

Supporting those affected by the Manchester attack

Manchester Attack Support Newsletter

September 2019

About this newsletter

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

We would love to hear your thoughts on the newsletter, including your ideas for future content. Please [email us](#).

Some people find it helpful to write about their experiences and feelings.

If you might be interested in being featured, please get in touch and we'll work with you on developing some content.

Sign up to receive regular newsletters via the [website](#).

Please pass on details of the website and newsletter to anyone who you feel might benefit from knowing about them.



Permanent memorial update

The Manchester city centre site for a permanent memorial to the attack has been confirmed on land between Hunts Bank and Deansgate, close to the Arena, Manchester Cathedral and the River Irwell.

Manchester City Council is currently procuring a design partner, following calls for an open expression of interest. Engagement with bereaved families has been a valuable part of the process and they have helped with decisions around the memorial's meaning and purpose, location and design.

The Memorial Advisory Group is looking to create a memorial which will:

- recognise those affected and honour those who died
- create a place of long-term remembrance for people to pay their respects
- provide a celebration of lives lived and memories
- be a place of contemplation
- educate and enlighten
- be able to meet the need for individual solitude.

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The Journey of Recovery: a short film

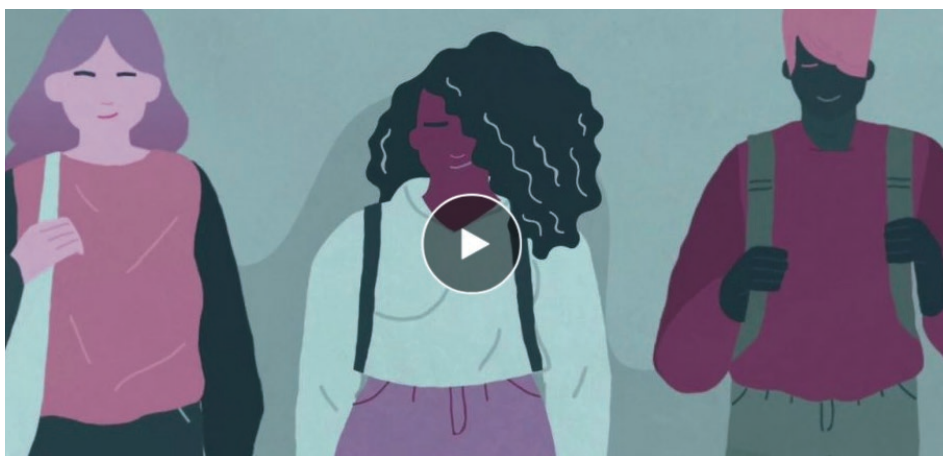
Young people who were at the Arena on the night of the attack have helped in the making of a [short film](#), which describes their ongoing journey of recovery. The film aims to help educational professionals better understand trauma and be able to offer support to other young people who might have experienced trauma. The young people who helped make the film also wanted other young people to know that they are not alone.

Written materials and guidance have also been developed with clinicians and teachers so that the animation can be used as part of the PSHE (Personal,

Health, Social and Economic) curriculum.

The key messages are:

- everyone can be affected by trauma and adversity
- there is no normal reaction to an abnormal event
- recovery from trauma can take days, weeks, months, years and is not linear
- people can recover from trauma with support from friends, family and school
- sometimes people can get stuck with their trauma and need professional help in their recovery journey.



Help and support

The Manchester Resilience Hub continues to co-ordinate care and support for children, young people and adults whose mental health and/or emotional wellbeing has been affected by the attack.

If you or someone you know is struggling you can contact the Hub by phone on 03330 095 071 or by [email](#).

Phone lines are open between 10am and 6pm from Tuesday to Friday and until 8pm on Wednesday.

You can also leave a message outside of these opening hours.

The Hub is for everyone who has been directly affected, family members who have been affected, professionals who have been affected and professionals seeking clinical advice about their service users.

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Coping with legal proceedings

The forthcoming trial and inquests may understandably cause anxiety for those affected by the attack. The legal proceedings are likely to be widely covered by the media and may include distressing details and images.

You may find it helpful to:

- find out about the purpose of the proceedings and how you can follow them if you want to. If you have a police FLO or caseworker they may be able to keep you updated
- take steps to limit the risk of being caught off guard by the news. Know the start date of proceedings and consider avoiding news bulletins
- tell your family, friends or others that major news may come up and how they can support themselves as well as you
- give yourself permission to either follow the details or not. There are no rules
- anticipate that the attack may become a talking point at school/work/in your community and prepare for how you will respond to conversations and questions. It is OK to cut conversations short, and some people find it helpful to have words ready in advance
- learn [what you can and can't discuss](#) on social media
- know who and where you can turn to for support if particular details or events upset you
- be kind to yourself and take time out if you need to. It can also help to make others close to you aware that the proceedings are in the news and that you would value their understanding and support
- know that you may learn new information which you may find upsetting or which may trigger unexpected reactions. In some cases professional help may assist with processing this and developing coping strategies.

■ The younger brother of Manchester Arena bomber Salman Abedi will stand trial on 5 November at the Old Bailey in London, charged with murdering the 22 victims of the attack.

A [website](#) has been set up to provide information about the inquests into the deaths of the 22 people killed in the attack. It is updated as the inquests progress and transcripts of the inquests' hearings will also

be published on the website.

The [FAQs section](#) gives helpful information about the purpose of the inquest, the role of the coroner, who may give evidence and how you can keep up to date.

■ [Email us](#) if you need further support, or you can contact the [Manchester Resilience Hub](#).

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The Manchester Together Archive

After the Arena attack over 10,000 objects were left by members of the public at spontaneous memorials throughout the city.

Different organisations in the city came together to conserve, preserve and document these objects.

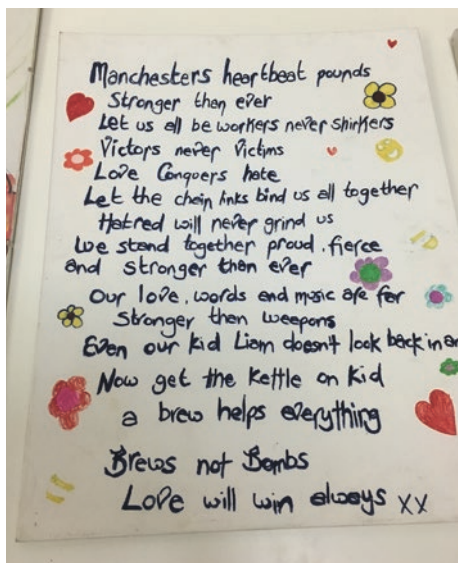
A [website](#) is now up and running, which describes how those items have been cared for and gives details of future plans to create a public-facing archive.



The project is supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and led by Manchester Art Gallery in collaboration with Archives+ and the University of Manchester.

Jenny Marsden, Project Co-ordinator for the archive, said: "Once the tributes have been

digitised and are made available online, people will be able to explore the significance and meaning of thousands of items, perhaps reconnecting with a tribute they left in the city centre, and learning more about the expressions of grief, love and solidarity contained within the archive."



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News round-up

■ **Georgina Hurdsfield** was at the Arena attack, and completed her final-year dissertation on Community Resilience and Visual Art: Responses to the Manchester Arena attack in 2018.

She photographed 32 pieces of art, objects and murals as testimony to Manchester's resilience in the face of terror. She said: "I worked at Manchester Arena as part of the food and beverage team and worked on the night of the Ariana Grande concert.



"As this traumatic event has become a big part of my life, I was constantly thinking about it.

"I wanted to learn to reflect on the event in a more positive light, which meant deciding to focus on the positive outcome of



how the community of came together and showed their strength to the rest of the world.

"After personally experiencing the attack, I conducted the study hoping to find the murals representing the strength I had seen in the Manchester community.

"I wanted to write a piece of research that would show people how resilient Manchester is. While collecting photographs of the artefacts in and around Manchester, I found comfort, reminding me that Manchester will not be divided by violence and hatred."

The images on this page featured in Georgina's research.

■ **The Manchester Survivors Choir** continues to perform at various events and venues. The choir was formed by survivors of the Arena attack, whose members have found that singing helps them to cope as well as bringing a sense of togetherness, solidarity and mutual support.

As their [Facebook page](#) says: "We sing together, support each other, eat cake and be(e) positive."

■ **Aimee Shepperd's dance school** in Ashton-under-Lyne, took part in the British Championships in Blackpool, and paid tribute to those affected by the Arena attack.

Their routine consisted of songs and poetry that featured in the first anniversary concert, and they wore outfits adorned with rhinestone bees.

■ **Greater Manchester singer Tray** found it helpful to focus her thoughts and feelings about the 22 May attack, by writing a song called 'Ocean of Tears'. It can be found on [Soundcloud](#).