

trust living

The newsletter for Terrence Higgins Trust's valued supporters

**How YOUR kindness is
changing the lives of
people living with HIV**

PLUS Dan and cast from
'I Kissed A Boy' attend
London Pride with
Terrence Higgins Trust

**TOGETHER
WE CAN**

Terrence
HIGGINS
TRUST 

Emma's Story

🔴🔴 I was living with HIV when I first got pregnant. I can't pass it on to any of my kids. 🔴🔴

I'm Emma, I'm 34, and six years ago I was diagnosed with HIV. I have two beautiful children, and a wonderful partner, Paul.

I had flu-like symptoms that wouldn't go away. I was shocked when I tested positive for HIV – could HIV even happen to me? It turns out, yes, because HIV can happen to anyone and a third of the people living with HIV in the UK are women.

Like many people, I didn't really know what it meant to be living with HIV. My friends and family didn't know how to respond and it was pretty horrific for me. I felt really alone and I went to a pretty dark place.

But I became determined not to let my diagnosis define me and I learned that with one pill a day I could live a normal life. For me the biggest turning point came when I became pregnant with my first child. I became so confident in my body and by being on effective treatment I knew I could give birth and my child would be HIV negative.



Today, both of my children and my partner are HIV negative. I don't feel alone or ashamed anymore, and all that matters is what I think of myself and how my close friends and family see me.

It's so important that we talk about HIV testing, to normalise testing for women, and to remember you can live a long and healthy life with HIV. That's why I'm now training to become a Positive Voices speaker with Terrence Higgins Trust – my chance to be a voice for other women who are living with HIV.

Thanks to you, people can access amazing resources. It makes such a difference to the outcome of a person's story to know that people like you care.

People like Emma rely on you to keep busting myths by sharing our **Can't Pass It On message that someone living with HIV and on effective treatment can't pass HIV on.**



Emma with partner Paul and their son.

Ellie's Story

“I was just 21 when I found out I had HIV.”

I'm Ellie, I'm 25 and four years ago my life changed forever. I was 21 years old, had just ended a long-term relationship and wanted to do an at-home STI test just to be on the safe side before I started my last year at uni. I knew nothing about HIV, but that was about to change...

After a confirmatory test with a nurse, there was no denying, I was HIV positive and in a ball of emotion. I called my parents to come be with me. They immediately set off and **on the way, my mum called Terrence Higgins Trust's Helpline, THT Direct, which is funded through your generosity.**



Ellie is now 26 and open about her diagnosis

They spent the entire three-hour drive on the phone with THT Direct. Your commitment to people living with HIV, like me, made the difference that day.

Without you, my parents and I would still be terrified and not know the facts. My mum learned that people on effective treatment can live long and healthy lives and they can't pass HIV on. **She heard the message of hope that you've been shouting and I know you will continue to shout until we end stigma.**

She put down the phone with relief and told my dad all she heard about how to support me and the correct things to say.

You have given me and anyone coming to terms with a diagnosis a lifeline.

Compassionate supporters and activists like you have fuelled the movement which has changed lives for 40 years and will continue to do so until together we end new cases. Which is why I wanted to tell you today how much your life-changing support means to me and the tens of thousands of people who rely on THT Direct every year.

You gave my mum the hope she needed. You stood up and showed me your love when I needed it most. Thank you so much.

**Thanks to you,
THT Direct answered
13,467 enquiries last year.**



Beautiful quilt created in tribute to Terry's life and all those you've helped in the HIV community

Forty one years on from his death, we're proud to announce the Terry Higgins Memorial Quilt was exhibited for the first time this summer at The Festival of Quilts in Birmingham's NEC. All the quilt panels have now been bequeathed to the UK AIDS Memorial Quilt project.

“Terrence Higgins Trust has been at the forefront of not only supporting people affected by HIV, but educating generations and ending the stigma once associated with the virus.”

Jo Riou, quilt sewer



irreplaceable piece of social history which tell the stories of just some of those who tragically died.

The AIDS Memorial Quilts are beautiful, tributes to those lost in the HIV epidemic to ensure they are never forgotten. Known as the NAMES Project, the quilts are an

Art in memory of Terry and lives lost to this epidemic

As part of the Terrence Higgins Trust family, you are invited to come and see **Terry Higgins – The Three Ages of Terry** at the **National Portrait Gallery, London**.

Terrence Higgins Trust commissioned a posthumous portrait of Terry Higgins by Curtis Holder, winner of the Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year 2020, which we then gifted to the National Portrait Gallery. The portrait was drawn from personal photographs and memories shared by Terry's partner and one of our founding members of Terrence Higgins Trust, Rupert Whitaker.

It is the first portrait of Terry Higgins to enter the National Portrait Gallery's Collection. *Terry Higgins – Three Ages of Terry* is displayed in the Making the Modern World gallery, a space dedicated to some of the most important figures of the 20th century.



“The drawing is a celebration of Terry; his humanity, physicality and sexuality. The time I spent with his partner Rupert gave me a real sense of those facets of him. I came to appreciate the man behind the name; his passions, strengths and vulnerabilities became very real.

“I wanted this portrait to offer the viewer a snapshot of the stages of his short and impactful life, and to show how those individual stages informed the whole.” **Artist, Curtis Holder**

The artwork is drawn in coloured pencil and shows Terry as a teenager in the Navy, a young man and a middle-aged man in the weeks just before his death. The colour red has been used to reference the now familiar and powerful symbol of the red ribbon, the universal symbol of awareness and support for people living with HIV.

2030: HIV Time's Up! at London Pride 2023

At this year's London Pride we shouted loud and proud about our new campaign - **2030: HIV Time's Up!** This is a pivotal moment for Terrence Higgins Trust as we focus on an incredible new goal to end new cases of HIV by 2030. **Here are some of our highlight pictures from London Pride.**



Boutique hits £1 million raised

Our Boutique has raised £1,000,000 for our life-changing work since opening its doors almost twenty years ago. Without our amazing volunteers, and the shop managers Chris and Gareth, this would not have been possible.

On Wednesday 12 July we hosted a party to mark the occasion at the West London charity shop with influencers, including the cast of BBC Three's *I Kissed A Boy*, shop volunteers and our Chief Executive Richard Angell, who presented Boutique with a commemorative plaque to celebrate their £1 million fundraising milestone.

It was a celebration of the commitment of our donors and volunteers who have kept the shop going. Together, they have a combined 100 years running our boutique. It was an incredible reminder of the huge impact volunteers make towards ending new HIV transmissions.

If you'd like to help your planet and people living with HIV, you can donate today.

Please drop-off your quality preloved items or those unwanted gifts to
19 Churton St, Pimlico, London SW1V 2LY.



Boutique

In the limelight - our star supporters!

Liz and Fran's epic David Bowie fundraiser is a hit

For the past 10 years, Liz and Fran have hosted an annual David Bowie fundraising night in memory of her friend Jim, raising a whopping £50,000 for people living with HIV!

“I am just an ordinary person, who just wanted to raise some money and awareness so that stigma and discrimination can be stopped, after seeing how awfully Jim was treated.”

“It's very humbling to think that through this event everyone has come together and bought a ticket that has helped change someone's life.

It's getting harder after the pandemic, people just don't have the spare money. I always tell them, just by buying a ticket, you are already helping. Other people contribute in other ways, making things to sell on the day, for example. The community spirit is just fantastic.” **Liz**



Liz and Fran



Alex reveals his diagnosis to colleagues 17 years later

Alex ran the London Marathon this year, after courageously revealing to colleagues that he has lived with HIV for 17 years. After raising £7,000 in his debut race, he told us 'it felt natural to fundraise for this charity' because of the support he has received from Terrence Higgins Trust for the past 17 years.

Alex inspired his colleagues to support Terrence Higgins Trust by donating to his marathon fundraiser after explaining how the support he's received has changed his life.

Like Alex, our Team Terry runners all ran with a message to share: in memory of a loved one, to support sexual health services, in solidarity with those living with HIV, or to contribute to the fight against the epidemic. Thank you!

Fantastic fundraisers like you mean that we were able to provide 1,597 hours of life-changing counselling sessions in 2022.

New STI data shows a shocking 24% increase in rates in England with no action plan from the government

These stark figures show there were 392,453 sexually transmitted infections (STIs) reported in England in 2022. These figures are a worrying testament to the fact that there is no vision or ambition for improving sexual health in England. You can help us hold the government accountable and demand a long term sexual and reproductive health action plan.

Last year, your determination led to the UK Government's commitment to piloting opt-out testing in A&Es across 4 key areas. More people are being diagnosed with HIV earlier because of you.

With your dedication we can ensure the same strides are made with STIs and that opt-out testing for HIV is rolled out across the UK.

Watch this space to find out how YOU can make sure the Government takes action!

Richard Angell, Chief Executive said:
"We are seeing a surge in numbers because sexual health services and public health budgets have been cut to the bone."

"Year after year the same groups are most impacted by STIs, including young people, gay and bisexual men, people living with HIV and those of Black Caribbean ethnicity."

"But nothing is being done to properly understand the impact of structural inequalities on poor sexual health, including racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia."

"The Government urgently needs to set out what good looks like for sexual health."

Over-Stretched and under Strain: Mystery Shopper Research reveals the truth about access to Sexual Health Services in England, Scotland and Wales

TOGETHER WE CAN TERRENCE HIGGINS TRUST



Over-stretched and under strain:

A Mystery Shopper Approach to Access to Sexual Health Services in England, Scotland and Wales

The report is published to shine a light on the barriers which exist when people are trying to take charge of their sexual health. The report reveals 49% of people are being denied sexual health appointments, long wait times for those that get through and a postcode lottery of postal testing availability – against a dire backdrop of rocketing rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The mystery shopper found those in rural areas, who are furthest away from a sexual health clinic, have the longest wait for appointment (19 days). They also have the least access to online test kits – just 70% of clinics in rural areas in England offered postal testing, compared to 91% in urban areas.

The report provides clear recommendations for urgent improvement which are critical to meeting our 2030 goal of ending all new HIV transmissions. Read the whole report online at tth.org.uk/news



Time is running out

Now is the time you can help end an epidemic that has killed 38 million people.

It's possible to be living with HIV and not know it. We **urgently** need your help to find and test everyone living with HIV in the UK. People with HIV who are on treatment can't pass it on.

Donate now and together we can end new cases of HIV in the UK by 2030.

tth.org.uk

