

# Bristol Disability Equality Forum.

## E-Bulletin April 2022



## News

### Title

Welcome to another edition of the BDEF e-bulletin. This issue has lots of news about what's happening at the Forum, as well as what is going on in Disability news locally and nationally.

We're currently in the process of giving the e-bulletin a makeover so the next edition may look a little different to this – we look forward to showing you our new look next month.

You can keep up to date with us on our social media which are linked below:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[BDEF Website](#)

### Disability Activism in Bristol - Forging Our Futures Display Launch Event and Display

A brand new museum display created by Bristol Disability Equality Forum and in collaboration with the **MShed** is to open this month.

It will showcase Disabled Bristol activists from the 1980s and 1990s through interviews and research done by Disabled young people from the city. Photography included in the display was taken by Bristol-based photographer David Constantine.

The display, which can be viewed **on the first floor** of the MShed, will be available for you to look at **from April 28<sup>th</sup> 2022 until October 1<sup>st</sup> 2023**.

There will also be a **launch event** for the display **April 27<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 7.30pm at the MShed**. Numbers are limited, but tickets to attend are still available. **To book your ticket to the launch event, go to:**  
<https://pretix.eu/bristolmuseums/yte7/>

For more information about the display itself, visit MShed's website: <https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed/whats-on/disability-activism-in-bristol-pioneers-protests-and-progress-from-the-1980s-to-now/>

## Coronavirus News

### Current Data

Following the end of free testing, estimates of the virus from the **Office for National Statistics (ONS) Coronavirus Infection Survey (CIS)** are now being used.

The ONS CIS is a weekly survey testing a large number of people throughout England and provides results at National, regional and sub-regional levels. **For more information and to learn more about how ONS collect data, [visit their website](#).**

The estimated prevalence of **the virus in Bristol, BANES & North Somerset is 9.6%** - this is higher than the estimate in England, which is 7.5%. There are **currently 180 patients in hospital** unwell with COVID-19 and **the R Number in the South West is - 1 to 1.3**.

In terms of vaccinations, **80% of people in Bristol over 16 years of age have had one dose of the vaccine, 76% have had two doses and 60% have had three doses.**

It is still important to wash your hands regularly, give one another space and wear a face covering in busy and crowded areas. These small actions will help to keep people safe, and reduce your chances of catching the virus.

### Vaccinations

Vaccinations for all **five to eleven year-olds** are now available in Bristol, and appointments can be booked via the National Booking System or by calling 119.

**Spring boosters** for people most at risk of COVID-19 are now being offered to:

- a) people aged 75 and over,
- b) those over 12 with a weakened immune system, and
- c) those who live in care homes for older people.

Find out more about spring boosters on [the BNSSG Healthier Together website](#). You can visit the [NHS website](#) for details on walk-in clinics and bookable appointments.

## Tests

Provision of free tests has come to an end.

The government will continue to provide **free COVID-19 tests for certain groups**, including:

- 1) patients in hospital,
- 2) people who are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19, or
- 3) people who live or work in high-risk, closed settings, such as in some NHS, social care and prison settings, where infection needs to be identified quickly to minimise outbreaks.

**More info on testing and where you can buy tests at:**

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/coronavirus/what-you-need-to-know>

## Community Climate Action Project

### Community Climate Action Plan

Big changes are coming to Bristol to stop climate change. These changes could make life better or worse for Disabled people.

So, Disabled people in Bristol have made a plan to make sure that the changes make our city better for everyone and the planet. It looks at everything from buses to parks.

**Please read and if you can support please email us at:**

[cca.bristoldef@gmail.com](mailto:cca.bristoldef@gmail.com)

Accessible pdf: <https://bristoldef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Community-version-070222.pdf>

Easy Read: <https://bristoldef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Community-version-EASY-READ.pdf>

BSL video: <https://youtu.be/4sHBdOcel60>

### Share your thoughts for change

We now need to make the ideas in our plan happen. Please **fill in our short surveys** to help us push for the change you want.



What needs to happen to make Bristol's Parks more accessible:

<https://bit.ly/3t8F2CS>

What are your thoughts on Bristol's public toilets:

<https://bit.ly/3DJu7Ep>

For more details on the project and to get involved, get in touch with Emma at [cca@bristoldef@gmail.com](mailto:cca@bristoldef@gmail.com) or phone 0117 914 0528.

## Making Change Happen



**Making  
Change  
Happen**



funded through  

As we enter the promised days of summer sunshine, we would very much like you to join us on **our Rolling and Strolling walks**.

We created the project with the aim of holding accessible walks, in which Disabled people can not only enjoy the outdoors and get some exercise

but also meet other Disabled people.

We are also extremely proud of our recent work in developing, with **Sustrans**, a new training course for people looking to lead walking groups that is fully accessible to Disabled people.

If you wish to join us, we **meet at 1pm** on the day of the walks. Our **upcoming walks** are as follows:

Friday 29th April,  
Eastville Park.

Meeting at the main entrance at the bottom of Fishponds Road leading into Muller Road.

Wednesday 4th May,  
Vassals Park.

Meeting at the main Entrance Perrymans Close.

Friday 6th May,  
St George Park.

Meeting at the main Entrance Chalks Road.

Wednesday 11th May,  
Warmley station to Bitton.

Meeting at Warmley Station.

Friday 13th May,  
Riverside Park.

Meeting outside the St Pauls Learning Centre.

Wednesday 18th May,  
The Harbourside.

Meeting near the arch leading onto the waterfront next to Anchor Road.

Friday 20th May,  
Castle Park.

Meeting at the main entrance opposite Union street.

Friday 27th May,  
Fishponds to Mangotsfield on the Bristol to Bath Cycle path.

Meeting at outside the Co op on Straights Parade.

Wednesday 1st June,  
Ashton Court Estate.

Meeting at the cafe near the carpark of the Kennel Lodge Road entrance.

You can also become a member of **our Making Change Happen Peer support community**. We continue to have regular online meetings via Zoom as well as more in person meet ups - venues will be announced in the very near future.

The meetings have a variety of themes regarding issues affecting Disabled people. Members of the group share advice and offer support and encouragement to one another. It offers members the opportunity to meet new people and make friends.

We also have **our Digital Inclusion project**, where we are able to provide Tablet computers and access to the Internet for Disabled people who don't have access. We are also able to offer ongoing lessons and advice in digital skills with **Jobsnetworkbristol**. Regular meetings are held at The Whithywood Centre in Hartcliffe and weekly meetings at:

Beehive Centre, St George  
Wednesday 10.30- 12.30

Malcolm X Community Centre, St Pauls

Wednesday 2.00- 3.30

Beachwood Club, Fishponds

Thursday 10.45- 12.45

**To find out more about the meetings you can contact Matt at [jobnetworkbristol@outlook.com](mailto:jobnetworkbristol@outlook.com)**

We are also looking for Disabled people to volunteer with us. You can volunteer not only as part of Rolling and Strolling and Digital inclusion but also in becoming **Befrienders**. This can help us deliver the vital work of helping Disabled people who may need a little extra support to leave their homes for tasks and help them to gain greater independence.

If you need help and support from a Befriender, or if you would like more Information or would like to help with any of our projects then please don't hesitate to contact Dan.

**Please contact Dan at: [mch.bristoldef@gmail.com](mailto:mch.bristoldef@gmail.com) or phone 0117 914 0528.**

## **Volunteering**

Do you care about equality for Disabled people in Bristol? Volunteering is the best way to push for change. There's a role for everyone and some can take as little as an hour a month. It's also a great way to make new friendships.

### **Current Great Roles**

#### **Befrienders**

The pandemic has isolated many Disabled people. It has also made accessing the internet an essential skill. For some this has damaged their confidence around leaving their house.

Befrienders can:

offer support over the phone,

visit people in their homes,

help them access the internet, and

carry out support plans tailored to the individual.

#### **Walk Leaders**

Get out in nature with other Disabled people. **Roll and Stroll** happens once a week and walks of different lengths and difficulty are on offer. We need walk leaders to help plan the walks and to be there on the day to help with their running.

### **Fundraisers**

Do you have experience of fundraising? Help us develop and carry out a strategy for our charitable donations income stream.

**More roles at: <http://bristoldef.org.uk/current-volunteering-opportunities/>. To volunteer or find our more please email: [cca.bristoldef@gmail.com](mailto:cca.bristoldef@gmail.com)**

### **Want equality and justice for all Disabled people? Then help fundraise for the Forum's work.**

Do staff in your organisation or business want to sponsor a charity but don't know where to donate to? Or are you an individual who buys most of their shopping online?

You can give and help us with fundraising as much or as little as you like by using the following:

#### **EasyFundraising**

#### **Amazon Smile**

#### **Go Fund Me**

**Find out more on our website, social media channels or contact us on 0117 914 0528 or email [bristoldef@gmail.com](mailto:bristoldef@gmail.com).**

### **Congratulations to Gordon Richardson on receiving a Honorary Degree from the University of Bristol!**

We're delighted to share that our Co-Chair of Trustees, Gordon Richardson, has been awarded an Honorary Degree for his many decades of working to improve the lives of Disabled people by the University of Bristol.

Honorary degrees are given to very few people (one to two a year). Gordon did his undergraduate degree in Economics and Accounting.

As well as being Co-Chair at the Forum, he is a founder of the Vassall Centre, the city's first fully accessible workplace, Chair of Designability, Treasurer of the Bristol Walking Alliance, Bristol West Diabetes Support Network and the regional arm of the British Polio Fellowship. He has also recently become one of the new Disability Equality Commissioners.

Gordon has worked tirelessly for the Forum since joining the Board of Trustees and we hope to work with him for many years to come - in a range of ways.

## **Give Your Views to Bristol City Council on the Falcondale Road/Henbury Road Junction**

**Bristol City Council** are proposing to carry out **traffic signal refurbishment works at the crossroad junction with Falcondale Road and Henbury Road** and proposing **a new 24 hour bus lane for a short stretch along Falcondale Road.**

For an opportunity to **have a say about these proposals**, review the **plan** and **fill in a short survey**.

You can take part at <https://bristol.citizenspace.com/sustainable-transport/falcondale-road-henbury-road-junction/>

**This survey will close on 8 May 2022.**

## **Disabling Homes Investigation from Bureau Local**

The **Disabling Homes Investigation** from **Bureau Local** focuses on Disabled Faculties' Grants (DFGs) and the harsh challenges people experience trying to get vital adaptations to their home.

After contacting all UK councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive for data on DFG delivery and waiting times, Bureau Local discovered long and growing waits for assessments and for adaptations to be completed. In a first of its kind analysis, they were also able to uncover the full extent of the wait for adaptations across much of the country.

Meanwhile, Disabled children and adults are turning to crowdfunding to pay for major adaptations, and sacrificing their



independence and dignity for years. Others are trapped inside or locked out of their own homes.

Some of the main findings are:

### **Waiting times (as of 30 September/October 2021)**

In 10 council areas in England and Wales, people had to wait on average more than a year to even see an occupational therapist and complete the pre-application steps, including Southend, where the wait was more than 18 months.

Government rules mandate that adaptations are approved and completed within 18 months, meaning a person could easily be waiting two to three years for the changes that make their property a liveable home.

Some areas in Northern Ireland, where grant rules are different, had wait times of more than three years.

### **Postcode lottery**

The difference in response times across England and Wales was stark. In some places in Wales, the average wait for an occupational therapist was barely a few days, but in Newport it could be up to a year.

Nearly 80% of local authorities in England and Wales are using discretionary powers to top up the maximum DFG amount, but the extra money a person can get varies wildly by council. Some offer another £30,000, but Manchester Council can offer up to £70,000. In some areas, the top-up is a grant; in many, it is a loan.

**You can read the article from Bureau Local with testimonies of "Disabled people trapped waiting years for vital home adaptations" here: <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2022-04-05/disabled-people-trapped-waiting-years-for-vital-home-adaptations>"><https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2022-04-05/disabled-people-trapped-waiting-years-for-vital-home-adaptations>**

You can also **add your insight** - they invite you to add your perspective and insight on DFGs, home accessibility or independent living on social media. It would be great if you could

use the hashtag **#DisablingHomes** to help gather all of this helpful content in one online place. There is also a historical hashtag **#FixTheDFGs** that you can use. Bureau Local will share your content.

## **New Pub Fully Staffed by Disabled People opens in Bristol**

(Article taken from **BBC News** on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2022:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-61096975>)

A pub will be the first in the city staffed by adults with Disabilities.

The former Tapestry Brewery in **Totterdown** has been purchased by **Props**, a charity that supports people with Disabilities to gain work skills.

The new owners want to create "a profitable enterprise" that can provide "real and meaningful" work opportunities for its trainees.

Their mission is to "break boundaries" around disabled people working.

Props purchased the Tapestry Brewery after it went into liquidation earlier this year and under the new ownership it will be called Tapestry by Props.

**You can find out more about Props on their website:**

<https://www.propsbristol.org/>

## **Information on a New Advocacy Service**

WECIL's Advocacy Service has been closed due to another organisation having been given the contract for the service. A new Advocacy service called **POhWER** is now available in Bristol for adults with learning difficulties, mental health needs, sensory or physical impairments, and their carers.

**More information and a referral form can be found on the POhWER website:** <https://www.pohwer.net/bristol>.

## **Want to help us make this e-bulletin even more useful?**

Are there changes happening where you live that you think others should know about? Do you have any news or views that other

members may like to hear about? This is your e-bulletin so please get in contact with us by email, phone or post with your ideas.

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94 Grosvenor Rd, Bristol BS2 8XJ.

**Email:** [bristoldef@gmail.com](mailto:bristoldef@gmail.com) or **Tel: 0117 914 0528.**