

**WORLD AIDS DAY**

**RED  
RUN  
LDN**

**COMMUNITY  
HEROES  
2025**

**WORLD AIDS DAY**

# **RED RUN LDN**

**22 NOVEMBER 2025  
VICTORIA PARK**

In June 1981, our community found ourselves at the centre of a global health crisis and a pandemic of unforeseeable proportions. A pandemic that was fuelled by rampant homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, racism, classism and stigma. This lethal mix meant our community began to mourn the loss of too many. Soon, we found ourselves at a clear and historic demarcation – what life was like before and after AIDS.

We established charities and events (similar to the World AIDS Day RED RUN), built networks, created support groups, and started campaigns. The same hands we used to uplift each other were used to chain ourselves in protest at the doors of the powerful, demanding a response.

Forty-three years later, thanks to our community-based actions, we're on the brink of ending HIV. U=U (undetectable equals untransmittable) is a scientific fact, PrEP is now freely available on the NHS, and new HIV diagnoses have declined. However, we must remain vigilant and continue to advocate for progress. We can be the generation that ends HIV.

The RED RUN embodies the spirit of community. Thousands of us unite to show solidarity and celebrate our achievements. These achievements are only possible due to the passion and dedication of countless unsung heroes working tirelessly behind the scenes. Today, we honour 17 of these individuals and thank them for their invaluable contributions.

Their contributions are unparalleled. Our heroes have created safe and inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals and served as role models for women living with HIV. They've organised grocery deliveries, offered nutritional advice and a comforting ear. They've shared their personal stories through public speaking and advocated for the needs of older generations and trans people living with HIV. They've contributed to financial management and advocated for meaningful inclusion in decision-making spaces. They've offered their time and energy to make a lasting difference in our community, each in their own unique way.

By recognising these individuals, we aim to inspire others and continue the momentum of our community-driven movement. Thank you to all our unsung heroes for your unwavering support and tireless efforts.

Our future is brighter because of you.

**Mark Santos**  
Executive Director, Positive East

## EDWIN SSESANGE



Mr Edwin is a passionate advocate for the LGBTQIA+ and HIV communities dedicating himself to ensuring equitable healthcare access for the marginalized population. As the founder of African Equality Foundation and volunteer at Africa Advocacy Foundation, Mr Edwin has spearheaded numerous outreach programmes, carrying out surveys, providing vital resources, education and support to LGBTQIA+ people and those living with HIV. His innovative approach combines research, medical care, counselling, mental health support, fostering resilience and empowerment to the community. Mr Edwin tirelessly raises awareness about the intersectionality of LGBTQIA+ rights and HIV issues hence inspiring many individuals. His commitment and advocacy has made a profound impact transforming lives, reducing stigma and promoting inclusivity in healthcare and community.



African Equality Foundation  
For inclusion & empowerment

African Equality Foundation is an LGBTQIA+ charity in the UK that works tirelessly to support and empower asylum seekers and refugees. Recognising the unique challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ in seeking safety and acceptance, our organisation provides a safe haven where they can access holistic support and resources. Our unwavering commitment to inclusivity, advocacy and empowerment has created a nurturing environment where individuals can rebuild their lives and reclaim their identity. African Equality Foundation offers crucial services such as legal assistance, mental health support, basic needs support and educational workshops, all aimed at enhancing the wellbeing and resilience of LGBTQIA+ asylum seekers and refugees. Through this work, the charity is transforming lives and fostering a more inclusive and compassionate society.

## MEET THE 2025 COMMUNITY HEROES...

2025

[africanequalityfoundation.org.uk](http://africanequalityfoundation.org.uk)

## MANOEL FILHO

With lived experience of being diagnosed with HIV while sleeping rough, Manoel has dedicated his time to fighting social injustices and addressing HIV stigma through volunteering and supporting AHF UK. He does this by engaging with communities to increase testing and education, especially among vulnerable communities, including those facing homelessness. Manoel has personally supported several people with similar experience. Through sharing his experience he inspires and educates many people on HIV. He has been a great pillar in the collaboration work with CRISIS, a homeless charity in Croydon. We are able to run a quarterly service for the service users and staff. His contribution includes advocacy, at the APPG for ending Homelessness and with the National AIDS Trust, highlighting homelessness and its impact by sharing his story. His recent milestone, working with CRISIS, is his publication; *OUT IN PARKS A Queer Man's Journey In and Out of Rough Sleeping* to be launched soon. A must read! Despite his own challenges, he continues to be a great pillar for many. Manoel is our Hero indeed, to be celebrated this year and beyond!



## IGNACIO LABAYEN DE INZA

Having worked in various paid and volunteer roles since 2008 supporting men who struggle with Chemsex, in 2019 Ignacio decided to offer support to people in a way that was not done before. Controlling Chemsex was founded in 2019 and is online, anonymous (where requested) and free for all clients. Ignacio works tirelessly to improve and extend the reach of support to clients in London but across the UK. Apart from the CEO role, he provides mentorship and thought leadership to people who approach him from all over the world. He has taught thousands that there is life after chemsex.

AHF

[aidshealth.org](http://aidshealth.org)

AHF UK provides anonymous, instant HIV tests in the area of Croydon, South London, through its own testing sites and at outreach sites and special events across the area. AHF UK also partners with the local hospital, community organisations and local businesses to offer HIV and sexual health information, free condoms, testing, prevention and advocacy. We are active at events all year long, including International Condom Day, Croydon Pride, National HIV Testing Week (UK), and World AIDS Day. The AHF UK programme does not provide treatment or care for people living with HIV, but we work closely with the NHS and community providers to link people diagnosed with HIV into treatment and support services.

## CONTROLLING CHEMSEX.

[controllingchemsex.com](http://controllingchemsex.com)

Controlling Chemsex is a charity created and run by professionals with experience providing Chemsex support, some whom have struggled with Chemsex in the past. We provide a new kind of Chemsex intervention to reinforce the support that is available, using new technologies to facilitate access to support for everybody, in order to make things as easy as possible for people who find it difficult to access support, and respecting the fact that confidentiality is highly important for them. Controlling Chemsex is passionate, we understand this reality and we are not here to judge you, we are here to help you.

## KITTY EDGAR

Kitty Edgar joined elop's fundraising group in April 2025. Kitty quickly became embedded in the group and has contributed greatly. Through Kitty's involvement we have added a regular comedy fundraising night to our fundraising programme. Kitty's support has ensured that fundraising team have reached new audiences and enhanced our programme of events. Through this we have also gained new volunteers and been able to inform more people about our services. Funds raised supports elop to provide mental health support for those who are newly diagnosed or concerned about their sexual health. No matter how busy she is, Kitty always has a smile and is tenacious in securing support from others to bring great line ups to elop's fundraising events. Thank you, Kitty, for all that you do.



## DSVs

Our team of DSVs are vital to our service. All students of Dietetics or Nutrition, they each spend a day a week in our office calling Service Users to arrange grocery deliveries, provide nutritional advice, and perhaps most importantly have a friendly chat. Over half the people using our services live alone, and even more experience social isolation, so these phone calls can really make all the difference to someone's day. As one Service User puts it "it is lovely to know that there is somebody out there thinking of you." The DSVs contribute so much behind the scenes, and they are our unsung heroes this year.



[elop.org](http://elop.org)

elop has 30 years' experience of providing high quality LGBTQ+ affirmative mental health and wellbeing services to LGBTQ+ communities in Greater London and South Essex. These services are provided by the community for the community. The elop ethos believes that one area of health & well-being, whether this be emotional, mental, psychological, physical, sexual, social, or even community, cannot be fully achieved or maintained without recognition of the opportunity for all concerns of our 'whole self' to be addressed. elop also provides LGBTQ+ voice, consultation, and dedicated LGBTQ+ education and training services to all sectors.

**the  
food  
chain**

[foodchain.org.uk](http://foodchain.org.uk)

The Food Chain is the UK's only HIV specialist nutrition charity. We exist to ensure that people living with HIV can access the nutrition they need to get well, stay well and lead healthy, independent lives and we give them the tools to do so. We deliver meals and groceries, offer cookery and nutrition classes and communal eating opportunities to combat isolation to people living with HIV in London and their dependents.

## ANDERS NIELSON BIO

Anders has worked at METRO Charity for 15 years, where he always goes the extra mile. He started as an outreach worker and now turns concepts for HIV prevention and support projects into operational, impactful services that reach people where they are. As GMI Partnership & HIV Prevention Manager, Anders works between GMI partners METRO, Spectra and Positive East. His services span digital and community-based, including on the travelling HIV testing bus. Anders' work targets Black African and Latin American communities, GBMSM, migrants, and "anyone who falls outside of the mainstream, or anyone at risk of not having an equitable access to services."



## HELEN WAMBUI

Ward Manager and Nursing Team Leader Hellen Wambui. Hellen sadly passed away recently. She was a quietly extraordinary soul, warm, gentle, and endlessly kind, leaving a lasting impression on everyone she met. Patients, colleagues, and visitors alike felt safe and seen in her presence. Her dedication shone on the wards and beyond, especially during the height of COVID-19, when she worked tirelessly under immense pressure, earning the Chairman's Award for Excellence in 2021. Hellen also gave her time to support fundraising events, never seeking recognition. She cared deeply for Mildmay and the people we serve. We will miss her greatly and honour her memory with love and gratitude.



METRO is an equality, diversity and inclusion charity, working in London and the south-east. For over 40 years, we have been empowering people and communities with our health and wellbeing services. Embracing difference and respecting identities is central to how we offer support. We started in 1984 as the Greenwich Lesbian and Gay Centre. Today we support many marginalised communities, with a strong focus on LGBTQ+ people, people living with HIV, and young people. Our holistic support reaches people where they are. We work across five areas: Youth, Mental health & wellbeing, Sexual health, HIV, and Community.

[metrocharity.org.uk](http://metrocharity.org.uk)



[mildmay.nhs.uk](http://mildmay.nhs.uk)



Mildmay Hospital is an independent charitable hospital in East London, providing specialist rehabilitation and care for people with complex HIV-related conditions, neurocognitive disorders, and for those experiencing homelessness. In 2025, we mark 40 years since Mildmay was re-established as a charitable hospital dedicated to HIV care, continuing a legacy of compassion, expertise, and innovation that has transformed countless lives. Alongside our clinical work, we advocate for those we serve and build international partnerships to strengthen healthcare globally. 2024 saw the naming by TfL of the Mildmay line on the London Overground, a lasting recognition of our place in the community.

## LOUISE VALLACE

Louise Wallace has over 30 years of experience in Local Government and Domestic Abuse charities, specialising in Programme/contract Management, as well as Service Improvement Consultancy. She is the Founder and CEO of Aunty Lou's House Limited, a Public Speaker, Yoga Teacher, Intersectional Coach, host of the "Aunty Lou's Hour" podcast and delivers HIV street talks. Faced with divorce, single parenthood and neurodivergency, Louise has embraced a transformative journey. This path led her to fuse her personal and professional realms, focusing on inner healing and inspiring others through her work and personal story.



## GEORGE HODSON

Artist, activist and self-proclaimed 'Warrior Queen', George was an unstinting supporter of the National HIV Story Trust from the earliest days of its operation. He was able to articulate and activate awareness of what it was to be a long-term survivor, to raise awareness of the needs and concerns of an older generation, and to engage a younger generation with stories from our history – both as a gay man and someone living with HIV. Cheeky, wickedly funny at times and with a huge heart to match his enthusiasm, he made amazing contributions to the NHST and our wider community. He remains a foundation stone of our work remembering the lives and loves of those affected by HIV and AIDS.



NATIONAL HIV  
STORY TRUST

[nhst.org.uk](http://nhst.org.uk)



 **NATIONAL  
AIDS  
TRUST**

[nat.org.uk](http://nat.org.uk)

We're the UK's HIV rights charity. We work to stop HIV from standing in the way of health, dignity and equality, and to end new HIV transmissions. Our expertise, research and advocacy secure lasting change to the lives of people living with and at risk of HIV

The NHST was established as a repository of real life stories, to preserve the history of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, remembering the stories of tragedy but also those of love, compassion and humanity. The NHST hopes the 120+ interviews filmed with families, partners and medical professionals, will be a voice for those who didn't survive, a chance to honour those who did, and an education for those who live so freely today because of this generational struggle.





**REBECCA  
TALLON DE  
HAVILLAND**

Rebecca is an advocate for trans women living with HIV. She has worked as an outreach officer for THT, promoting HIV testing in the community and is also a member of the Gilead Sciences' pan-European Women's Working Group on HIV. Rebecca currently works at HIV Ireland and TransPlus at 56 Dean St in London. Rebecca runs one of Not A Phase's online peer-support groups, supporting those who transition later in life, as well as being part of an exciting new project for the charity, supporting those in the trans+ community who have been diagnosed with HIV.

## NOT APH ASE

[notaphase.org](http://notaphase.org)

Founded in 2020, in response to the huge challenges trans+ people currently face in the UK, Not A Phase is a trans-led, grassroots charity dedicated to uplifting and improving the lives of trans+ adults through awareness campaigning, social projects and funding for trans+ led initiatives across the UK. The charity aims to give the trans+ and gender non-conforming individuals space to thrive, whilst working with organisations on D&I strategies to promote positive change.

## GERARD CREAMER



Gerard joined our Steering Group in January 2020 to oversee compliance as Plushealth transitioned from a voluntary community group to a registered charity in England and Wales. Gerard is now in his second term of office and as Treasurer he oversees the financial management and reporting of the charity finances. Managing the charity finances isn't an easy task, yet Gerard manages to bring a sense of humour to his role and is always looking for ways to ensure we fully focus our resources to support people living with or affected by HIV across the UK.

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**Plus+  
health  
.org.uk**

[plushealth.org.uk](http://plushealth.org.uk)

Plushealth is the online peer support charity with a vision is to promote emotional, and physical wellbeing by providing practical help and support so people living with HIV can live healthy active lives, free from stigma and prejudice. We inform, empower, support, and improve the lives of people living with HIV, their HIV negative partners, family members, close friends, and carers. Our website offers practical information and is written by people living with HIV. We provide UK wide, FREE online peer support and where needed assist those in financial distress to access this vital support regardless of local funding arrangements.

## EURIZA GOMES DA MATA

Euriza has been our Project Community Coordinator since 2022. Previously a dedicated volunteer, she now leads Project Community, a project based in City and Hackney aiming to improve sexual and reproductive health of marginalised communities in the borough. Euriza has always worked tirelessly to ensure we run an inclusive and accessible service for Black African and Caribbean communities. She is very passionate about this work, and puts her heart and soul into everything she does. This is always evident when she is out in the community, speaking to people in an open and friendly manner, without judgement and sharing information to help tackle HIV stigma and fear within the community. Within Project Community, she has worked hard to attend countless events and run workshops to engage communities across City and Hackney, and has empowered many people to take control of their sexual health and wellbeing.

## PositiveEast

For 32 years, Positive East has been one of the largest community-based HIV charities in London. Support services include advice (to access benefit entitlement and housing), counselling, support groups, ReAssure (a specialist psychology service for HIV positive female refugees and asylum seekers), volunteering, workshops, peer mentoring and the Women4Women project. Positive East also provides free HIV/STI testing across East London.



## ROA ALMAZAN

As a migrant and proud trans woman living with HIV, Roa has become a powerful voice in the HIV community. Her advocacy began in 2022 when she spoke about gender equality for trans communities in Parliament during Positively UK's Manifesto launch. Since then, Roa has grown as a strong advocate for both the trans and HIV communities. She volunteers with Positively UK's South London wellbeing group and plays an active role in various impactful initiatives representing trans women's needs. Her powerful speech at the 2024 National Conference of People Living with HIV brought the room to its feet. Keep an eye out, as Roa will soon grace the Naked Truth calendar!



It has been over 40 years since Positively UK took the forefront in leading the HIV response. Since then, the charity has played an instrumental role, developing the National Standards of Peer Support in HIV and hosting the Biannual National Conference of People living with HIV. Positively UK has trained hundreds of people living with HIV as peer mentors, ensuring everyone has access to peer support. Their peer caseworkers provide support across numerous HIV clinics in London, as well as remotely and within community spaces. The charity also runs a welfare advice service and a range of support groups that cater to everyone living with HIV, including LGBTQ+ people, migrants, women and straight men.

## PAMELA CUTHILL

Pamela's passion and compassion for people is apparent in everything she does. She flexibly and proactively shapes Spectra's Sexual Health Community Programme to service users' realities, making sure the needs of those she meets are front and centre of plans and priorities. Pamela makes creative initiatives to make sexual health support and testing easy for people excluded from healthcare, and has been an inspiring force when sharing these skills. Pamela is an incredible advocate for her staff, people living with HIV and their loved ones, and everyone her outreach team meets.



## JOYCE OUMA

Joyce has over eight years experience in youth-led programming in the HIV response. She currently works as Youth Officer for UNAIDS, moving from a role at Y+ Global where she led programs for young people living with HIV (YPLHIV). Joyce is an incredible advocate for YPLHIV. Driven by her passion and lived experience, she works tirelessly to promote young people's meaningful inclusion in key decision and policy-making spaces. In 2024, Joyce joined STOPAIDS for the Youth Stop AIDS Speaker Tour, travelling to five cities in the UK to raise awareness of key issues faced by YPLHIV.



Spectra's free wellbeing and health advocacy services are run by people like you who have been there too. With our roots in community based HIV prevention, we have grown to support the wider LGBTQIA+ community and others living with the health consequences of stigma and multi-marginalisation. We recognise that your identity, well-being, knowledge and confidence can impact relationships and choices you make in life. If you want counselling, health advocacy, peer social groups, sexual health tests or have questions for us, get in touch through our website.

[spectra-london.org.uk](http://spectra-london.org.uk)

## STOPAIDS.

STOPAIDS is a membership network with a thirty-five year history of engagement on international development and HIV and AIDS. Our vision is for a world without AIDS, where all people can realise their right to good health and wellbeing. Our strength is in our membership and partnership and STOPAIDS convenes and unites UK civil society voices and positively shapes UK leadership in the global response to HIV and other health rights and equity issues. STOPAIDS also engages at the global level through global civil society coalitions and platforms, and directly influences key global processes and multilateral partnerships.

[stopaids.org.uk](http://stopaids.org.uk)

## MARTIN ROACH

It is an honour to nominate Martin as our RED RUN Community Hero 2025. Martin has overcome many personal challenges, including growing up with cerebral palsy and being diagnosed with HIV in 2002. Despite these challenges, he has chosen to share his personal story in order to change people's perceptions and create better understanding of living with HIV. Martin's determination to improve himself and contribute to the greater good is truly inspiring. Martin ran the Reading Half marathon for the very first time back in April 2025, there is absolutely no stopping him! We are fortunate to have him as a Terrence Higgins Trust Positive Voice volunteer in our community.



[tth.org.uk](http://tth.org.uk)



## TONY BRYNE

Tony has volunteered with Wandsworth Oasis for over 17 years. Volunteering in Wandsworth Oasis Trinity Road's shop is a lifeline for him. When Tony started, he was very shy and intimidated by people but over the years he has blossomed and become an integral part of the Wandsworth Oasis Team. Tony has participated in several fundraising activities, from sponsored walks to night cycling, all to raise money for Wandsworth Oasis.



[wandsworthoasis.org.uk](http://wandsworthoasis.org.uk)



Wandsworth Oasis is a growing chain of charity shops dedicated to raising funds for HIV Support, Prevention and Awareness projects across London, in addition to fighting HIV Stigma. Unlike most charity shops Wandsworth Oasis operates more like a Trust or Foundation who, after operational costs and reserves, distributes its profits via an annual grant programme to other charities who work directly with people affected by HIV. Many of these projects rely on the support of Wandsworth Oasis to deliver their much needed expertise to their services users and clients.

Since 1982 we've been supporting people impacted by HIV and poor sexual health. Today our vital advice line, THT Direct, is a one-stop shop for many. We also support people living with HIV with a hardship fund, counselling, work support, and peer-to-peer support to come to terms with their diagnosis, and we campaign for change. Together we can end new cases of HIV by 2030, support people living with HIV and impacted by poor sexual health.



## ABOUT THE WORLD AIDS DAY RED RUN

Since its inception in 2009, the RED RUN has become a cornerstone in our journey towards a world where everyone living with HIV can thrive. What began as a small gathering of 50 people has evolved into one of the UK's largest annual HIV community events, raising over £1.1 million for vital support and prevention projects.

The RED RUN is a space for unity where HIV charities, people living with HIV, and the broader community come together in solidarity. It's a movement for raising awareness, celebrating progress, and advocating for continued support.

While significant strides have been made, with new diagnoses declining dramatically and the UK exceeding the UNAIDS 90:90:90 target, the journey continues. Over 106,000 people in the UK are still living with HIV, and stigma remains a barrier to care. Funding cuts also threaten essential services.

The RED RUN is more important than ever. It's a celebration of our achievements, a call to action for continued support, and a platform for raising awareness.

We hope you will continue the journey with us.

**Take Action. Lace Up.**

Let's keep moving forward, together.

**WORLD AIDS DAY**

# **RED RUN LDN**

**22 NOVEMBER 2025**  
**VICTORIA PARK**

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