**Bristol Disability Equality Forum.**

**E-Bulletin May 2022**

**News**

**Summer is on it’s way…**

You may remember that in last month’s issue we told you that this month’s edition might look a bit different. This is still a work in progress and we are now getting help from a volunteer. We really hope that it will be ready for next month’s issue! For now,we hope you enjoy reading this month’s edition full of news about what’s happening at the Forum, as well as locally and nationally.

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

[**Facebook**](https://www.facebook.com/bristoldef/)[**Twitter**](https://ww.twitter.com/BDEFbites)[**Instagram**](https://www.instagram.com/bdefbites/)[**LinkedIn**](https://www.linkedin.com/company/bristol-disability-equality-forum/)[**BDEF Website**](http://www.bristoldef.org.uk/)

**Bristol Disability Equality Forum nominated for the Community Organisation Award for Disability at the National Diversity Awards!**

We are delighted to announce that we have been **nominated for the Community Organisation Award for Disability** at the **National Diversity Awards**!

The awards celebrate the "excellent achievements of grass-root communities". We at the Forum are very proud that our work with and for Disabied people in Bristol has been recognised, even more so as an Disability charity that is made up of Disabled staff and trustees.

We hope to attend the National Diversity Awards 2022 to see who wins this award and many other awards on 16th September at Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral.

**You can find out more about the National Diversity Awards on their website:** [**https://www.nationaldiversityawards.co.uk/**](https://www.nationaldiversityawards.co.uk/)

**Coronavirus News**

**Current Data**

**The latest available data from Bristol City Council is that 1 in 47 Bristol residents are estimated to have had COVID-19 in the last week, this is 2.1% of people in the city. 51 patients are in hospital with COVID-19 and 15 people have died from it.**

**In terms of getting vaccinated, 80% of people aged sixteen and over in Bristol have had their first dose, 76% have had a second dose and 61% have had a booster or third dose.**

**Vaccines still available for 5-11 year old’s**

**The COVID-19 vaccine is still available for 5–11-year-old’s in Bristol.**

**Parents of all children aged 5 to 11 years can have their child vaccinated, and it is particularly important for children who have health conditions that put them at high risk from COVID-19. This includes children who are clinically extremely vulnerable, severely immunosuppressed or a household contact of someone who is severely immunosuppressed.**

**[Note: immunosuppressed = can't fight off infections and illnesses as well as other people. This is usually either because of a health condition, or because of the medicines they are taking]**

**Children are given the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for both doses and children aged 5 to 11 will be given smaller doses than older children and adults (a third of the normal dose).**

**The vaccine should give your child long lasting protection against serious complications of infection, including any future waves of COVID-19, due to new variants.**

**If your child has not yet received their vaccine, please book an appointment at a local clinic, or find your nearest walk-in clinic.**

**Further information about vaccinations and all local walk-in clinics are available on** [**www.grabajab.net**](http://www.grabajab.net)**.**

**Long Covid**

**For some people, COVID-19 can cause symptoms that last weeks or months after the infection has gone.**

**If you are experiencing symptoms such as fatigue, shortness of breath, chest pain or dizziness, after having COVID-19, you may be suffering from "Long COVID".**

**If you are worried about symptoms four or more weeks after having COVID-19, contact your GP for advice.**

**More information about Long COVID can be found at** [**https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/long-term-effects-of-coronavirus-long-covid/**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/long-term-effects-of-coronavirus-long-covid/)**.**

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**Community Climate Action Project**

**Community Climate Action Plan Project**

We have started to put our plan into action and have asked the Lottery for money for our Disabled climate champions and for our business to fix mobility aids. We are also in discussions with Disability Rights UK to support other cities in the UK to make their own climate plans by and for Disabled people.

**If you haven't read the plan, please do so here:** [**https://bristoldef.org.uk/community-climate-action/**](https://bristoldef.org.uk/community-climate-action/)

Now that our plan is out, groups are coming to us wanting to work together. Please see the two offers below.

**Manor Valley Woods** have mapped 3 routes for sensory trails with SENSE. They would like to work with people with sensory impairments to pilot them. **If you are interested please get in touch with** [**cca.bristoldef@gmail.com**](mailto:cca.bristoldef@gmail.com)

**Project to Support Nature**

Are you looking to improve your local neighbourhood to bring back nature? Do you want to enjoy the benefits of an improved natural environment?

**Avon Wildlife Trust**’s Nextdoor Nature project is looking for community groups who want to learn about nature on their doorstep, and create or look after places for wildlife near where they live. This might be in the street, in gardens or community spaces. The selected communities will be supported by a community officer, wildlife guides and resources, training, and a wider network of community action.

**To hear more, please contact** [**Julie.doherty@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk**](mailto:Julie.doherty@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk) **with a little bit of information about your group and what you want to achieve.**

**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**

As the outreach worker at the Forum, my job is essentially to bring Disabled people together.

This doesn't mean that we believe Disabled people should be lumped together and segregated from the rest of society - in fact the total opposite.

Our members come from all sorts of backgrounds. We have members who have felt themselves to be marginalised, who crave greater independence, who may need a helping hand to expand their social circle and explore different ways of living. We also have members who lead extremely independent lives with successful careers but have never been able to talk openly about their experience of being a Disabled person and the issues that they have had to face.

By bringing Disabled people together, we aim to build mutual support networks where Disabled people can get the support they require: whether it be an opportunity to find information and get advice, make friends or discuss issues that affect Disabled people in Bristol and beyond.

Our **Making Change Happen Peer Support Community** holds online meetings **via Zoom every Tuesday at 7pm and Thursday at 5pm**.

The meetings are always very welcoming and supportive to new members and a chance to meet some of our regular members in advance of our in-person meetings.

Our **Befriending** work supports people who may need a little more support in going out into the community for many reasons. This includes those who lack confidence and who would welcome the support of an understanding person who is willing to maybe give them a call, meet up and offer them the support that we have all needed at one point or another.

If you do not have Internet access, our **Digital Inclusion project** can help Disabled people in Bristol who are not online join our meetings. We provide you with a tablet computer, access to the Internet and on going IT support with **JobNetworkBristol**.

**JobNetWorkBristol also runs IT drop in groups 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)

As well as our Making Change Happen online and in-person meetups, you can also join us for some light exercise and chatter on our **Rolling and Strolling accessible walks**. If you wish to join us, we meet at 1pm on the day of the walks. **Our upcoming walks are as follows:**

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

**Friday 3rd June, Eastville Park**. Meeting at the main entrance at the bottom of Fishponds Road leading into Muller Road.

**Friday 10th June, St George Park**. Meeting at the main Entrance Chalks Road.

**Tuesday 14th June, Vassals Park**. Meeting at the main Entrance Perrymans Close.

**Friday 17th June, Riverside Park**. Meeting outside the St Pauls Learning Centre.

**Tuesday 21st June, Warmley station to Bitton**. Meeting at Warmley Station.

**Friday 24th June, Castle Park**. Meeting at the main entrance opposite Union street.

**Tuesday 28th June, The Harbourside**. Meeting near the arch leading onto the waterfront next to Anchor Road.

If you are interested in any of our projects and you would like to know more or if you would like to discuss the possibility of helping our work by signing up as a volunteer, then get in touch with 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)**.**

**May Disability Discussions**

May's meeting is **online** on **Thursday 26th** from **12 noon to 1pm**. The topic is **'How do we get politicians to care about disability rights?'**

**Please let Emma know if you can attend by emailing** [**cca.bristoldef@gmail.com**](mailto:cca.bristoldef@gmail.com) **and use the Zoom link below:**

[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83851662961?pwd=Q1hISUlISWZIc2xLMUxsU1BLN1JOQT09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83851662961?pwd=Q1hISUlISWZIc2xLMUxsU1BLN1JOQT09)

**Meeting ID: 838 5166 2961**

**Passcode: 939146**

**Disability Activism in Bristol - Forging Our Futures Display**

A museum display created by Bristol Disability Equality Forum and in collaboration with the **MShed** is open.

It showcases 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 **until October 1st 2023**.

**For more information about the display, 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/**](https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed/whats-on/disability-activism-in-bristol-pioneers-protests-and-progress-from-the-1980s-to-now/)

**Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) Quality of Live 2022 survey**

**The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)** wants to know more about the experiences of:

a) blind people,

b) deaf-blind people, and

c) those living with a vision impairment in the UK today,

and how those experiences affect their quality of life.

They want to understand what’s most important to people – what’s difficult, easy, what’s missing from everyday life and what brings people joy.

To do this, **RNIB have created a survey** that explores different areas of life. RNIB will be able to use the information gathered to plan work out where they can have the greatest impact on people’s lives, ensuring people have the kind of support they need and helping people to achieve their goals.

If you would like to help them do this, **by taking part in a 30-minute telephone survey**, you can directly contribute to RNIB’s understanding of people’s experiences with vision impairment and what is most important to them.

**To let them know you would like to take part, or if you’d like more information before deciding, contact:** [**rosa.grossman@revealingreality.co.uk**](mailto:rosa.grossman@revealingreality.co.uk) **and/or,** [**eliza.bacon@revealingreality.co.uk**](mailto:eliza.bacon@revealingreality.co.uk) **and/or,** [**sofina.suhaimi@revealingreality.co.uk**](mailto:sofina.suhaimi@revealingreality.co.uk)**.**

**Important News for all Disabled people with a car**

**The Council has announced that, with the exception of Easton & St Philips RPS, the Council will be increasing Pay and Display charges and Permit tariffs in all other Residents’ Parking Scheme areas.**

Notices of these changes (called **a Notice of Variation**), providing detailed information about the new charges, **appeared in the Bristol Post on 10 May. The increased charges will start on 6 June 2022.**

**Parking for Blue badge holders’ stays unchanged.** Blue Badge holders don’t need a permit to park in any Residents’ Parking Scheme area and can park for free without a time limit in:

a) permit holders only bays,

b) shared use bays,

c) pay and display bays.

**To see the Notice of Variation documents, please visit** [**https://www.bristol.gov.uk/streets-travel/traffic-regulation-orders-tros**](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/streets-travel/traffic-regulation-orders-tros) **from 10 May to 6 June 2022.**

Please note, the Council says this is not a consultation exercise, it is just to let you know about the parking increase. This is because it was agreed as part of the Mayor’s Budget for 2022/23.

**The Forum**’s view of this change is that it seems to completely ignore the cost of living crisis many people in Bristol are experiencing – especially Disabled people and families that include one or more Disabled children or young people. An increase that is a lot higher than was talked about when the Mayor drew up his draft budget. We welcome the continued protection for Blue Badge holders but worry what will happen to all those people in the city who live on benefits. Where are they supposed to get the money for their parking permit?

Before the current crisis, 50% of all Bristol homes living in poverty included one or more Disabled person. How much that will increase will depend on what local and national government does to exempt people on a low income from price increases – including this one.

**The Forum** has also always thought that the Residents’ Parking Zones have got it wrong. Surely, if we are to charge people for using their car it should be when that car is away from their home – because it is in use (except when it is an access need)?

Instead, Bristol is charging people to leave their car at home when they go to work, rather than charging people who take their car with them!

**Rising bills having ‘catastrophic impact’ on Disabled people**

New research by charity [**Leonard Cheshire**](https://www.leonardcheshire.org/) has found **many Disabled people are struggling to pay for the basic costs of living**. For some this could be quite serious for their health - for example, if you need to keep your medicines in the fridge but can't afford the electricity.

The research found that:

- **a quarter** of those who took part in the research **said they missed meals because they couldn't afford it**.

- **28%** had **not been able to afford to** [**heat their home**](https://www.itv.com/news/topic/energy).

- **7% said they have less than £10 a week for essentials** like food after paying for housing and bills.

**You can find the full story, including video interviews with Disabled people affected by the crisis,** [**on the ITV website**](https://www.itv.com/news/2022-04-20/rising-bills-having-catastrophic-impact-on-disabled-people)**.**

**Bristol's Art Club**

**Bristol’s Art Club** is a new project inviting people all over the city to develop their artistic side to support their mental wellbeing as we learn to live with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Bristol Art Club wants you to get creative and send photographs of your artworks to an online gallery of local talent. It doesn't matter if you are a professional or amateur, art is good for you!

The project is inspired by **the Grayson’s Art Club exhibition at Bristol Museum & Art Gallery**. **For more about the exhibition, visit the museum website:** [**https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-museum-and-art-gallery/whats-on/grayson-perry-art-club/**](https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-museum-and-art-gallery/whats-on/grayson-perry-art-club/)**.**

Photographs of selected artworks will also be put up on screens in the museum and on social media to celebrate the creativity of Bristol’s citizens.

Arts and culture can have a big impact on our wellbeing so let’s start sketching, painting, sewing, sculpting or crafting together.

**Find out more about Bristol’s Art Club and submit your artwork at** [**https://exhibitions.bristolmuseums.org.uk/grayson-perrys-art-club/submit-your-artwork-form/**](https://exhibitions.bristolmuseums.org.uk/grayson-perrys-art-club/submit-your-artwork-form/)

**ARE YOU HAVING A LAUGH? Accessible Live Comedy at North St Standard, Bedminster**

“**ARE YOU HAVING A LAUGH?**” is a **fully wheelchair accessible comedy gig** taking place **Sunday 12th June from 7.30pm at North St Standard, Bedminster**. The gig will feature comedy from **Dani Johns**, **Fiona Ridgewell**, **Priya Hall**, **Becky Walker** and **Ollie Horn**.

Here is some information on each of the acts:

**Dani Johns**

Our resident MC is born and bred Bristolian Dani Johns. Described as a “smart, clever pocket rocket of a comedian” whose “sassy delivery captivates every audience member”. Dani is an instantly likeable act with an impressive and increasing list of accolades (BBC New Comedy Award, Funny Women Stage Award, Bath Comedy Festival New Act Competition, Komedia Bath New Act of the Year Award).

**Fiona Ridgewell**

Fiona Ridgewell is an upbeat conversational comedian. In February 2020 her show “Contender” was nominated for best debut show at Leicester Comedy Festival, in the same year she she was a Funny Women Finalist. Fiona is known for her “direct, cheeky sense of humour” and “easy warm on stage.”

**Priya Hall**

Priya Hall is a Welsh-Indian stand-up comedian and comedy writer who is quickly ascending the UK comedy scene. She’s featured on a number of TV and radio shows, as well as having written and starred in a “Beena & Amrit” a new comedy pilot for BBC2 Wales.

Her comedy has been described as “hilariously oversharing” which is all fun and games but frequently gets her into trouble with her mum.

**Becky Walker**

Described as “hilairously dark” and “totally unpredictable”, Becky is a queer & disabled performer does not shy away from tough subject matter. She finds the funnies in the darkest of places and wins over the audience with ease.

**Ollie Horn**

From theatres in San Francisco, to military bases in South Korea, hostels in Barcelona, and even former colonial post offices in Myanmar, Ollie’s effortless stage presence and wide-eyed curiosity resonates with stand-up audiences the world over.

Having performed stand-up comedy in over 20 countries and counting, Ollie is not short of stories to tell and unique perspectives to share from his travels—not least the four years he spent living in Japan working as a minor television and radio personality.

Ollie is at his best when in conversation with his audience, blending his considered, intelligent and personal stand up with responsive, curious and charming crowd interactions.

**Tickets are £7 and doors open at 6pm on the night. You can book your ticket from the Headfirst website here:** [**https://www.headfirstbristol.co.uk/#date=2022-06-12&event\_id=74972**](https://www.headfirstbristol.co.uk/#date=2022-06-12&event_id=74972)

**North St Standard** is an inclusive venue and have excellent wheelchair access. The main entrance, bar area, performance area (for both acts and audience) and toilets are all wheelchair accessible.

**If you have any specific accessibility requirements or questions, please feel free to contact them by telephone: 01179 639223 or email:** [**info@northststandard.co.uk**](mailto:info@northststandard.co.uk)**.**

**Paid Job Opportunities from Community Access Support Service (CASS), The People’s Voice Team and The Pituitary Foundation!**

**Community Access Support Service** (CASS) have an exciting opportunity to drive change in Bristol by joining the CASS team as a **Project Manager**. **Find oit more information about the role and how to apply on our blog:** [**https://bristoldef.org.uk/paid-opportunity-become-project-manager-at-community-access-support-service-cass/**](https://bristoldef.org.uk/paid-opportunity-become-project-manager-at-community-access-support-service-cass/)

**The People’s Voice Team** are recruiting **project workers** who will be people with a learning difficulty. **Find out more and how to apply on our blog:** [**https://bristoldef.org.uk/paid-opportunity-become-a-support-worker-with-the-peoples-voice-team-from-bristol-city-council/**](https://bristoldef.org.uk/paid-opportunity-become-a-support-worker-with-the-peoples-voice-team-from-bristol-city-council/)

**The Pituitary Foundation** are seeking an **Engagement and Volunteer Manager**. **Find out more and how to apply on our blog:** [**https://bristoldef.org.uk/paid-opportunity-become-the-new-engagement-and-volunteer-manager-at-the-pituitary-foundation/**](https://bristoldef.org.uk/paid-opportunity-become-the-new-engagement-and-volunteer-manager-at-the-pituitary-foundation/)

**Changing the narrative on Disability: is representation in books getting better?**

(News first reported by **The Guardian** on [18th May](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/may/18/changing-the-narrative-on-disability-is-representation-getting-better).)

Are we finally getting some good Disability representation in fiction? Certainly, the publishing industry seems to have belatedly recognised the need to get disabled writers through the door. After a successful social media campaign, Amazon has recently introduced a “Disability fiction” section. The Society of Authors now has a dedicated peer network for disabled and chronically ill writers.

Hopefully, developments will encourage authors and publishers into the huge space Disability representation could occupy. Diverse stories are important. We don’t always have to die at the end.

**Disability employment gap persists despite new statistics**

(News first reported by [**Disability News Service**](https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com) on [19th May](https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/governments-milestone-disability-jobs-stats-are-meaningless-when-it-comes-to-equality/) and [**Disability Rights UK**](https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/)‘s E-Newsletter 19th May.)

The government has announced that over one million more Disabled people are in employment compared to five years ago.

The minister for Disabled people, **Chloe Smith**, had [described the figure](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-hits-goal-to-see-a-million-more-disabled-people-in-work) as an “important milestone” which showed the government’s “commitment to supporting Disabled people to lead independent lives and reach their full potential”.

She said this delivered on a Conservative manifesto commitment to see one million more Disabled people in work between 2017 and 2027.

The [**Office for National Statistics** figures](https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusofdisabledpeoplea08), released on Tuesday 17 May, do show there were about 4.8 million Disabled people in employment in the UK in the first quarter of 2022, compared with about 3.5 million in the first quarter of 2017.

But [analysis of the new figures](https://www.disabilityatwork.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/celebration-of-1m.pdf) by **Professor Vicki Wass**, from Cardiff Business School, a member of the [**Disability@Work**](https://www.disabilityatwork.co.uk/) group of researchers, has shown that the disadvantage faced by Disabled people in the jobs market has not reduced since 2017.

**Kim Hoque** from **Disability@Work** said: “While Ministers may consider reaching their goal of getting an additional one million Disabled people into work as worthy of celebration, this needs to be kept in perspective, given the DWP’s own analysis shows that while the number of Disabled people in work has increased, so has the number of non-disabled people. As such, Disabled people’s employment prospects, in relative terms, have not improved. Reflecting this, the disability employment gap, which indicates the difference in the percentage of Disabled and non-disabled working of age people who are in work, is no smaller now than it was in mid-2019.”

**The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee**

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II will have reigned for seventy years this June. Her Platinum Jubilee will be celebrated nationally in various ways between June 2nd to June 5th.

**You can find out more about the Jubilee and all the events happening locally and nationally here:** [**https://platinumjubilee.gov.uk/**](https://platinumjubilee.gov.uk/)

**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.

Bristol Disability Equality Forum, St Paul’s Learning Centre,

94 Grosvenor Rd, Bristol BS2 8XJ.

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