

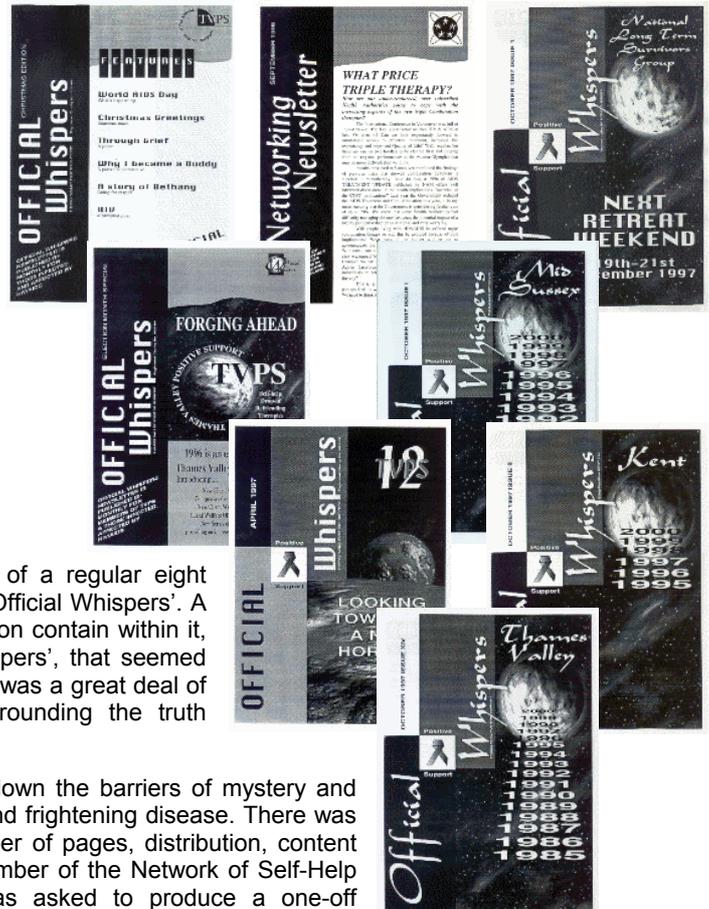
# A History of TVPS Newsletters

# NEWSLETTER

## How it all began



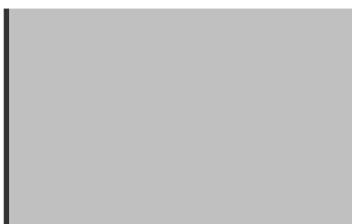
The Newsletter and how it all began. Early as 1985, and the since the Reading Area AIDS Support Group was established, information newsheets were available to members of the original three groups. However, it was not until Thames Valley Body Positive produced 'EXCESS' in early 1989, that a regular newsletter was available, which took the form of a four-page information newsletter available to its members and other local voluntary and statutory agencies. After moving into the Burnham Support Centre the newsletter was subsequently renamed in 1992 as '1433 News' reflecting the new P. O. Box number .



August 1995 saw the first edition of a regular eight page bi-monthly newsletter called 'Official Whispers'. A name that established the information contain within it, was official and not 'Chinese Whispers', that seemed to be the order of the day, as there was a great deal of misinformation and ignorance surrounding the truth and actual facts behind HIV/AIDS.

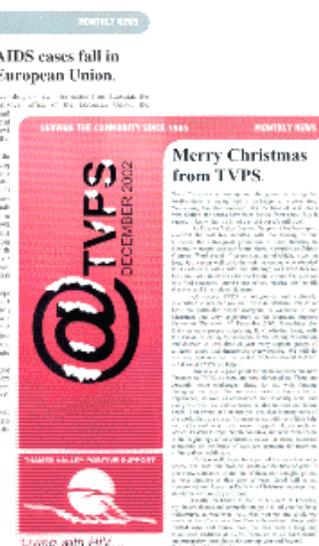
Official Whispers helped to break down the barriers of mystery and fear surrounding this relative new and frightening disease. There was an immediate increase in the number of pages, distribution, content and information available. As a member of the Network of Self-Help HIV and AIDS Groups, TVPS was asked to produce a one-off newsletter, based on OW for the Network, and National Long Term Survivors. With a joint venture of newsletter production as a regional 'Official Whispers' for BodyPositive Kent covering the whole of Kent and Mid-Sussex Body Positive covering the Sussex area.

Dolly Tovelopeski OW' fictitious Agony Aunt, who had been with OW since it was established, was unceremoniously asked to leave her regular spot, and subsequently criticised by the Trustees at the time for being too influential to our vulnerable clients. TVPS Publications defended her position, stating that this was utter nonsense as every member was aware that she was fictitious, and by suggesting this, a majority of the Trustees were out of touch. Sadly, the administration within TVPS failed to develop the potential of this successful format and its outstanding achievements. Which ultimately lead to its premature demise in August 1998. The management at this time had little or no experience and quite wrongly felt that a cheap newsheet was a far better option. Extremely shortsighted and foolish in the light of funding was available for a regular newsletter.





During 1998-2000 TVPS had failed to produce an important communication media for our membership. Mainly due to bad foresight and complacency by the administration at that time. January 2000 saw a welcome return to a regular and comprehensive newsletter, similar to the successful Official Whispers that ended its life in its prime and future development and aspirations. News @ TVPS slowly re-introduced the style and quality of its successful predecessor. Which in turn made way for TVPS' current publication to further develop the content and information now available to our members on a monthly basis.

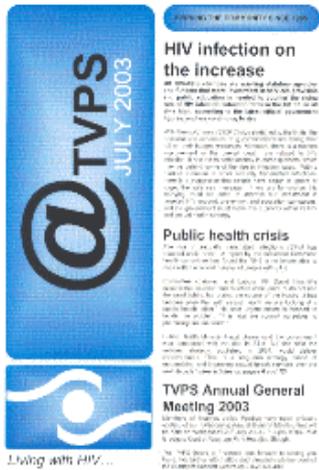


Since the development of News @ TVPS the group has acknowledged the need for the important need for a regular newsletter, that has news and information relevant to our members, that, may in a small way help the isolation many of our members feel within the large area we cover.

News @ TVPS also inspired contributions from our volunteers, as the newsletter editorial was produced within the community rather than office based. This allowed our employees to concentrate on other important matters at hand, whilst giving clients and volunteers input into the newsletter, which had previously been under-mind. An involvement that proved TVPS had skills within our membership, to produce and develop a professional feel to the newsletter that became @TVPS. An accumulation of all past newsletters, taking the successful qualities of each publication to become what TVPS hopes is continuing to develop into an interesting and informative newsletter format.

This month we celebrate the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of our now familiar newsletter, the successful @TVPS. The monthly publication came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2001. January 2002 saw a special three-month run of our past newsletter designs, to celebrate TVPS' 18 years of serving the local community – in a three month special article called History @ TVPS.

Over the past two years Thames Valley Positive Support has attempted to improve the newsletter's content and information. The design has been adapted during this period to give a more professional quality, feel and look. February 2003 saw the TVPS newsletter available online for the very first time, at the redesigned TVPS website, with an Acrobat PDF version in a downloadable format, and a full colour interactive version. Distribution is being increased back to the levels of 1996, as we feel it is important to show our services to a broader and wider audience. Dear Dolly returned by popular demand, with TVPS running an ongoing article - Respite & Retreat – Recognising a Need, that has proved popular, and we hope, has helped people recognised the need for this important service provision. Further ongoing articles will appear in future editions. @TVPS still costs no more to produce than its forbears eight years ago.



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