

# Supporting those affected by the Manchester attack

Manchester Attack Support Newsletter

May 2018

## Permanent memorial update

Manchester is committed to having a permanent memorial, or memorials, to commemorate 22 May 2017, but getting this right and ensuring a lasting and appropriate memorial requires a careful process.

The advisory group of civic and business leaders, established last summer to oversee memorial matters, has continued to meet. Initial consultation with bereaved families has taken place about outline proposals to mark the first anniversary. Ideas for a permanent memorial have also been discussed.

Further updates on the permanent memorial development process will be available later this year.

## About the Newsletter

This newsletter is a way of providing advice and information to support anyone affected by the Manchester Arena attack on 22 May 2017.

The attack killed 22 people and injured many more, and work is still going on across the country to provide care, treatment and support for all those affected.

Our [Manchester Attack Support website](#) continues the work started by Manchester City Council and partners in coordinating help and support services for anyone affected.

It also includes opportunities to contact us directly for information about advice and support services, as well as to sign up to receive further newsletters and updates about the memorial consultation process.

In this edition of the newsletter, we include information about the anniversary and ongoing support initiatives.

We would love to hear your thoughts on the newsletter, including your ideas for content.



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Brought to you by Manchester City Council, the Manchester Resilience Hub and partners

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## Coping with anniversary reactions

If you are feeling anxious about the forthcoming anniversary, you are not alone. It is not uncommon for anxiety and sadness to increase in the lead-up to and during the anniversary of traumatic events.

Around the anniversary of 22 May 2017, people are likely to remember events clearly, and many will feel emotions more intensely than usual.

Reliving the sadness is a very natural part of the healing process, but there is not just one right way to heal.

### Helpful tips:

- Recognise and acknowledge feelings you may experience
- Find healthy ways to cope with your distress
- Engage in an activity that honours lost loved ones
- You may find participating in rituals helpful, including creating your own
- Use your support system; don't isolate yourself.

You can also find helpful information about managing during the anniversary on [our website](#).

General information and further advice on coping strategies can be found on the [American Psychological Association website](#).

Also, this article from the [Grief Healing blog](#) gives some useful tips on coping with anniversary reactions to grief, including dealing with setbacks, aftershocks and the recurrence of grief.

## The Compassionate Friends

[The Compassionate Friends](#) is an organisation of bereaved parents offering support, understanding and friendship to others after the loss of a child of any age from any cause.

The national telephone helpline, staffed by bereaved parents, is available for support and information 365 days a year.

They can help with local contacts and support groups, weekend gatherings and retreats, information leaflets and bereavement support publications. Some sibling support is also available.

They can be contacted by calling 0345 123 2304 or emailing [helpline@tcf.org.uk](mailto:helpline@tcf.org.uk). They are available seven days a week from 10am to 4pm and 7pm until 10pm.

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## Anniversary activities in Manchester

### Manchester City Council is organising a programme of events to mark the anniversary of the 22 May 2017 Arena attack.

The commemoration is based around two themes:

#### **Remembrance, Reflection and Celebration of Life**

This element will recognise each of the 22 people who lost their lives in the attack, those who were injured, and first responders.

#### **Manchester Together**

This element will embrace the solidarity shown by the city.

As well as a Civic Memorial Service at Manchester Cathedral, there will be a mass singalong in Albert Square – a united act of remembrance supported by choirs from across the region.

There will be a Trees of Hope trail through the city centre, starting the weekend before the anniversary.

People will be able to leave personal messages of hope, and support for those affected, on trees placed at key locations around the city centre, including St Ann's Square.

For five nights, song lyrics will be projected onto the pavements and buildings in St Ann's Square.

[See our website for more details.](#)

## If you need legal advice

We have been made aware of 'cold callers' making contact with individuals affected by the arena attack. In a couple of cases they have passed on details to solicitors. The calls may start with a general question, such as "Have you had an accident?" or, more recently, "Do you know you may be entitled to compensation for the recent accident you were involved in?"

They do not know if you have or have not been in an accident. It is a random call in the hope that some people will provide them with information, which they can then pass on to a solicitor.

If you wish to have legal advice connected to the arena attack, there are [solicitors acting on a pro bono basis on behalf of victims of the attack](#).

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## Manchester Resilience Hub

[The Manchester Resilience Hub](#) is an enhanced NHS mental health service set up specifically to help people from across the UK who have been affected by the Manchester Arena attack, including concert-goers, children, families and professionals.

The service is hosted by Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust, in association with other NHS and voluntary-sector agencies.

As well as running the wellbeing screening programme for those involved in the attack, the Hub provides a central point for mental health advice and support.

It does not provide one-to-one therapy; where this is needed, clinicians in the Hub work with other providers across the country to help people receive the care they need from services close to where they live.

People can access the Hub Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, by calling 03330 095 071, or emailing: [gm.help@nhs.net](mailto:gm.help@nhs.net).

If the team are unable to answer your call immediately, you will have the option to leave a message and someone will call you back as soon as possible.

You can also leave a message outside of opening hours.

## The Kerslake Report

[Lord Kerslake's Report](#) published on 27 March, details an independent review into the preparedness for, and the emergency response to, the Manchester Arena attack. It promised to 'put the experience of bereaved families' at the heart of the report, and many of the people affected contributed to the work.

The purpose of the report was to outline those aspects of the preparedness and response that were effective and those that may inform future good practice. The report identified clear lessons and recommendations that the Government, organisations and emergency services have accepted and are taking forward.

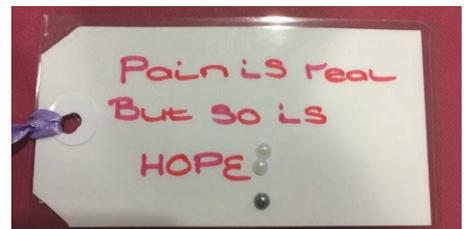
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## Family days

Last year, a number of families affected by the attack asked whether it would be possible for children and young people to meet each other to share how the attack had impacted on their lives. As a result, Greater Manchester Police worked with the Manchester Resilience Hub to organise a day for this on 27 January. The day included separate sessions for children and young people and for parents/carers. One of the activities for children and young people was making messages of hope, some examples of which are shown, right:

The feedback from the day was excellent, with 98% of children and young people saying they would recommend the event to others involved in the attack. Manchester Resilience Hub, working with a number of partners, are hoping to organise more events over the coming months.

If your family was affected by the arena attack and you would be interested in attending any future family day, you can contact the Hub on the numbers stated above.



## We Love Manchester Emergency Fund releases a further £3million

Families of those who died during the attack will be among those to benefit from [a release of £3million from the We Love Manchester Emergency Fund](#).

Money has also been allocated to set up nationwide psychological support groups, which will be influenced by a successful model used in Norway following the terror attacks of 2011.

Those eligible to benefit from the funding should have already been contacted. Visit the [We Love Manchester Emergency Fund website](#) for further information about the fund.