

Supporting those affected by the Manchester attack

Manchester Attack Support Newsletter

April 2020



Coping with legal proceedings

The trial of Hashem Abedi, brother of the Arena attack bomber, and the forthcoming public inquiry may be causing anxiety for people affected.

A [dedicated website](#) has been set up to provide information relating to the independent public inquiry, which is due to start in June.

The legal proceedings will be widely covered by the media and may include distressing details and images.

The [Manchester Attack Support website](#) has details about the legal proceedings, links to FAQs and tips on coping.

About the newsletter

This newsletter includes advice and information for anyone affected by the Manchester Arena attack on 22 May 2017 and is linked to the [Manchester Attack Support website](#).

We are aware of the continuing impact of the attack, especially given the ongoing legal proceedings and build up to the third anniversary.

If you or anyone you know is seeking help and support in relation to the attack, you can access further help and support through the [Manchester Resilience Hub](#).

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

If you or someone you know is struggling,

you can contact the Hub by phone on 03330 095 071 or by email: GM.help@nhs.net

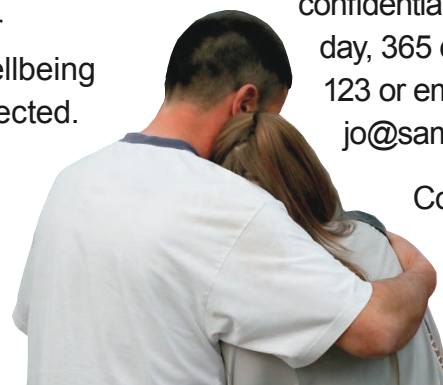
Lines are open between 10am and 6pm Tuesday to Friday (8pm Wednesdays). You can also leave a message outside of these opening hours.

The hub is for:

- Everyone who has been directly affected
- Family members who have been affected
- Professionals who have been affected
- Professionals seeking clinical advice about their service users.

Additionally, you can contact Samaritans, who provide free confidential support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Call 116 123 or email: jo@samaritans.org

Contact us about the newsletter by email: masgp@outlook.com.



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

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Permanent memorial update

Designers are working with families to produce the memorial for the 22 May 2017 Manchester Arena attack.

BCA Landscape and Smiling Wolf were selected for their design concept 'Glade of Light – A Living Memorial' after a consultation process involving families and the public.

The Glade of Light is a grove of native trees, illuminated at night like 'a field of stars'. Within the tranquil garden there will be 22 memory pools with the names of those killed in the attack and personalised messages from their friends and families.

The creative brief for the memorial required that it:

- Recognise those affected and honour those who died
- Create a place for long-term remembrance for people who pay their respects
- Celebrate the lives of those who were killed, and happy memories of them
- Be a place of contemplation



- Educate and enlighten
- Be able to meet the need for individual solitude.

Andy Thomson, Director of BCA Landscape, said: "We are determined to do our utmost to design a memorial that is a place of tribute, comfort, tranquillity and reflection, and do the families of those who lost loved ones, and everyone else affected by the attack, proud."

The memorial will be located on a site between Manchester Cathedral and Chetham's School of Music, at the foot of Fennel Street bounded by the River Irwell and Cathedral.

Attack Support Groups

The Manchester Attack Support Group Programme (MASGP) consists of nine support groups, which have been meeting regularly across the UK since 2018.

The meetings, run by trained facilitators, provide an opportunity for the bereaved and survivors from the attack to meet and benefit from mutual peer support.

The groups help members connect with others who have been through a similar experience, so they feel less isolated and can make sense of reactions and behaviour related to the attack. Members also learn tips for coping and staying resilient.

In January, members from all the groups had the opportunity to meet. They also heard talks from those who are bereaved and survivors from other disasters about what has helped them in the long term.

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Anniversary experiences - what helps?

As the third anniversary of the Arena attack approaches, the shared experiences and reflections of others who have been bereaved or survived previous disasters can offer some helpful insight.

For members of [Disaster Action](#) (all bereaved, or survivors from UK disasters) the lead-up to and day of each anniversary is often a difficult time; knowing and preparing for this can make a difference.

Other suggestions that Disaster Action members have found helpful include:

- Connecting with others who have been affected. For some people this can be through starting or joining family or survivor support groups. It is not unusual for these to first emerge in the years after an incident
- Planning for media interest. Media interest in those directly affected by a disaster often increases around anniversaries. You can prepare for this by

Counter Terrorism Awareness Training

The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) has opened a [free online course](#) so that members of the public can learn how to spot suspicious behaviour or items and understand what to do in the event of a bomb threat or major incident.

The 45-minute e-training package, entitled ACT (Action Counters Terrorism), was

developed in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in 2017 for staff working in crowded locations such as shopping centres and entertainment venues.

It comprises seven modules, including identifying security vulnerabilities, what to do in the event of a bomb threat and how to respond to a firearms or weapons attack.

deciding whether or not you might wish to participate in interviews or other media-driven activities. Some people have found it useful to have their own family spokesperson, or produce their own statements or photographs for the media. This will help give you more control over what goes out

- Resisting other people's timelines. With the passage of time it is often assumed that those who have

survived or been bereaved by disaster should 'recover' in neat phases, return to 'normal' and be able to put 'closure' on their experience. Such assumptions and comments often feel inappropriate and unhelpful, reflecting the views and expectations of others rather than how it really feels.

- Contact Disaster Action by email: admin@disasteraction.org.uk

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Manchester Together Archive

Following the attack, more than 10,000 tributes were left by members of the public in spontaneous memorials that sprang up in St Ann's Square and other sites in the city.

The tributes included toys, artwork, candles, notes, letters and balloons. All the material was collected and protected, and is now stored at Manchester Art Gallery, and known as the Manchester Together Archive.

Manchester Art Gallery, in partnership with Archives+ and The University of Manchester, has received funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to catalogue and photograph the tributes so they can be viewed online, allowing people to see and think about the material in the Archive.

A team of 23 volunteers have been recruited to help with this work, and so far they have collectively contributed over 700 hours to the project.

Workshops

The Archive team have run



several reflective workshops with adults and young people.

These workshops have provided an opportunity for people to see and think about the items in the archive, talk about the community response to the attack, and share their ideas for future use of the Archive.

They are also working with the poet Ryan Williams, who wrote the poem [Our Manchester](#) after the attack.

Ryan will lead poetry workshops with children from secondary schools to explore some of the poetry in the Archive.

Developing the Archive

Interviews are being conducted with people connected to the Archive to capture their stories and learn more about some of the items in the collection. The Archive team are currently seeking more funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to provide access to a wider range of people, both at the gallery and digitally.

If the application is successful, there will be a three-year funded project to develop an online home for the Archive, and a range of activities to help visitors to the gallery learn about it.