moved to Bristol a year ago and started working in the voluntary sector. Moving here from a small town in Gloucestershire has been great for me, and I have been so lucky to make some amazing friends and really immerse myself in the Bristol lifestyle. This city has taught me so much about different cultures and walks of life, and I'm keen to keep experiencing and learning new things!

Outside of work, I love spending time with my friends, going dancing, enjoying all the amazing food that this city has to offer, and going for walks. I head back to my home town regularly to volunteer, which I absolutely love! I have also recently started knitting lots, and am enjoying being creative and hope to keep getting better, and one day I will master the skill of crocheting!

So far, I've only been at Brigstowe for a month, but I feel very welcome here, and am excited to get more involved going forward!



# Meet our wonderful colleagues at the Brecon HIV Clinic, Southmead Hospital



## **Liz Williams**

Lead HIV Clinical Nurse Specialist

I have worked within HIV for over 25 years and the last 18 years at the Brecon clinic. I have an interest in supporting newly diagnosed patients, women's health and pregnancy.

## **Phoebe Byrne**

HIV Clinical Nurse Specialist

I am new to the Nurse team, but have always had an interest in HIV and bring varied nursing experience to the role.



## **Lizzie Richards**

HIV Clinical Nurse Specialist

I have worked at the Brecon clinic for 18 months and have previous HIV experience. Part of my role is to work closely with Brigstowe and Terence Higgins Trust supporting people living with HIV.



# 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.





# Important information for voters

From **4<sup>th</sup> May 2023**, voters in England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in Local elections, Police and Crime Commissioner elections, UK parliamentary by-elections and Recall petitions.

From **October 2023**, this will also apply to UK General elections.

You can find out what ID is accepted online at [www.gov.uk/how-to-vote/photo-id-youll-need](https://www.gov.uk/how-to-vote/photo-id-youll-need).

If you don't have accepted photo ID, you can apply for a free voter ID document, which is known as a Voter Authority Certificate online at [www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate](https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate).

The deadline to register to vote in the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023 elections in England is **11:59pm on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April**. Register to vote online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).

# HIV & the Menopause

## What is the menopause?

Menopause is the time when menstruation periods permanently stop. It is a natural part of the ageing process and usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55.

## Menopause & HIV

The menopause and HIV is under-researched, but the evidence base is growing. Some studies suggest that women living with HIV might experience symptoms of menopause earlier and more severely. According to the [PRIME study](#), symptoms of menopause among women living with HIV in England were sometimes confused with HIV symptoms.

## Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) & HIV treatment

HRT can be prescribed to reduce some symptoms of menopause, prevent osteoporosis, or treat early onset of menopause. It involves taking oestrogen in the form of tablets, an implant or a gel to replace the decline in your own levels. HRT can be taken with HIV treatment; however, HIV clinics don't usually provide HRT so you'll need to have it prescribed by your GP. There are also other therapies available to treat menopause symptoms, However, they may interact with your HIV treatment so it's important to discuss these with your HIV clinicians.

**\*Sources:** information taken from [THI](#) and [NAM aidsmap](#).

## Our commitment to the menopause & EDI

Brigstowe is committed to creating an inclusive society and workplace. We believe that the menopause should not be taboo or hidden, although no staff member or volunteer should feel obliged to disclose information about the menopause. Instead, we feel it is important for everyone to understand what the menopause is and to be able to talk about it without embarrassment, and for the person it is affecting to know they will be listened to, understood and supported.

Is your baby nearly ready for solid foods?

# Practical Weaning Workshop

Led by nutritionist Cori Flynn  
For parents with babies  
around 3-7 months old



## Included:

- Learn how to build good eating habits from the start
- Learn baby first aid around choking and CPR
- Build your confidence
- Explore affordable food choices
- Cook and eat an age-appropriate meal together

At Coexist Community Kitchen,  
Epstein building, Mivart street,  
Easton BS5 6JF

 @coriflynn.nutrition

Free - Donations welcome



**Friday 31st  
March 2023  
10am-1pm**

**Book via email:**

[corinneflynn.nutrition@gmail.com](mailto:corinneflynn.nutrition@gmail.com)



SCAN ME



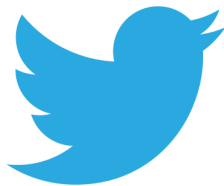
# Follow Us

## Join in and follow all of the action

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



**@BrigstoweInfo**



**@BrigstoweInfo**



**@Brigstowe**

