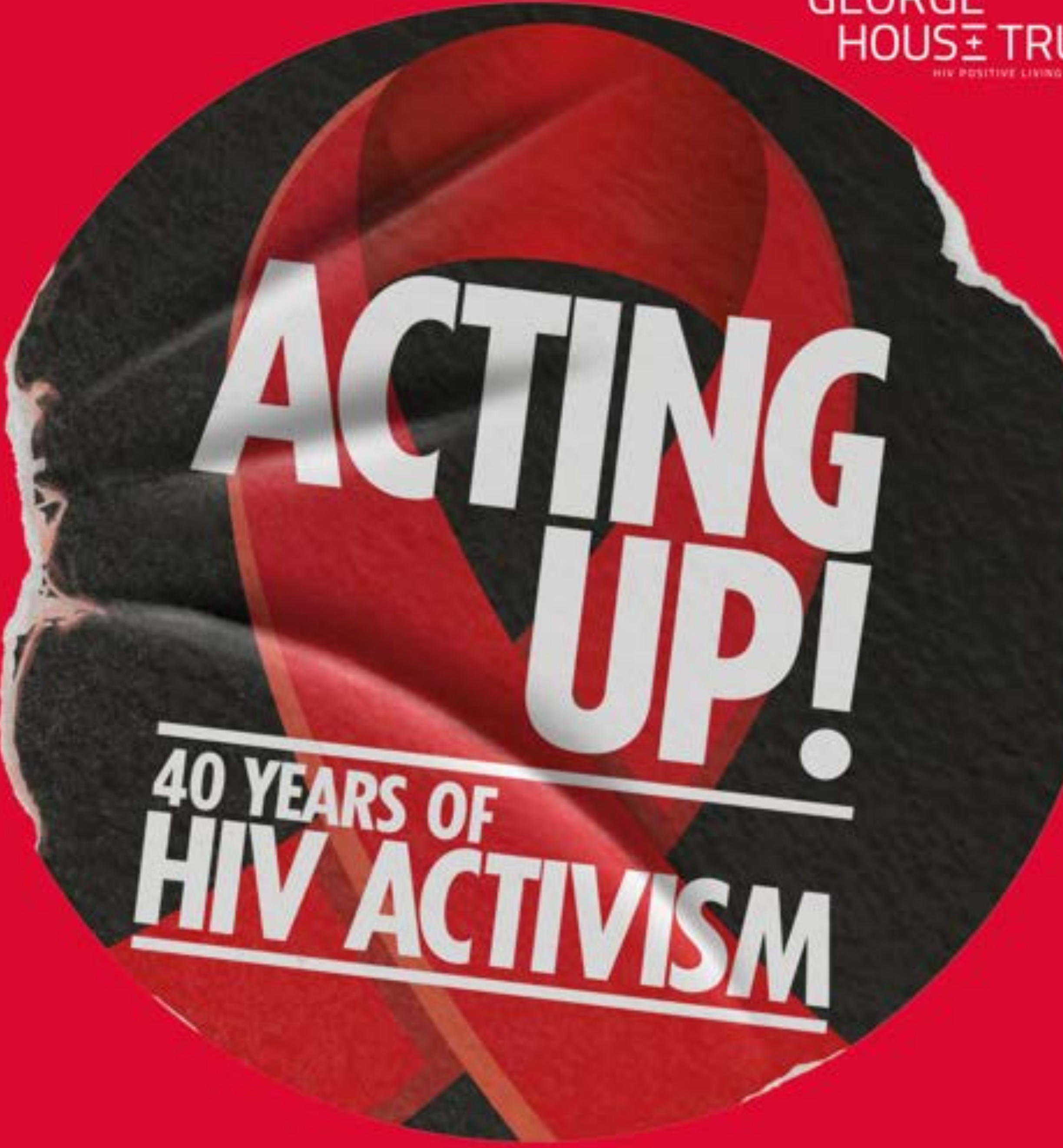
GEORGE
HOUSE TRUST
HIV POSITIVE LIVING SINCE 1985



ACTING UP!
40 YEARS OF HIV ACTIVISM AND GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

Foreword by
RUSSELL T DAVIES

ACTING UP!
40 YEARS OF HIV ACTIVISM AND GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

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www.ght.org.uk

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GEORGE
HOUSE TRUST
HIV POSITIVE LIVING SINCE 1985

"George House Trust is extremely important to me as a positive person in the respect that I know I can ring the office or go to the drop in at any reasonable hour and ask for a little bit of support or talk over a problem and receive understanding from somebody. And they can help in practical ways like massage. And I wish the powers that be would recognise the importance of an organisation like George House Trust. How important it is. It's a lifeline for somebody like myself with HIV or AIDS."

RON MOWBRAY
Speaking in 1995

From: 'A Lifetime Commitment: The Work of George House Trust',
a documentary produced by Manchester Metropolitan University students

GEORGE
HOUS± TRUST
HIV POSITIVE LIVING SINCE 1985

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FOREWORD

RUSSELL T DAVIES

PATRON, GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

It's my great honour, as one of the Patrons of the George House Trust, to write this foreword for the anniversary book.

I wrote a drama series called *It's A Sin*, for Channel 4, which detailed some of the stories of the AIDS epidemic, from the 80s to the 90s. When I first set out to write the scripts, the GHT became wonderful friends to me. They helped so much with my research, as people came forward to tell me their stories. And the Trust opened up their archives - they've kept meticulous handwritten logs of the phone-lines at the time, detailing the calls from so many souls reaching out in the dark, in a time of ignorance and fear. In those days, the institutions of the UK were letting us down, but the GHT was there to help.

Forty years! The world has turned and so much has changed. And yet, there's one constant throughout this book. The people.

There are those we've lost. And we remember them with sorrow, pride and joy. But more than that, there are those who've lived and learnt, and here they are, their faces beaming out of these pages, bristling with stories to be told. And that's what the GHT is all about; people coming forward with open hearts and bright minds, burning with compassion, sometimes with anger, and always with a determination to face this problem down. Because I know for a fact that the people making up the GHT are, quite simply, wonderful. The staff, the experts, the counsellors, the fundraisers, and above all, the volunteers, those bloody wonderful volunteers stepping forward to help, with a smile and an outreached hand, in all weathers. Those shining stars. I think this book is dedicated to them.

The fight goes on, of course. This is a living battle, facing obstacles and challenges and setbacks, as the world around us changes with alarming speed. But despite the losses we have seen over the years, I like to think of the battle against AIDS as a triumph. Because good people came together, they gave their time, their money, their imagination, their expertise, and their love, and they found a path out of the wilderness.

So if you see the GHT out fundraising, dig deep, if you can. If you see us in the Pride Parade, give an extra cheer. And better still, if you want to help, come and join in. You'll make friends for life, and become part of a story that shows humanity at its absolute best.

Russell x

INTRODUCTION

DARREN KNIGHT

CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

When I stop and look at how George House Trust has transformed over the last 40 years, it makes me smile. I remember walking through the doors for the first time, scared, alone and needing help. Taking that step changed my life. Walking through the very same doors years later as Chief Executive changed it all over again. To return not in fear but to lead the charity that once helped me, was both surreal and humbling.

Every day, I watch extraordinary people bring this place to life. I see volunteers delivering their magic with joy and warmth. I see colleagues dealing with situations that are complex and sometimes heartbreaking. I see trustees wrestling with difficult decisions, guided by a fierce commitment to the cause. Every time, I'm reminded of the unapologetic grit that binds us together. Forty years of love, laughter, and more than our share of blood, sweat and tears form the very foundations on which George House Trust stands.

Back in 1985, six gay men had the courage to look unflinchingly at a crisis. They knew HIV wasn't going anywhere and they built Manchester AIDSline, the forebearer of the George House Trust we know and love today. Their activism, compassion, and refusal to accept silence are woven into everything we do.

When our Chair, Andrew Sloan, and I began shaping the vision for our 40th anniversary year, we were bold, perhaps even a little audacious, and the team didn't just rise to the ambition, they exceeded it. The ten month exhibition at Manchester Central Library was such a powerful symbol of activism. Thousands of people walked through those doors, leaving with a deeper understanding of HIV and the reality of the HIV stigma that persists today. We are forever grateful to Neil Macinnes and the entire Manchester Libraries team and to Joanne Rosenthal the curator for transforming our ideas into something unforgettable.

There are so many people to thank. There are countless names we hold in our hearts; some we've lost and many we still have the privilege of walking beside. Forty years of determination cannot possibly fit into a single book. This book is our attempt to honour every person who has walked through our doors, every volunteer who has given their time, every activist who refused to be silent, every supporter who believed in us and every life touched. Their stories live in these pages.

This book is a piece of history. A testament to resilience, to activism, to community and to the unstoppable spirit that has carried the HIV response for four decades. As Joe Tanzer, our 40th Anniversary Project Lead, often reminds me, "remembrance is a form of activism". He's right.

As you turn these pages, I invite you to join us not only in remembering what has been, but in shaping what must come next. Our shared history is not a story of survival alone; it is a promise. A promise that we'll all continue working for a world where HIV holds no one back.

Darren.

1

40 YEARS OF GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

A PERSONAL REFLECTION

40 YEARS OF GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

A PERSONAL REFLECTION

PAUL FAIRWEATHER

In 1983 I was working as the liaison officer at Manchester Gay Centre and I began reading about this strange new disease called GRID (Gay Related Immunity Syndrome) which was affecting groups of gay men in New York and San Francisco. I wrote an article entitled 'The New Threat to our Lifestyle' for the Mancunian Gay magazine I was involved with.

In 1984 I organised a public meeting above the Thompsons Arms where a guy called Tony Whitehead who was involved with the Terence Higgins Trust came and spoke in the most prophetic way about how HIV was going to impact all our communities.

In 1985 I was one of six gay men, most of whom were involved with Manchester Gay Switchboard, who set up Manchester AIDSline. We had a small grotty office in Portland St with a telephone, a desk and a chair, and the phonelines operated on a Monday night from 7-9pm.

Many of the calls were from what we termed the "worried well". People who were terrified of catching HIV but who were at absolutely no risk. Soon we began taking calls from people who had been diagnosed with HIV. In these early days there was little information about HIV and there were no treatments available.

The Royal George Pub, the site on which George House was built and from where it took its name.

Opposite: Extract from the Manchester AIDSline logbooks

Friday 27th Jan Dave & Andrea

(3219) Mother wanted details of testing centres - North M/C re son - suggested contact Monsall. Not willing to discuss further - hadn't made up his mind.

3220 (~~2320~~) Nigel phoned.

3221 (~~2321~~) Male enquiring re testing clinics in the Manchester / Salford area.

MONDAY 30-1-89 Sara

3222

~~2322~~ - Man worried about prostitute giving him "hand relief" and risks involved. re-assured

3223

~~2323~~ - Gay man risks of Oral Sex

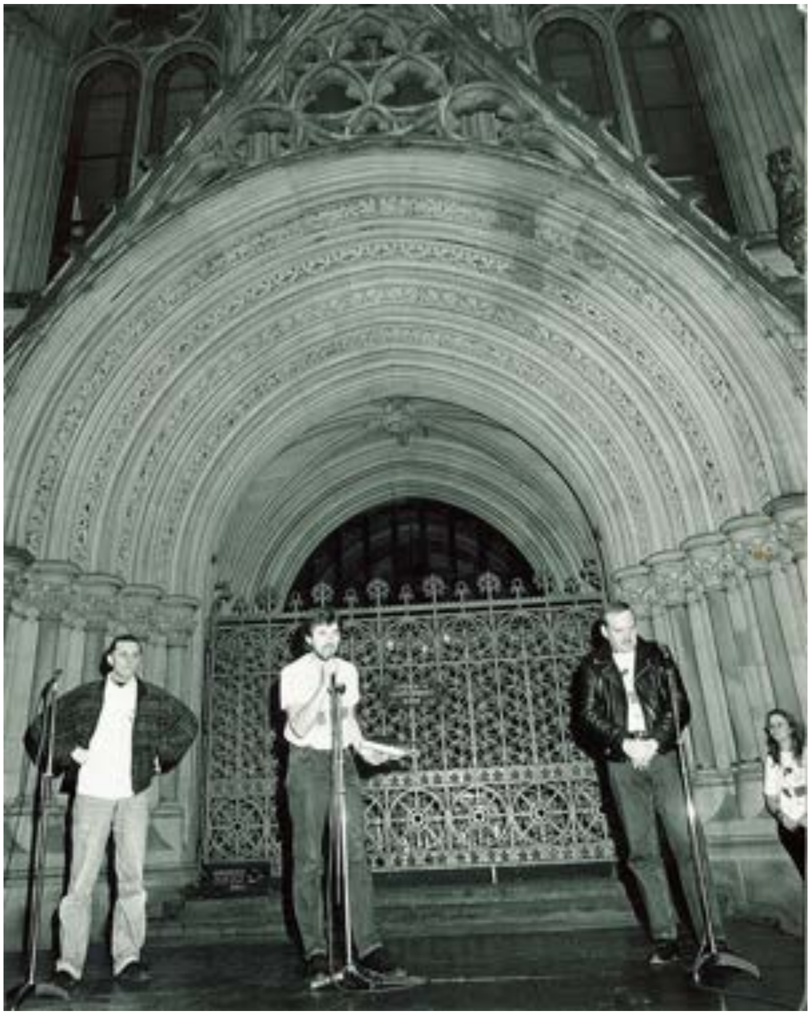
3224 - Mike Jones rang doing doing project wanting more info

3225 - Woman wanting to be sex.

3226 - Man thinking he might have Chlamodia ? re spelling

3227 Woman who's brother HIV+ discussed Fam Supp + BP+

Shane Johnson, caretaker of George House and first Chair of Body Positive North West. Shane cut the ribbon which opened George House in 1990.



The official launch of George House Trust outside Manchester Town Hall, December 1991

Photos from an action to coincide with Health Secretary Virginia Bottomley's visit to Manchester in 1993. George House Trust and ACT UP Manchester jointly organised the event to protest funding cuts for HIV services.

George House Trust volunteers at Manchester Pride in 2007

> James Anderton, the homophobic Chief Constable spoke publicly about ‘gay men swirling around in a cesspit of their own making.’

At this time there was also a huge amount of fear, paranoia and ignorance about HIV even from staff within the NHS. The crew of an ambulance transporting a person living with AIDS threw them out when they realised they had AIDS. Then the health service quarantined the ambulance!

In 1985 Manchester City Council set up an Equal Opportunities Unit. They established a Lesbian subcommittee and a Gay Men’s subcommittee as a formal part of the council’s decision-making process. They appointed two Equal Opportunities Officers (Gay Men) of which I was one and they also appointed two Equal Opportunities Officers (Lesbians).

At the time this was very radical and controversial, and I believe that the work we were developing in Manchester was one of the reasons that Section 28 was introduced in 1987 by the Thatcher government.

That year my friend Roger Youd who was HIV positive was forcibly detained at North Manchester General Hospital under new legislation. We lobbied the Council and picketed the Town Hall and he was released.

The annual August bank holiday weekend Candlelight Vigil in Sackville Gardens, 2003

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence with George House Trust in 1995

The case gained national attention and highlighted the stigma and discrimination faced by people living with HIV. This incident is referenced in the TV drama *It's a Sin* written by George House Trust patron Russell T Davies.

I was involved with setting up the first Body Positive group, within AIDSline, as a support group for people living with HIV. Jonathan Grimshaw who had just helped set up Body Positive in London came and spoke about the importance of peer support for people living with HIV.

Manchester City Council was a key supporter of Manchester AIDSline and was the first local authority to produce a comprehensive HIV policy which included supporting staff who were living with HIV. In 1986 they set up an AIDS Working Party and an AIDS Unit to develop policies and provide training. They also set up a specialised team of HIV social workers.

The level of fear and hostility created an atmosphere attacking our basic civil rights. Manchester AIDSline was involved with Manchester City Council in organising a public meeting to discuss the threats to our civil liberties and come up with strategies to defend ourselves. James Anderton, the homophobic Chief Constable, spoke publicly about "gay men swirling around in a cesspit of their own making" with reference to HIV. I was one of a group of gay activists who disrupted

Raising funds for George House Trust in 1996 with the 'Wake Up Manchester' campaign

> "The moral panic about AIDS... made it easier for the government to attack lesbians and gay men."

an evangelical rally he was speaking at to protest his views on HIV. There was a campaign to have him dismissed as Chief Constable which did not succeed!

In February 1988 the North West Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Equality organised a 20,000 strong demonstration against Section 28, which talked about pretended family relationships and local authorities promoting homosexuality. The moral panic about the AIDS epidemic and 'gay plague' headlines clearly made it easier for the government to attack lesbians and gay men.

Manchester AIDSline grew very quickly, and we soon had more funding and more paid staff. We held our first AGM in 1987 and in 1992 we formally became the George House Trust. In 1994 moved into our current premises at Ardwick Green.

Manchester had an active branch of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) which used direct action to increase awareness of HIV stigma and to put pressure on drug companies to increase access for HIV medication. In Manchester, the group lobbed tennis balls containing condoms into Strangeways Prison which refused to provide condoms for prisoners. They also picketed Virginia Bottomley, who was then the Health Secretary, and translated her name into I Am An Evil Tory Bigot.

I have spoken for many years at the Candlelight Vigil at Manchester Pride as a local councillor and HIV activist. In 2009 I came out publicity as living with HIV and there was a huge photograph of me on the front page of the North Manchester Advertiser where I lived and was a local councillor. I had great

Manchester Pride, 2024

> “We have been committed to ensuring that the voices and experiences of those of us living with the virus are at the heart of the organisation.”

support from George House Trust and from friends and family and an extremely positive response from local people. For me and for many people living with HIV, being more public about my HIV status has been a powerful way to challenge HIV stigma and self-stigma.

Looking back over the last 40 years I am astonished at how much has changed. HIV is now a long-term manageable health condition. We have U=U and PrEP. However, HIV stigma and self-stigma is alive and well and needs to be challenged wherever it appears.
From our beginning in 1985 we have been committed to providing high quality services for people living with HIV. We have been committed to ensuring that the voices and experiences of those of us living with the virus are at the heart of our organisation. “Nothing about us, without us”. We have been committed to campaigning to improve the quality of life for people living with HIV. We have campaigned for an equal age of consent, for formula milk for mothers with HIV and to end the criminalisation of HIV.

For the last 10 years I have been working with an amazing group of Positive Speakers who are living with HIV and willing to share their stories to challenge HIV stigma. We have spoken to thousands of young people in schools in Manchester. The willingness of these young people to listen, to ask questions and to challenge HIV stigma is what gives me the greatest hope for the next 40 years. ■

Ana Phylactic and Cheddar Gorgeous as U=U and PrEP, marrying in the perfect ‘union’ to end HIV transmission.
Part of George House Trust’s entry into the Manchester Pride Parade in 2023. The theme that year was ‘Queerly Beloved’.

2

HIV ACTIVISM IN MANCHESTER

A TIMELINE

TIMELINE

1981

The British press reports on the first cases of a mysterious illness that seems to be affecting gay men in the USA.

1982

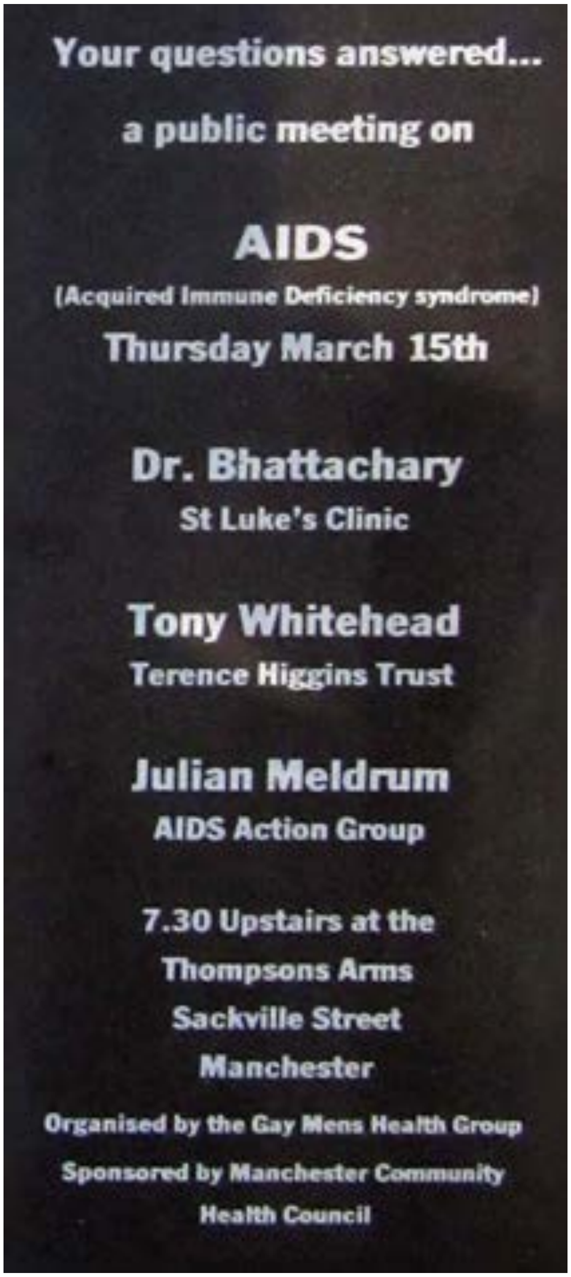
This collection of illnesses is named AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). The first AIDS-related deaths are reported in the UK, mainly in London.

1983

Mancunian Gay magazine publishes an article in its February edition titled 'The New Threat to Our Lifestyle – Analysing the AID syndrome.'

1984

Local gay activists organise a public meeting above the Thompsons Arms pub to discuss the threat of AIDS to the city's gay community.



Your questions answered...

a public meeting on

AIDS

(Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome)

Thursday March 15th

Dr. Bhattachary
St Luke's Clinic

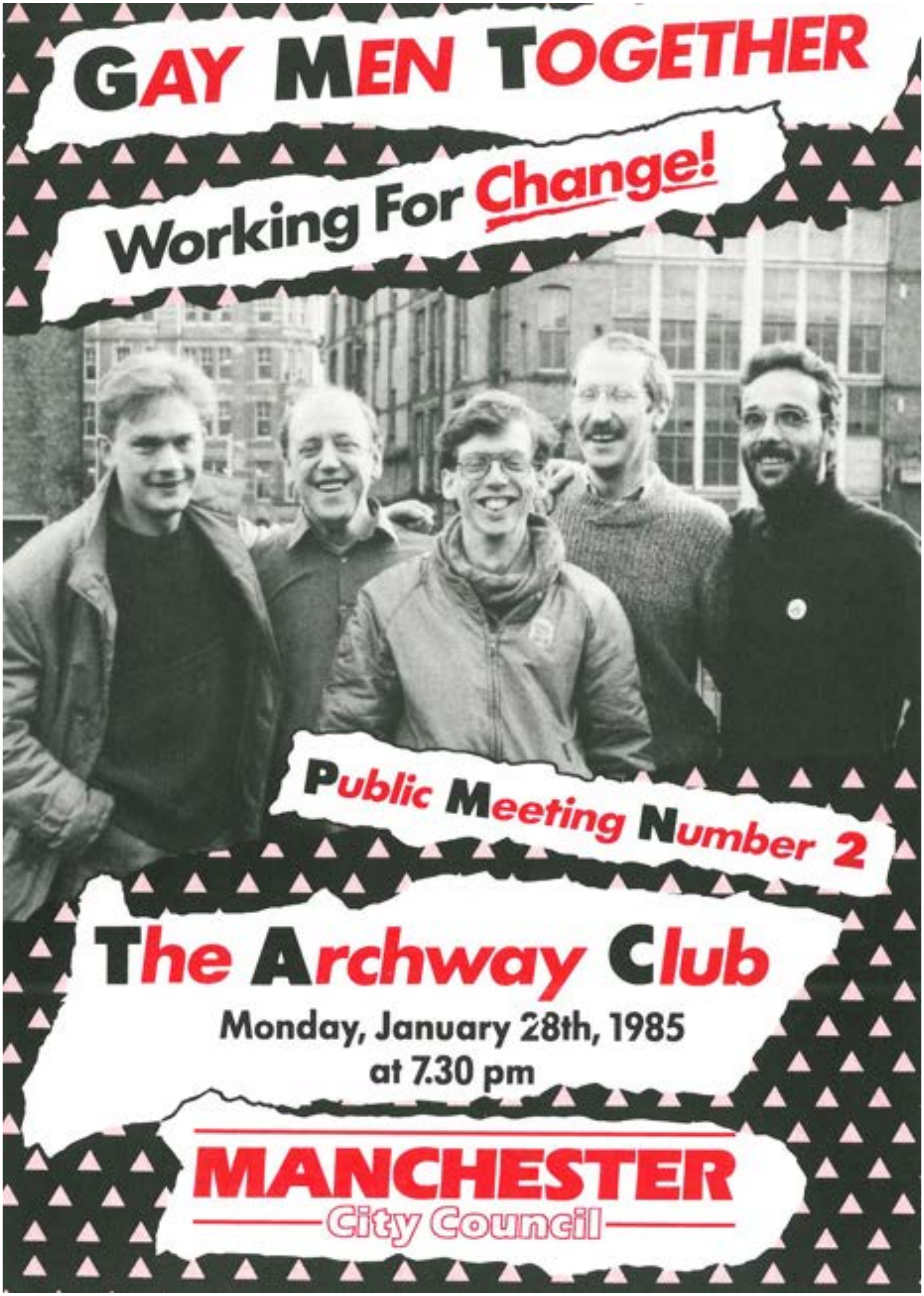
Tony Whitehead
Terence Higgins Trust

Julian Meldrum
AIDS Action Group

7.30 Upstairs at the
Thompsons Arms
Sackville Street
Manchester

Organised by the Gay Mens Health Group
Sponsored by Manchester Community
Health Council

Advert for public meeting in Thompsons Arms, March 1984



Flyer for public consultation meeting, January 1985

1985

Manchester City Council appoints two Gay Men's Officers and two Lesbians' Officers and sets up an AIDS Working Party. HIV testing becomes available in the UK.

Roger Youd, a 29-year-old man living with HIV is detained against his will as a public health risk at the Monsall Hospital in North Manchester. The story gains national attention and highlights discriminatory health legislation put in place by the government.

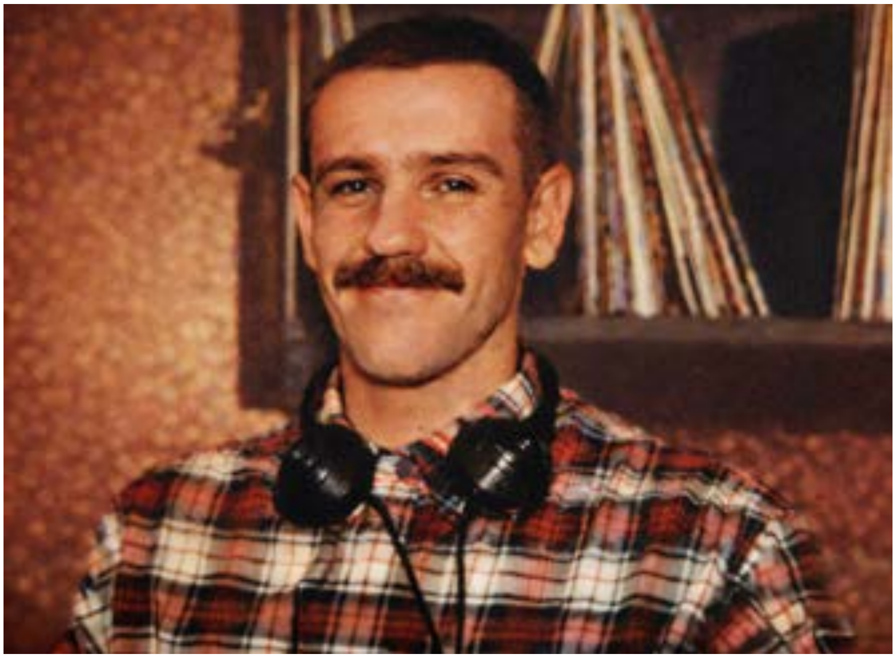
Six gay men set up Manchester AIDSline, a volunteer run helpline. They rent a small office on Portland Street and operate with a grant from the council.

1986

The virus which causes AIDS is named HIV (Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus).

Body Positive North West is set up as part of Manchester AIDSline, offering a self-help group for people affected by HIV.

At an event by Greater Manchester Police to discuss how to deal with AIDS, Chief Constable James Anderton states that gay people are "swirling about in a human cesspit of their own making".



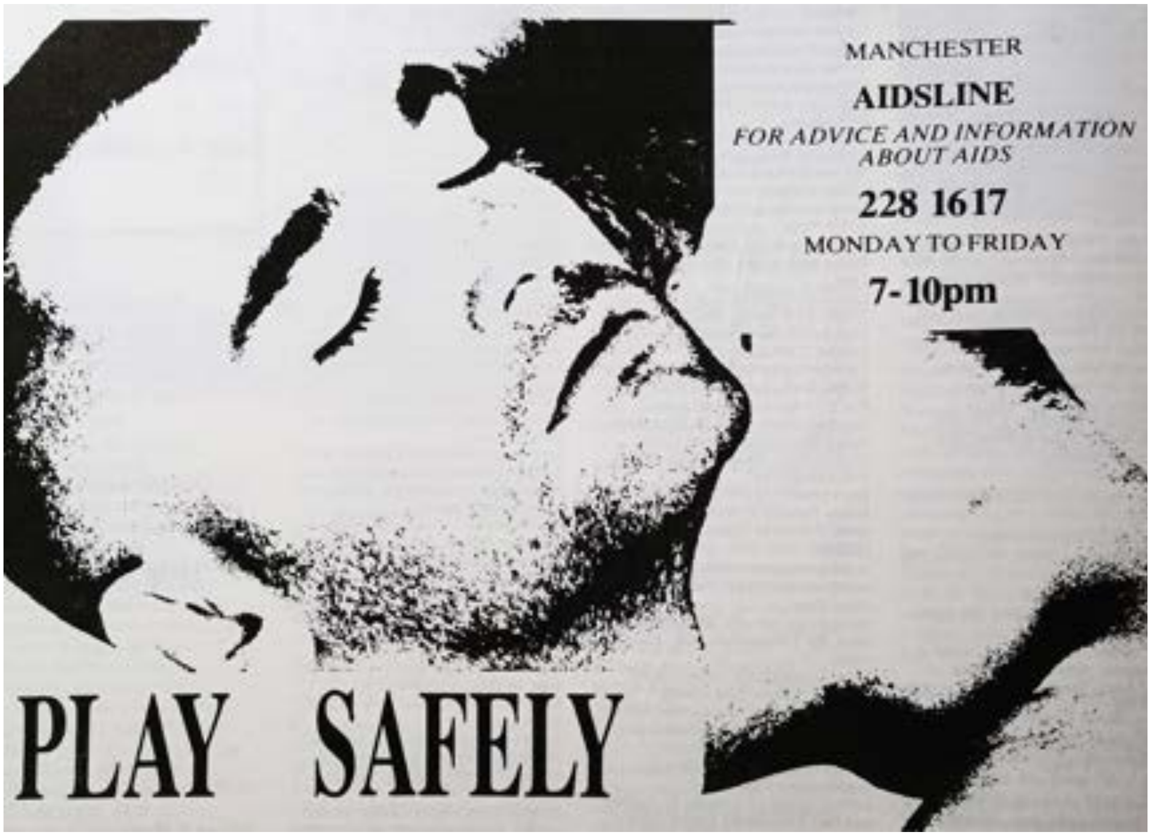
Roger Youd

Manchester Evening News coverage of Roger Youd's detention in 1985

You can't go home, AIDS man is told

A MAN suffering from AIDS was banned from leaving hospital by a court yesterday.

In a historic decision, Manchester City magistrates ordered his detention in Monsall Isolation Hospital for at least three weeks.



MANCHESTER

AIDSLINE

FOR ADVICE AND INFORMATION ABOUT AIDS

228 1617

MONDAY TO FRIDAY

7-10pm

PLAY SAFELY

Advert for Manchester AIDSline in Mancunian Gay magazine, 1985

Advert for Body Positive North West
in Mancunian Gay magazine, 1986

BODY POSITIVE group meeting

Thursday 13th March
7.30pm Manchester Council for Voluntary Service — 3rd floor, Gaddum Centre, Camp St (off Deansgate next to Comet)

Speakers Dr Eric Curless
Jonathon Grimshaw
Peter Randell (London Body Positive Group)

A meeting of gay men who are HTLV3 antibody positive.

1987

The UK Government launches its Don't Die of Ignorance public health campaign, in response to rising cases of HIV/AIDS in the UK. Leaflets are delivered to every house in the country and a TV advert spreads fear and stigma.

1988

Over 20,000 people march through central Manchester to protest anti-gay legislation brought in by the Conservative government known as Section 28.

1990

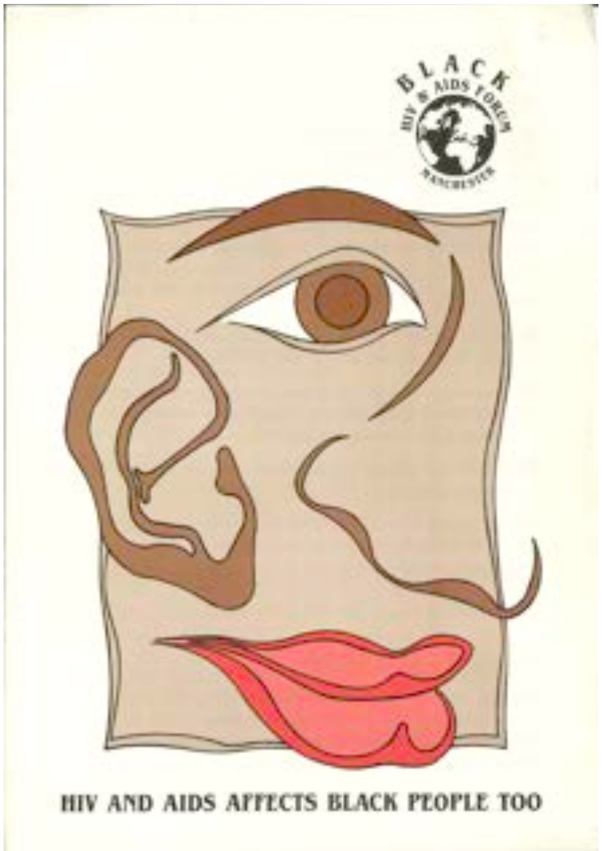
The Black HIV and AIDS Forum (now BHA for Equality) is set up to combat health inequalities and provide support to black and minority ethnic communities in Manchester affected by HIV.

Increased knowledge of HIV leads to a focus on sexual health campaigns to prevent transmission of the virus. MESMAC Manchester is formed to promote safer sex in the gay community.

George House is built as a dedicated centre for Manchester AIDSline and Body Positive North West and soon becomes a space offering wider community care services for people with HIV. George House is officially launched the following year with the slogan 'There is still life with HIV'.

Photo from Section 28 rally in Manchester, 1988

MESMAC flyer, early 1990s



Black HIV and AIDS Forum flyer, early 1990s

1991

A group of MESMAC volunteers starts what later becomes MASH (Manchester Action on Street Health) offering practical support and sexual health services to sex workers in the city.

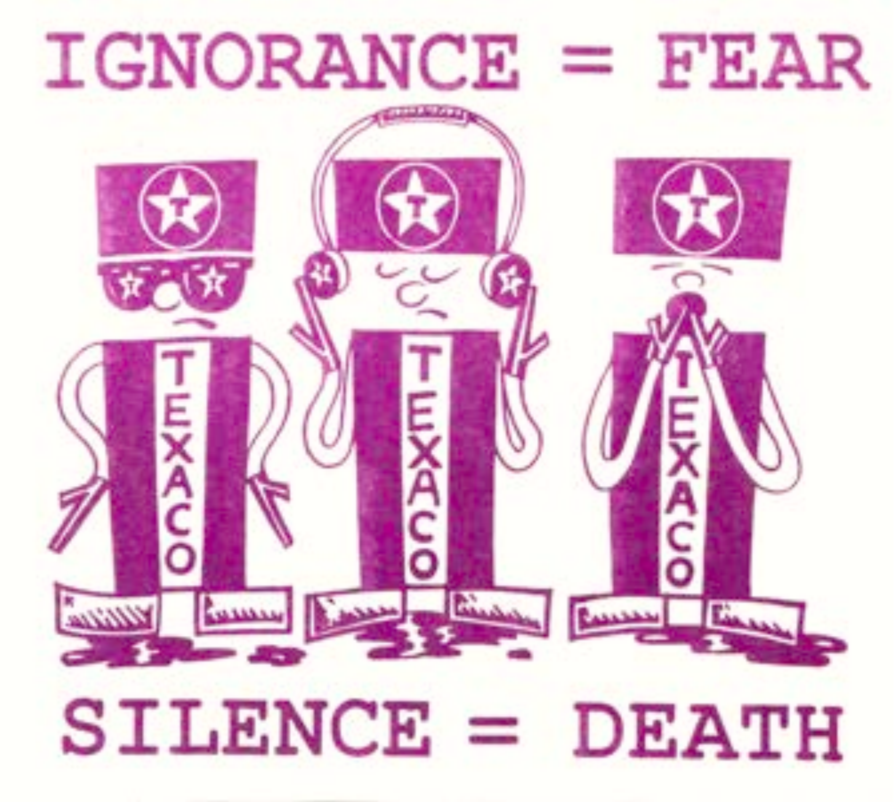
Activists from ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) organise a boycott in protest of Texaco's policy of compulsory HIV tests for employees. In March, ACT UP Manchester picket Texaco petrol stations on Stockport Road and Wilmslow Road.

1992

Manchester AIDSline continues expanding its offer and becomes George House Trust. Body Positive North West opens its own premises.

1993

ACT UP Manchester and George House Trust stage a protest against government cuts to HIV services during Health Secretary Virginia Bottomley's visit to Manchester.



ACT UP Manchester flyer from Texaco action, 1991

The launch of the MASH van, with Mike Naraynsingh, Jo Brand, Sarah Crosby and MASH volunteers, 1991

ACT UP Manchester and George House Trust protest the visit of Health Secretary Virginia Bottomley, 1993

1994

George House Trust moves to a new permanent site in Ardwick Green where it is still based today.

MESMAC Manchester develops into Healthy Gay Manchester (HGM), offering a more direct and locally-focused approach to HIV prevention among gay and bisexual men. Over August bank holiday they distribute 24,000 packs of condoms and lube in the city.

Estimates of the number of people living with HIV are produced. 23,000 people are believed to be living with HIV in the UK at the end of the year.

1996

Major medical advances in treating AIDS are announced at the 11th World AIDS Conference in Vancouver. Effective treatments are proven to protect the immune systems of people with the HIV virus. Over the coming years, new AIDS diagnoses and AIDS-related deaths begin to fall dramatically.

2000

Healthy Gay Manchester merges with the Manchester Lesbian and Gay Switchboard to become the Lesbian and Gay Foundation (now LGBT Foundation).

The Beacon of Hope sculpture is erected in Sackville Gardens to commemorate those who lost their lives to HIV and AIDS. It is the first permanent memorial of its kind in the UK.

"...a new concept in sexual health for gay men."

hgm

Healthy Gay Manchester

HGM, Ducie House, 37 Ducie St.,
Piccadilly, Manchester M1 2JW
tel:(061)236 7600 fax:(061)236 7611

Healthy Gay Manchester flyer, mid 1990s

Lesbian and Gay Foundation safer sex pack, early 2000s

2002

The Black HIV and AIDS Forum is relaunched as the Black Health Agency (now BHA for Equality).

2004

The Blue Room offers male sex workers in Manchester support with issues such as sexual health and substance misuse. Initially a project by Theatre in Prisons and Probation and the Lesbian and Gay Foundation it later becomes an arts and social change charity. It now operates as Our Room, supporting male, trans and non-binary sex workers.

2007

Common Threads, The UK AIDS Memorial Quilt exhibition is shown at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester.

2016

Following years of scientific studies, researchers and activists launch Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U), now a global movement endorsed by the scientific community. U=U states that a person with undetectable levels of HIV cannot pass on the virus to their sexual partners. The following year the British HIV Association (BHIVA) comes out in support of U=U.

Detail from the Beacon of Hope sculpture in Sackville Gardens, 2025

2017

The PaSH (Passionate about Sexual Health) partnership launches, with BHA for Equality, George House Trust and the LGBT Foundation working together to deliver integrated HIV prevention, support and sexual health services across Greater Manchester.

2020

The UK government announces that PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) - a drug that prevents HIV transmission - will be made available on the NHS in England to people at higher risk of getting the virus. The move follows years of activism and campaigning for access to PrEP.

2022

Greater Manchester exceeds the global 95-95-95 targets set by the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). It is estimated that 95% of people living with HIV have been diagnosed, of whom 97% are on treatment and 97.3% of those on treatment are virally suppressed.

2025

During National HIV Testing Week in February, Sir Keir Starmer becomes the first serving prime minister to publicly take an HIV test. The government launches a new five-year HIV action plan for England.

Acting Up! 40 years of HIV Activism exhibition opens at Manchester's Central Library accompanied by a year-long programme of events, as part of George House Trust's 40th Anniversary project. ■

Manchester Pride, 2024

3

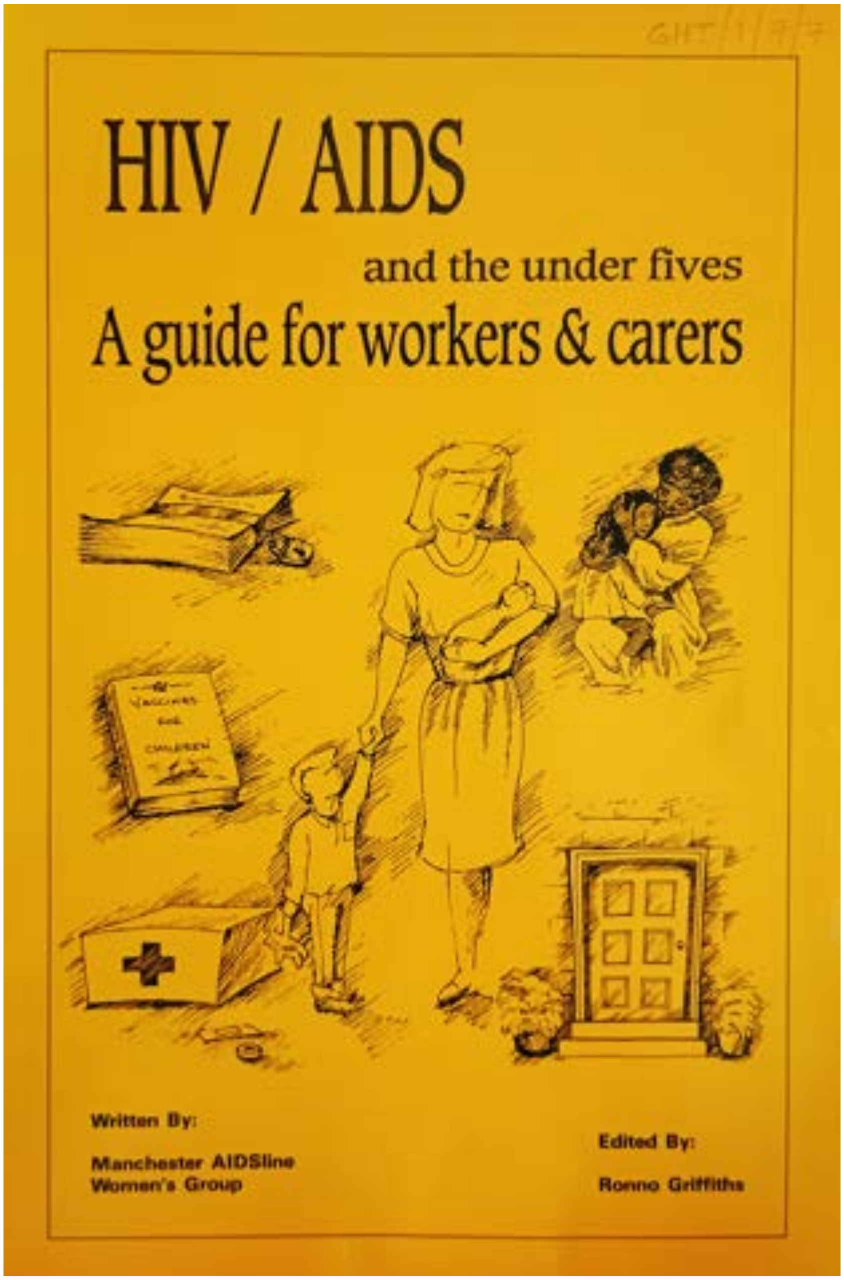
HIV ACTIVISM IN MANCHESTER

THE PIONEERS

MANCHESTER AIDSLINE

Manchester AIDSline was founded by six gay men in 1985, following a series of public meetings on the threat that AIDS posed to gay life in the city. It offered a vital helpline for people, at a time when accurate information on HIV and AIDS was hard to come by. AIDSline gradually expanded beyond the phone line into counselling services and public health advocacy. In 1992 the organisation became George House Trust. ■

Manchester AIDSline and Body Positive North West stickers, late 1980s



GHT/1/7/7

HIV / AIDS

and the under fives

A guide for workers & carers

Written By:

Manchester AIDSline
Women's Group

Edited By:

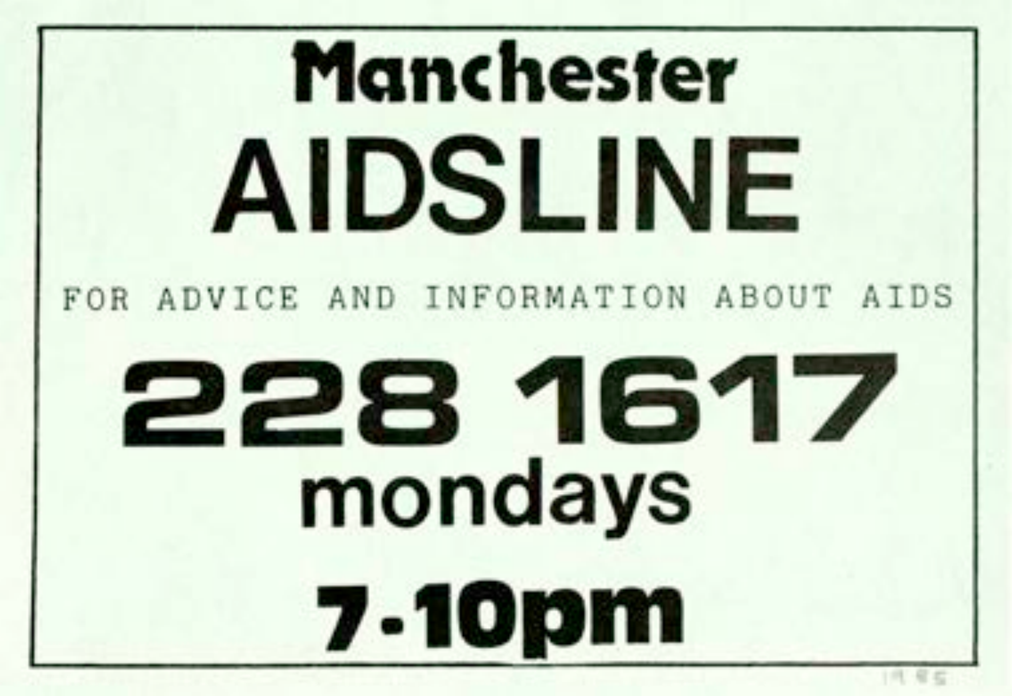
Ronno Griffiths

Resource guide produced by Manchester AIDSline Women's Group, mid/late 1980s

> "I don't think people believed it. There was a huge amount of ignorance. People thought it was a long way away, in America, and it was very different in Manchester – it wouldn't happen here."

PAUL FAIRWEATHER

LGBT and HIV campaigner and one of the founders of Manchester AIDSline



Manchester

AIDSLINE

FOR ADVICE AND INFORMATION ABOUT AIDS

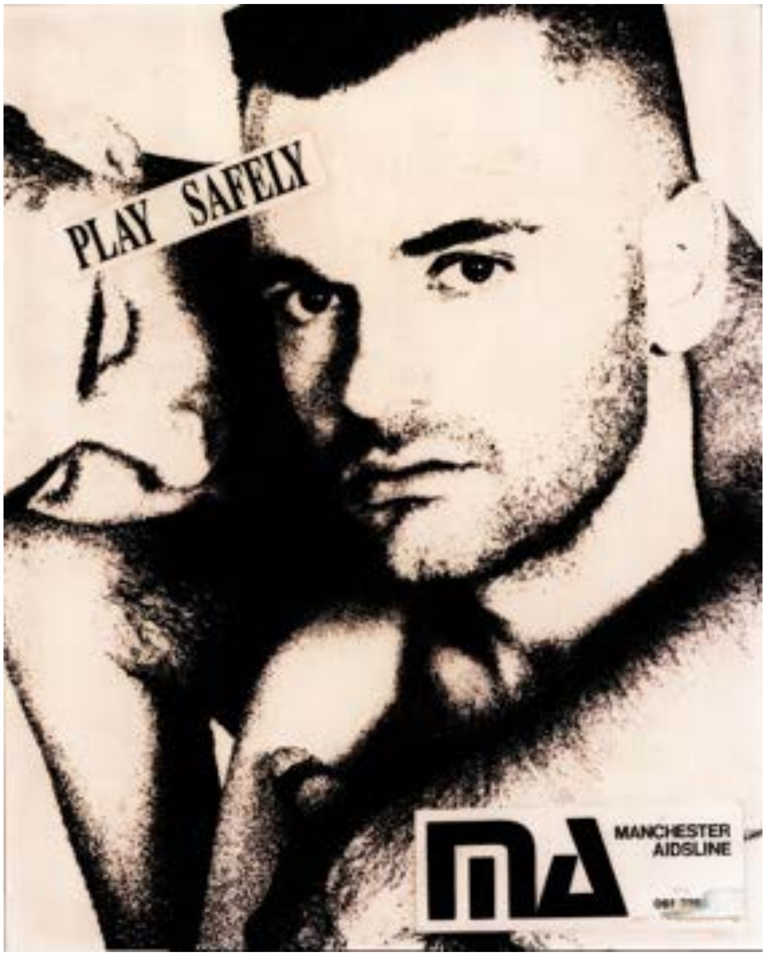
228 1617

mondays

7-10pm

1985

Manchester AIDSline flyer, mid 1980s

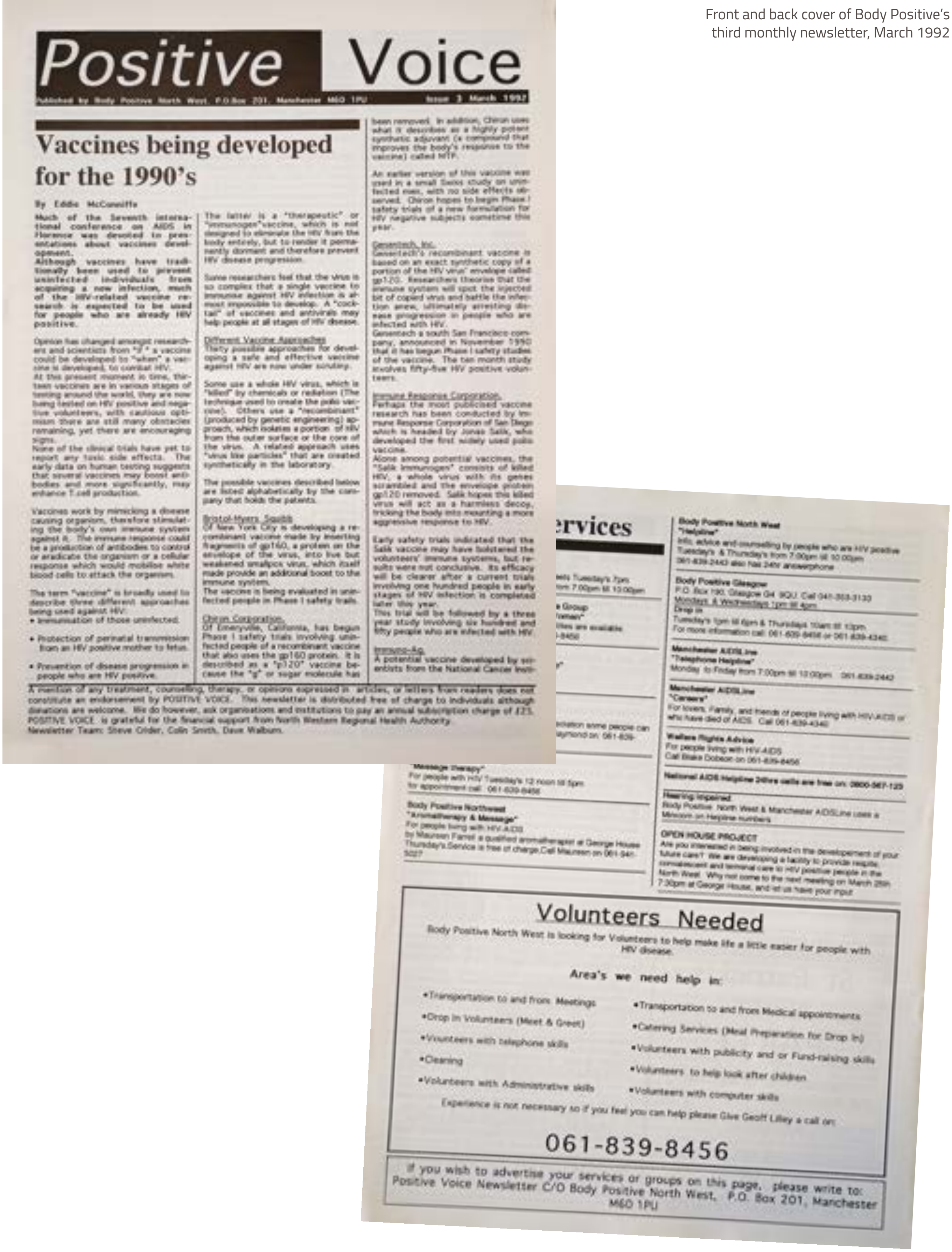


Manchester AIDSline poster, late 1980s

BODY POSITIVE NORTH WEST

Body Positive North West was set up in 1986, originally as part of Manchester AIDSline. It offered peer support to people living with and affected by HIV, including social care, counselling, financial support and befriending services. In the early years of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, it was one of the few places in Greater Manchester where people could drop in for food and community. ■

Front and back cover of Body Positive's third monthly newsletter, March 1992



Positive Voice

Published by Body Positive North West, P.O.Box 201, Manchester M60 1PU

Issue 3 March 1992

Vaccines being developed for the 1990's

By Eddie McConnifffe

Much of the Seventh international conference on AIDS in Florence was devoted to presentations about vaccines development.

Although vaccines have traditionally been used to prevent uninfected individuals from acquiring a new infection, much of the HIV-related vaccine research is expected to be used for people who are already HIV positive.

Opinion has changed amongst researchers and scientists from "if" a vaccine could be developed to "when" a vaccine is developed, to combat HIV.

At this present moment in time, thirteen vaccines are in various stages of testing around the world, they are now being tested on HIV positive and negative volunteers, with cautious optimism there are still many obstacles remaining, yet there are encouraging signs.

None of the clinical trials have yet to report any toxic side effects. The early data on human testing suggests that several vaccines may boost antibodies and more significantly, may enhance T.cell production.

Vaccines work by mimicking a disease causing organism, therefore stimulating the body's own immune system against it. The immune response could be a production of antibodies to control or eradicate the organism or a cellular response which would mobilise white blood cells to attack the organism.

The term "vaccine" is broadly used to describe three different approaches being used against HIV:

- Immunisation of those uninfected.
- Protection of perinatal transmission from an HIV positive mother to fetus.
- Prevention of disease progression in people who are HIV positive.

The latter is a "therapeutic" or "immunogen" vaccine, which is not designed to eliminate the HIV from the body entirely, but to render it permanently dormant and therefore prevent HIV disease progression.

Some researchers feel that the virus is so complex that a single vaccine to immunise against HIV infection is almost impossible to develop. A "cocktail" of vaccines and antivirals may help people at all stages of HIV disease.

Different Vaccine Approaches

Thirty possible approaches for developing a safe and effective vaccine against HIV are now under scrutiny.

Some use a whole HIV virus, which is "killed" by chemicals or radiation (The technique used to create the polio vaccine). Others use a "recombinant" (produced by genetic engineering) approach, which isolates a portion of HIV from the outer surface or the core of the virus. A related approach uses "virus like particles" that are created synthetically in the laboratory.

The possible vaccines described below are listed alphabetically by the company that holds the patents.

Bristol-Myers Squibb

Of New York City is developing a recombinant vaccine made by inserting fragments of gp160, a protein on the envelope of the virus, into live but weakened smallpox virus, which itself made provide an additional boost to the immune system.

The vaccine is being evaluated in uninfected people in Phase I safety trails.

Chiron Corporation.

Of Emeryville, California, has begun Phase I safety trials involving uninfected people of a recombinant vaccine that also uses the gp160 protein. It is described as a "p120" vaccine because the "g" or sugar molecule has been removed. In addition, Chiron uses what it describes as a highly potent synthetic adjuvant (a compound that improves the body's response to the vaccine) called MTP.

An earlier version of this vaccine was used in a small Swiss study on uninfected men, with no side effects observed. Chiron hopes to begin Phase I safety trials of a new formulation for HIV negative subjects sometime this year.

Genentech, Inc.

Genentech's recombinant vaccine is based on an exact synthetic copy of a portion of the HIV virus' envelope called gp120. Researchers theorise that the immune system will spot the injected bit of copied virus and battle the infection anew, ultimately arresting disease progression in people who are infected with HIV.

Genentech a south San Francisco company, announced in November 1990 that it has begun Phase I safety studies of the vaccine. The ten month study involves fifty-five HIV positive volunteers.

Immune Response Corporation.

Perhaps the most publicised vaccine research has been conducted by Immune Response Corporation of San Diego which is headed by Jonas Salk, who developed the first widely used polio vaccine.

Alone among potential vaccines, the "Salk Immunogen" consists of killed HIV, a whole virus with its genes scrambled and the envelope protein gp120 removed. Salk hopes this killed virus will act as a harmless decoy, tricking the body into mounting a more aggressive response to HIV.

Early safety trials indicated that the Salk vaccine may have bolstered the volunteers' immune systems, but results were not conclusive. Its efficacy will be clearer after a current trials involving one hundred people in early stages of HIV infection is completed later this year.

This trial will be followed by a three year study involving six hundred and fifty people who are infected with HIV.

Immuno-Ag.

A potential vaccine developed by scientists from the National Cancer Insti-

A mention of any treatment, counselling, therapy, or opinions expressed in articles, or letters from readers does not constitute an endorsement by POSITIVE VOICE. This newsletter is distributed free of charge to individuals although donations are welcome. We do however, ask organisations and institutions to pay an annual subscription charge of £25.
POSITIVE VOICE is grateful for the financial support from North Western Regional Health Authority.
Newsletter Team: Steve Crider, Colin Smith, Dave Walburn.

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ervices

eets Tuesday's 7pm
om 7.00pm till 10.00pm

e Group
Women"
ities are available
-8456

r"

ciation some people can
aymond on: 061-839-

"Massage therapy"
For people with HIV Tuesday's 12 noon till 5pm
for appointment call: 061-839-8456

Body Positive Northwest
"Aromatherapy & Massage"
For people living with HIV-AIDS
by Maureen Farrell a qualified aromatherapist at George House
Thursday's Service is free of charge.Call Maureen on 061-941-5027

Body Positive North West
"Helpline"
Info, advice and counselling by people who are HIV positive
Tuesday's & Thursday's from 7.00pm till 10.00pm
061-839-2440 also has 24hr answerphone

Body Positive Glasgow
P.O. Box 190, Glasgow G4 9QU. Call 041-353-3130
Mondays & Wednesdays 1pm till 4pm

Drop in
Tuesday's 1pm till 6pm & Thursdays 10am till 12pm
For more information call: 061-839-8456 or 061-839-4340

Manchester AIDSLine
"Telephone Helpline"
Monday to Friday from 7.00pm till 10.00pm 061-839-2442

Manchester AIDSLine
"Careers"
For lovers, Family, and friends of people living with HIV-AIDS or who have died of AIDS. Call 061-839-4340

Welfare Rights Advice
For people living with HIV-AIDS
Call Blake Dobson on 061-839-8456

National AIDS Helpline 24hrs calls are free on: 0800-567-123

Hearing impaired
Body Positive North West & Manchester AIDSLine uses a Minicom on Helpline numbers

OPEN HOUSE PROJECT
Are you interested in being involved in the developement of your future care? We are developing a facility to provide respite, convalescent and terminal care to HIV positive people in the North West. Why not come to the next meeting on March 25th 7.30pm at George House, and let us have your input

Volunteers Needed

Body Positive North West is looking for Volunteers to help make life a little easier for people with HIV disease.

Area's we need help in:

•Transportation to and from Meetings
•Drop in Volunteers (Meet & Greet)
•Vounteers with telephone skills
•Cleaning
•Volunteers with Administrative skills
•Transportation to and from Medical appointments
•Catering Services (Meal Preparation for Drop In)
•Volunteers with publicity and or Fund-raising skills
•Volunteers to help look after children
•Volunteers with computer skills

Experience is not necessary so if you feel you can help please Give Geoff Lilley a call on:

061-839-8456

If you wish to advertise your services or groups on this page, please write to: Positive Voice Newsletter C/O Body Positive North West, P.O. Box 201, Manchester M60 1PU

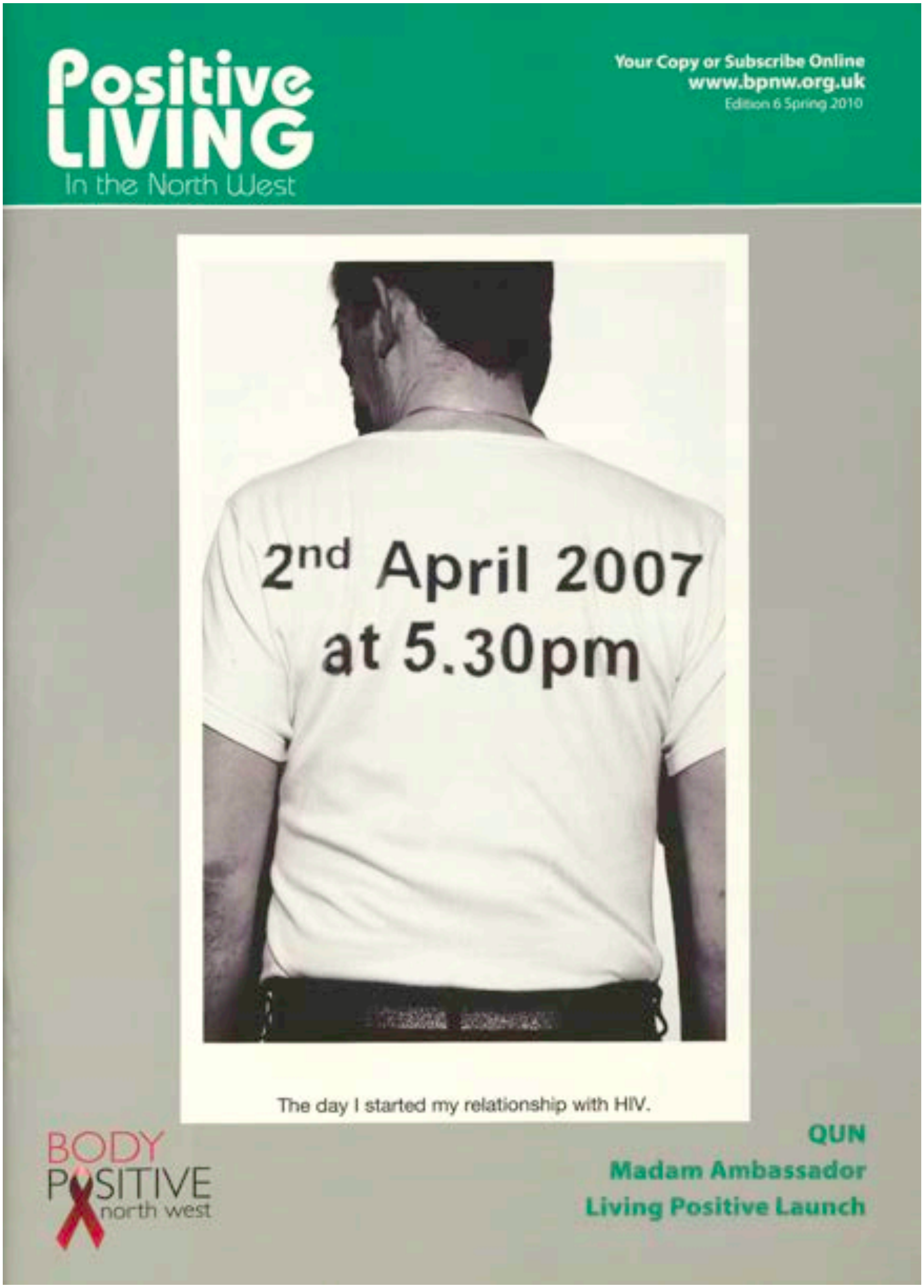
A self help and
service provision group
for people
affected by
HIV Disease
in the North West.

BODY POSITIVE
NORTH WEST
P.O. Box 185
Manchester M60 2DD

Registered charity No. 1002475
Private Limited Co. No. 2594770

Cover of leaflet promoting Body Positive's services, early 1990s

> "It was very rewarding but left me with a lot of sadness. I was pretty burnt out by the end – there was a lot of trauma. Many people I got close to passed away – not just one or two, but twenty or thirty I worked with long term and got to know, and became very fond of."
>
> **TINA THREADGOLD**
> **Former community care worker, Body Positive North West**



Positive
LIVING
In the North West

Your Copy or Subscribe Online
www.bpnw.org.uk
Edition 6 Spring 2010

2nd April 2007
at 5.30pm

The day I started my relationship with HIV.

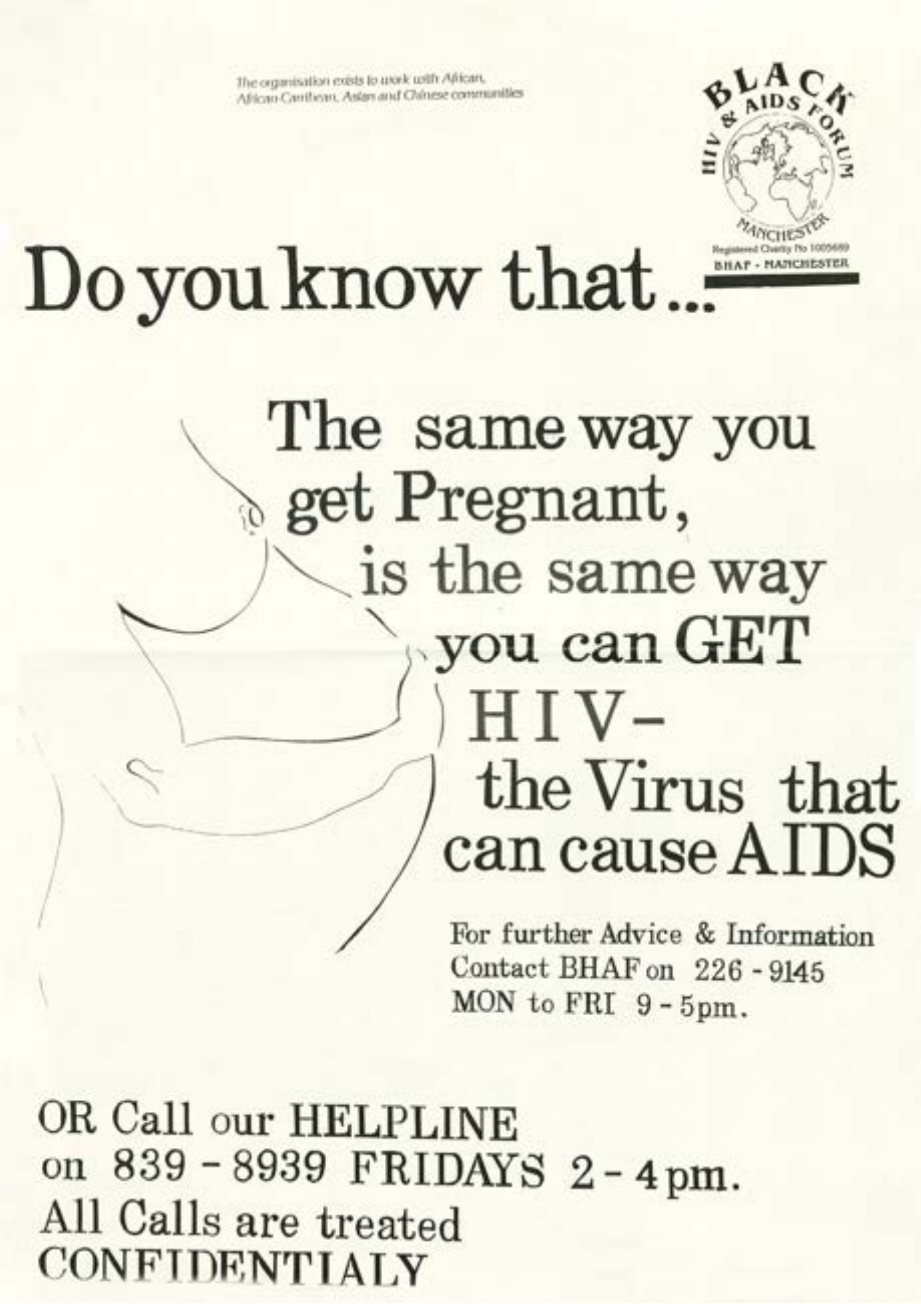
BODY
POSITIVE
north west

QUN
Madam Ambassador
Living Positive Launch

Spring 2010 edition of Body Positive's magazine

BLACK HIV AND AIDS FORUM

The Black HIV and AIDS Forum (BHAF) was set up in 1990 to provide support to Black and minority ethnic communities in Manchester affected by HIV and AIDS. BHAF offered culturally sensitive materials, a befriending scheme, and information packs for non-English speakers. The organisation relaunched as the Black Health Agency in 2002 and now operates as BHA For Equality. ■



The organisation exists to work with African, African Caribbean, Asian and Chinese communities

BLACK HIV & AIDS FORUM
MANCHESTER
Registered Charity No 1005689
BHAF - MANCHESTER

Do you know that...

The same way you
get Pregnant,
is the same way
you can GET
HIV–
the Virus that
can cause AIDS

For further Advice & Information
Contact BHAF on 226 - 9145
MON to FRI 9 - 5pm.

OR Call our HELPLINE
on 839 - 8939 FRIDAYS 2 - 4pm.
All Calls are treated
CONFIDENTIALY

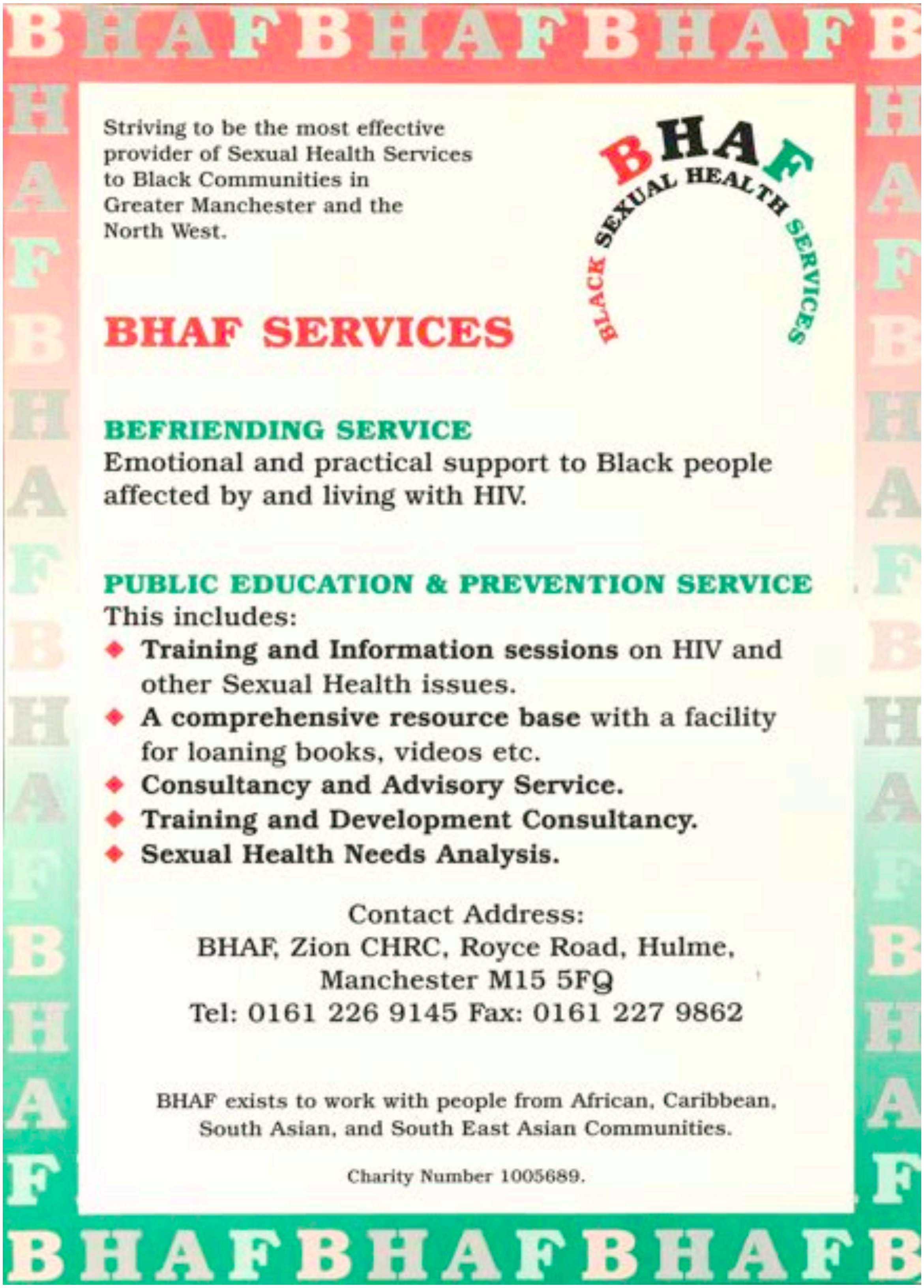
Black HIV and AIDS Forum poster, early 1990s

Black HIV and AIDS Forum team with banner, early/mid 1990s

> “The organisers said: ‘Let’s set up a group. Come up if you want to be a volunteer to talk about HIV within these communities.’ I put my hand up and said: ‘I’m going to go and be part of this angry conversation – we need to be angry, but we need to do something about it.’”

PRISCILLA NKWENTI

Former volunteer and first paid worker, Black HIV and AIDS Forum



Striving to be the most effective
provider of Sexual Health Services
to Black Communities in
Greater Manchester and the
North West.

BHAF
BLACK SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES

BHAF SERVICES

BEFRIENDING SERVICE

Emotional and practical support to Black people affected by and living with HIV.

PUBLIC EDUCATION & PREVENTION SERVICE

This includes:

- **Training and Information sessions** on HIV and other Sexual Health issues.
- **A comprehensive resource base** with a facility for loaning books, videos etc.
- **Consultancy and Advisory Service.**
- **Training and Development Consultancy.**
- **Sexual Health Needs Analysis.**

Contact Address:
BHAF, Zion CHRC, Royce Road, Hulme,
Manchester M15 5FQ
Tel: 0161 226 9145 Fax: 0161 227 9862

BHAF exists to work with people from African, Caribbean, South Asian, and South East Asian Communities.

Charity Number 1005689.

Black HIV and AIDS Forum flyer, early/mid 1990s

ACT UP MANCHESTER

The Manchester chapter of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, founded in New York in 1987) was established in 1990. It organised protests and actions all over the city, from Texaco petrol stations to the Town Hall. The group described its formation as a 'response to the complacency, ignorance and discrimination shown by the government, the medical profession, insurance companies and the legal system towards people with AIDS and HIV'. ■

AIDS KILLS WOMEN TOO

Over 1800 women have AIDS or are HIV positive in this country. Over 700 through sex with men.

USE A CONDOM ...OR BEAT IT

FIGHT AIDS - FIGHT BACK

ACT UP Manchester flyer, early 1990s

ACT UP Manchester members protesting the lack of AIDS education in schools, early 1990s

> "I was involved in ACT UP Manchester. We were a non-violent direct-action group; we dropped 40-foot banners from the Town Hall (Action = Life, Silence = Death), threw condoms over the walls at Strangeways Prison, and campaigned against the inaction of the government. ACT UP was all about lying in the road, telephone-blocking, fax-zapping, letter-writing, informing, condom-dropping, researching, lobbying, talking, shouting, screaming, stickering, misbehaving, lying-in, dying-in, painting, retaliating, creating and having fun. Although ACT UP Manchester was only active for about two years, the activism contributed significantly to the city's strong HIV/AIDS support network and overall LGBT+ rights legacy."
>
> **TONY OPENSHAW**

ACT-UP

Manchester

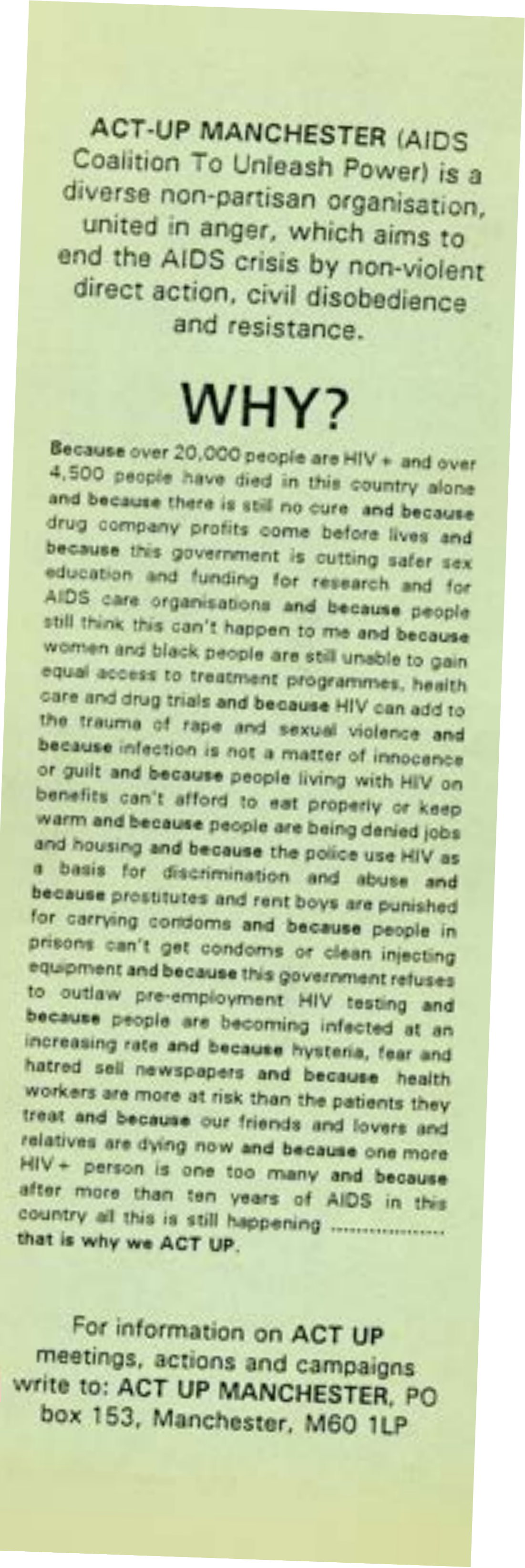
meet every

first

Monday of the month.

Manchester Town Hall @

7.30pm.



ACT-UP MANCHESTER (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power) is a diverse non-partisan organisation, united in anger, which aims to end the AIDS crisis by non-violent direct action, civil disobedience and resistance.

WHY?

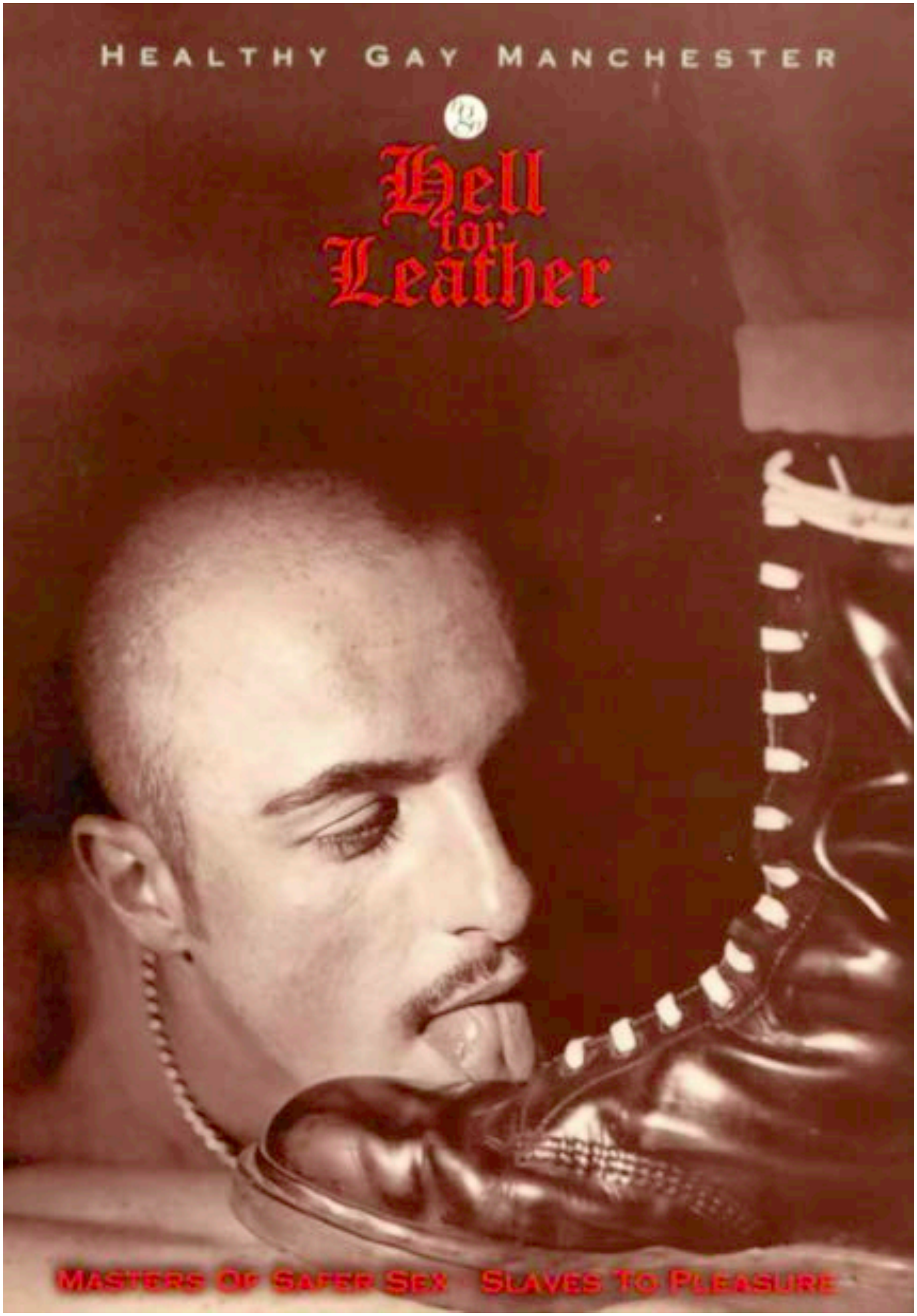
Because over 20,000 people are HIV + and over 4,500 people have died in this country alone **and because** there is still no cure **and because** drug company profits come before lives **and because** this government is cutting safer sex education and funding for research and for AIDS care organisations **and because** people still think this can't happen to me **and because** women and black people are still unable to gain equal access to treatment programmes, health care and drug trials **and because** HIV can add to the trauma of rape and sexual violence **and because** infection is not a matter of innocence or guilt **and because** people living with HIV on benefits can't afford to eat properly or keep warm **and because** people are being denied jobs and housing **and because** the police use HIV as a basis for discrimination and abuse **and because** prostitutes and rent boys are punished for carrying condoms **and because** people in prisons can't get condoms or clean injecting equipment **and because** this government refuses to outlaw pre-employment HIV testing **and because** people are becoming infected at an increasing rate **and because** hysteria, fear and hatred sell newspapers **and because** health workers are more at risk than the patients they treat **and because** our friends and lovers and relatives are dying now **and because** one more HIV + person is one too many **and because** after more than ten years of AIDS in this country all this is still happening .... **that is why we ACT UP**.

For information on **ACT UP** meetings, actions and campaigns write to: **ACT UP MANCHESTER**, PO box 153, Manchester, M60 1LP

ACT UP Manchester flyers, early 1990s

HEALTHY GAY MANCHESTER

Healthy Gay Manchester originally grew out of MESMAC Manchester. Founded in 1994, it offered a direct and locally-focused approach to HIV prevention for gay and bisexual men. HGM produced safe-sex literature that was defiantly sex positive and members of the group took to the streets to distribute condom and lube packs in venues across the city. The organisation later merged with the Manchester Lesbian and Gay Switchboard to become the Lesbian and Gay Foundation, now the LGBT Foundation. ■



Healthy Gay Manchester mini flyer, mid 1990s

Healthy Gay Manchester leaflet, 1990s

> "Trying to create a really sex-positive environment was very important – men had to learn the language of sex to stay alive. We had to find new ways to talk about sex. Condoms were completely alien to gay men. They didn't have to worry about family planning, and sexually transmitted infections were an occupational hazard. But suddenly, things changed."

PAUL MARTIN OBE
Chief Executive Officer of LGBT Foundation and former Development Officer at Manchester MESMAC

healthy gay manchester

WORLD AIDS DAY

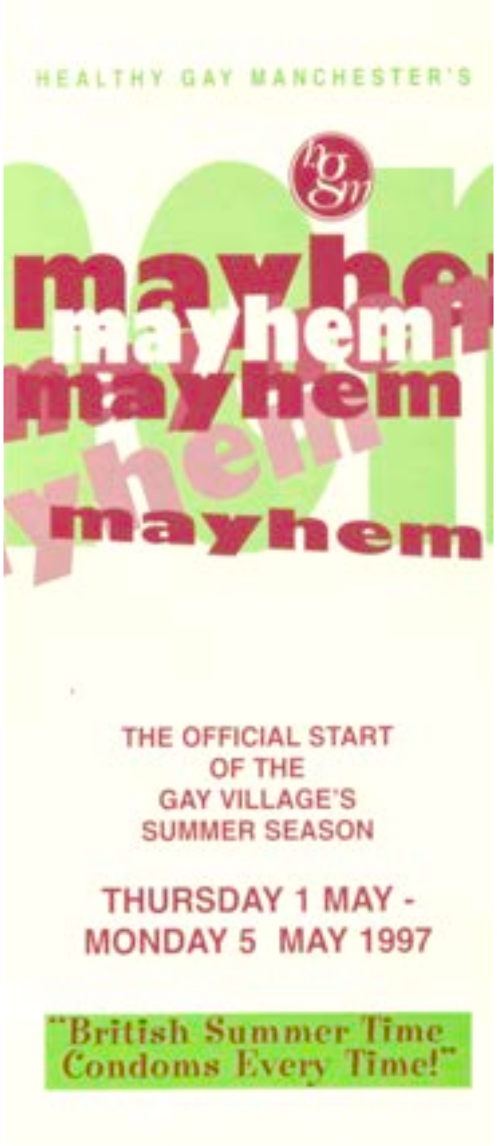
hgm

World Aids Day

GAY VILLAGE EVENTS
25th November - 2nd December
1995

Respect Your Sex
Use Condoms & Lube

Healthy Gay Manchester flyers for events in the Gay Village, 1990s



HEALTHY GAY MANCHESTER'S

hgm

mayhem
mayhem
mayhem
mayhem

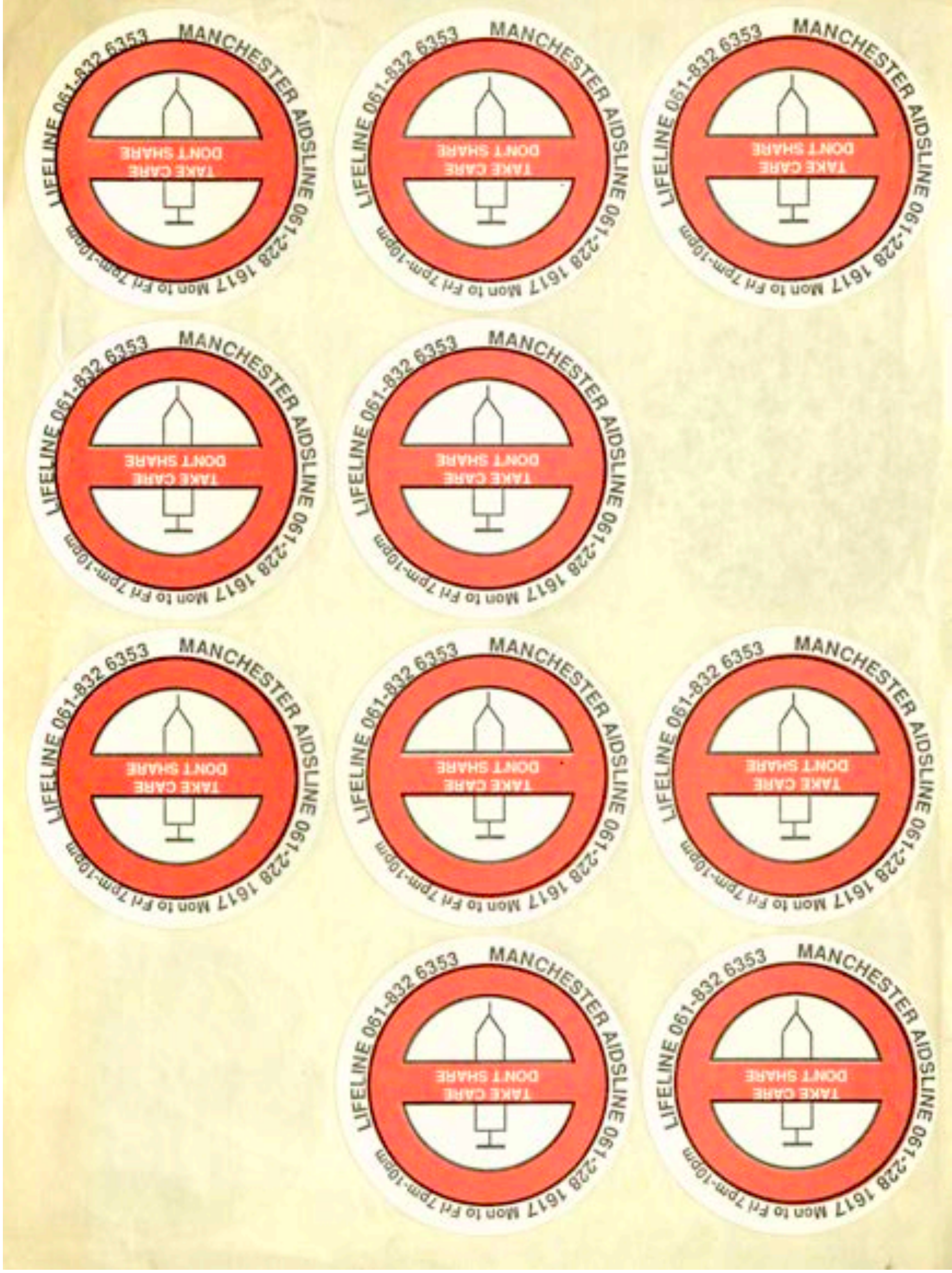
THE OFFICIAL START
OF THE
GAY VILLAGE'S
SUMMER SEASON

THURSDAY 1 MAY -
MONDAY 5 MAY 1997

"British Summer Time
Condoms Every Time!"

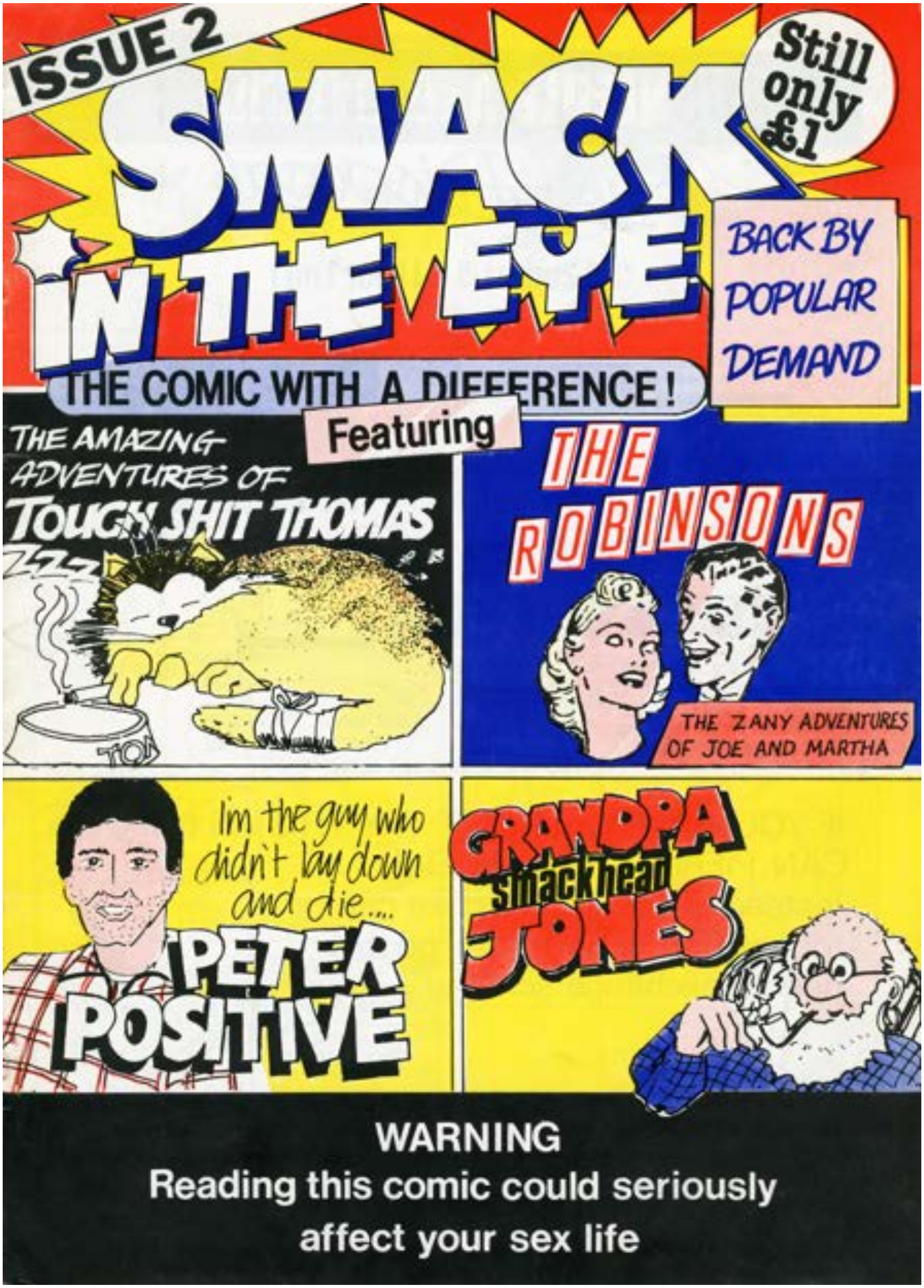
LIFELINE

Lifeline was a Manchester-based charity established in 1971, which provided support and advice to drug users. In response to HIV/AIDS it pioneered a harm reduction approach to safer drug use and safer sex. Artist Michael Linnell started working for Lifeline in the mid-1980s. He produced comics such as Smack in the Eye which used humour and a radically open approach to share information on HIV prevention with vulnerable groups, such as heroin users and sex workers. ■



Lifeline and Manchester AIDSline stickers, mid/late 1980s

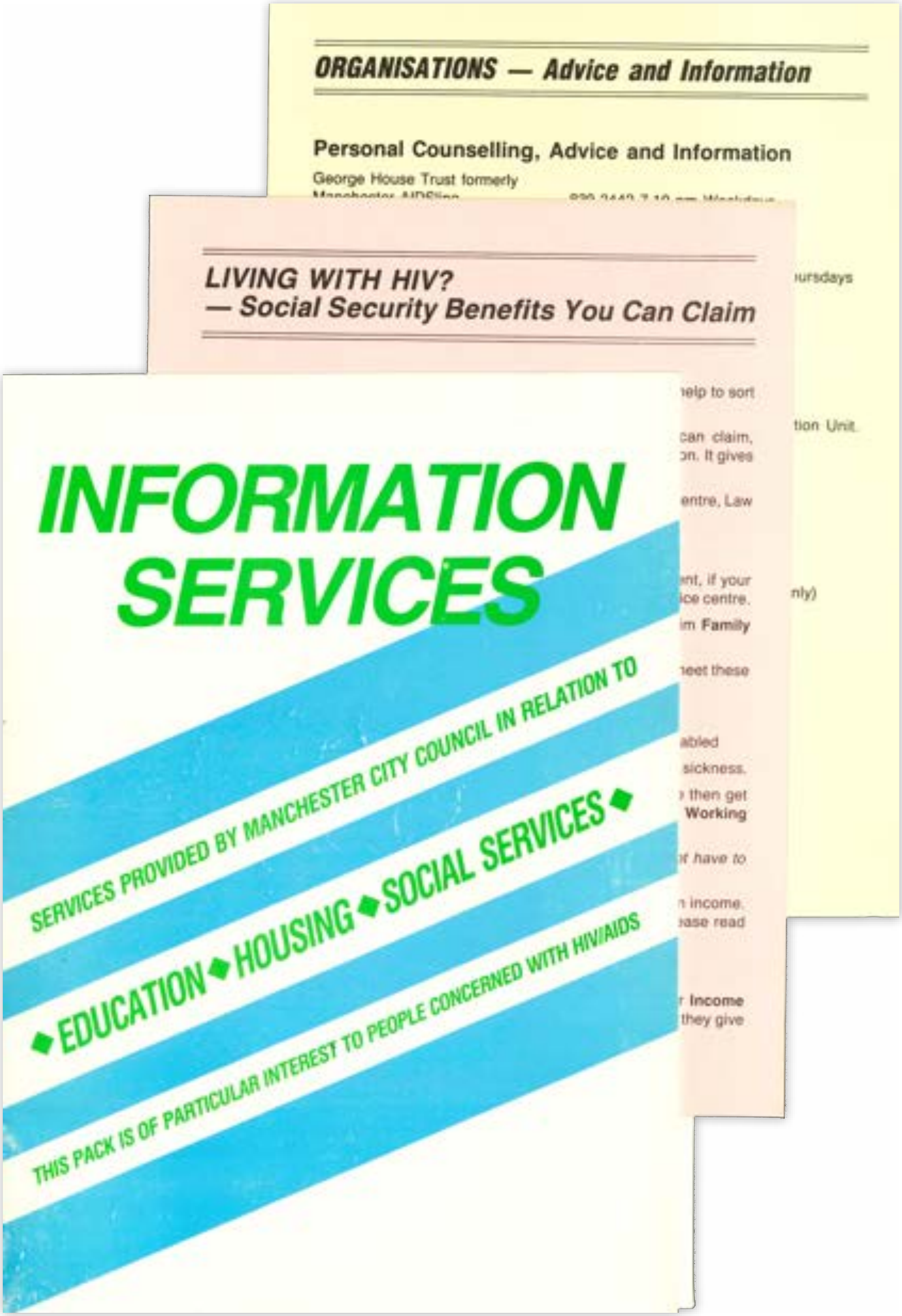
> “It was talking to those individual target audiences and finding out what the practicalities were. I did quite a few with street sex workers, both male and female, and again it was understanding the world from their point of view, portraying them as they wanted to be portrayed – not necessarily how they looked, but how they wanted to be portrayed. It was a way of tapping into that humour to put across the messages. The process was brand new at the time, treating the audience with respect and aiming it at the audience it was aimed at.”
>
> **MICHAEL LINNELL**



Cover of Smack in the Eye issue 2, 1988

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Manchester's response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic was particularly strong. This was perhaps a result of the city having a thriving gay village and a history of LGBT+ activism stretching back decades. In 1985 **Manchester City Council** established an AIDS Working Party and appointed two Gay Men's Officers and two Lesbians' Officers. The behind-the-scenes work carried out by local government and regional health authorities in Greater Manchester laid critical foundations. ■



ORGANISATIONS — Advice and Information

Personal Counselling, Advice and Information

George House Trust formerly

LIVING WITH HIV?
— Social Security Benefits You Can Claim

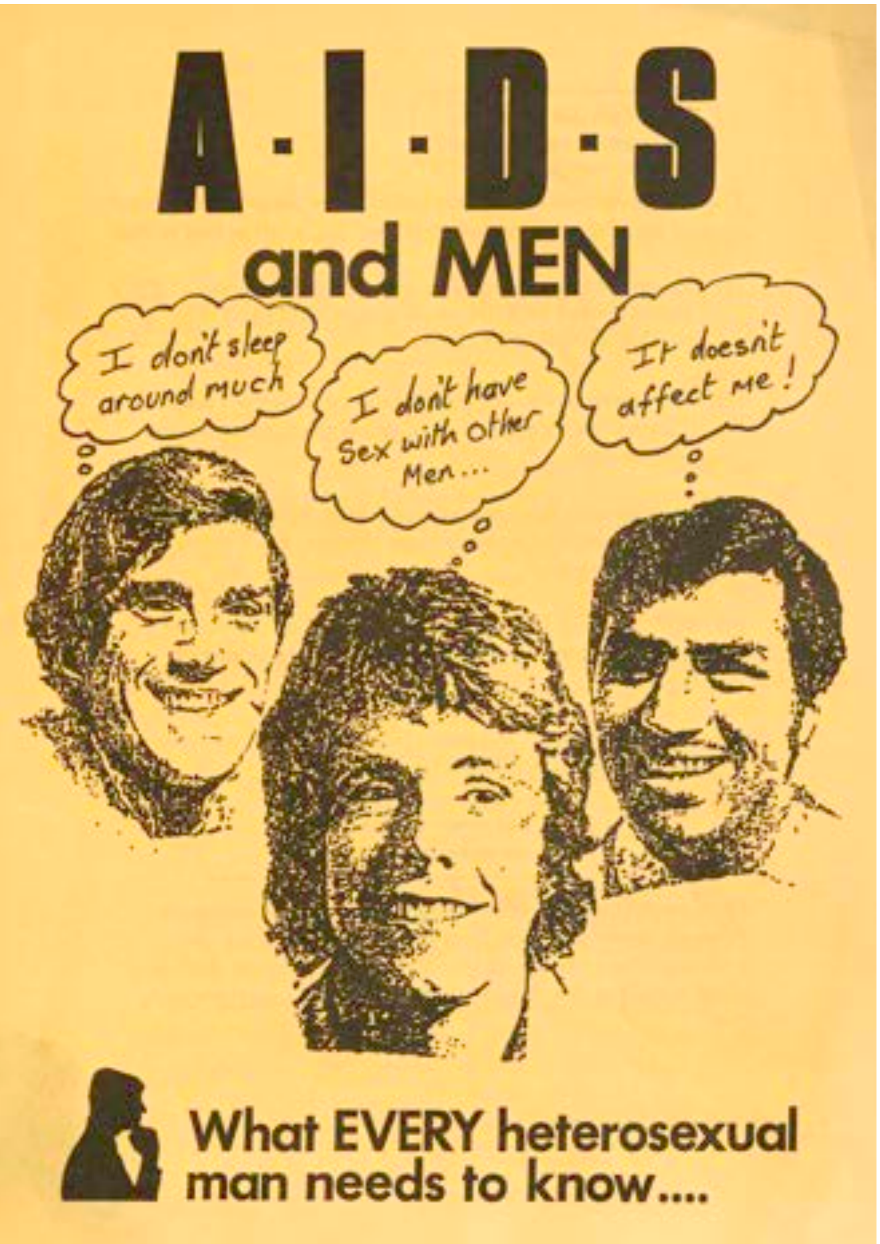
INFORMATION SERVICES

SERVICES PROVIDED BY MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL IN RELATION TO

◆ EDUCATION ◆ HOUSING ◆ SOCIAL SERVICES ◆

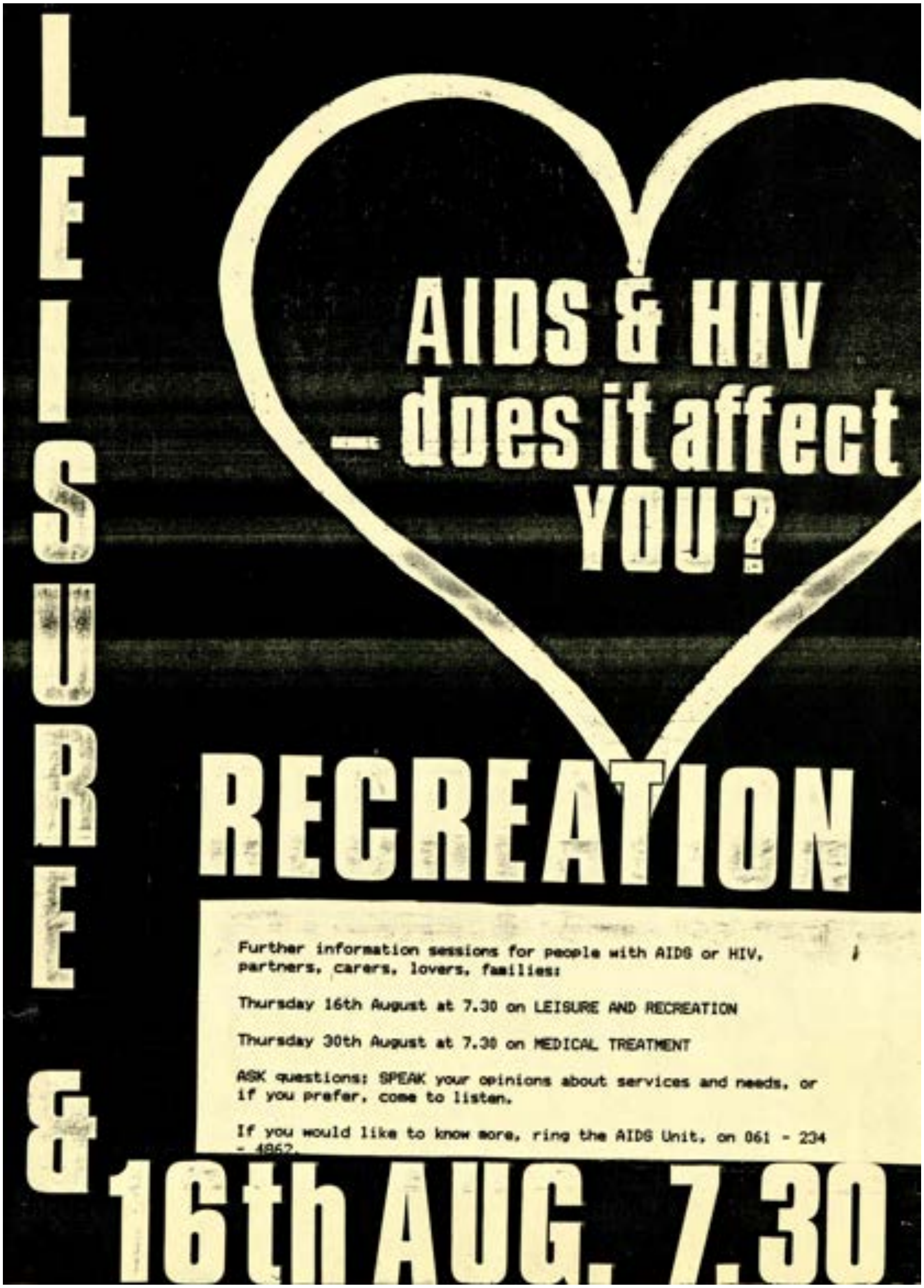
THIS PACK IS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO PEOPLE CONCERNED WITH HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS info services pack produced by Manchester City Council, early/mid 1990s



Flyer for heterosexual men produced by North Manchester Health Promotion in collaboration with Manchester AIDSline, mid/late 1980s

> "There's something about Manchester that's quite community focused. I'm sure that's why the Council was more forward-thinking about stuff like needle exchanges and establishing an AIDS Unit. Instead of 'no', they said 'why not?'"
>
> **JANET MANTLE**
> **Former health promotion specialist**



LEISURE &

AIDS & HIV – does it affect YOU?

RECREATION

Further information sessions for people with AIDS or HIV, partners, carers, lovers, families:

Thursday 16th August at 7.30 on LEISURE AND RECREATION

Thursday 30th August at 7.30 on MEDICAL TREATMENT

ASK questions: SPEAK your opinions about services and needs, or if you prefer, come to listen.

If you would like to know more, ring the AIDS Unit, on 061 - 234 - 4862.

16th AUG. 7.30

Flyer produced by Manchester City Council’s AIDS Unit, late 1980s/early 1990s

4

GEORGE HOUSE TRUST ARCHIVE

CATALOGUING THE ARCHIVE

RICHARD SCARBOROUGH

Volunteering to help with cataloguing George House Trust's extensive archive was an emotional rollercoaster of memories from the last 40 years. Stored in a room full of boxes were 40 years of minutes of meetings, memorabilia from campaigns, official publications, photographs from events and celebrations and much more all waiting to be discovered. I was one of the group of volunteers who were trained to sort

through the archive and catalogue the items using a catalogue structure that we developed. The training covered the practicalities to preserve items like removing paper clips that could rust and damage paper, wrapping items in archive grade tissue and packaging them up. What initially sounded like a fairly mundane task proved to be anything but. Several of us volunteers had lived through the history that we were uncovering and many archiving sessions were spent discussing the items we found and the memories we associated with them. Memories of good times, of places and people including those we knew and lost. Perhaps surprisingly, my overall memory of the archiving sessions was how much fun we had reminiscing. During one session we were looking at campaign materials which we laid out on a large table to sort into the different

> “Volunteering to help with cataloguing George House Trust’s extensive archive was an emotional rollercoaster of memories from the last 40 years.”

campaigns and put into a chronological order based on limited information and our recollections. Looking across decades of campaigns was both heartening to think about how far we've come with treatment and prevention but also frustrating that some themes, like stigma, are still so relevant today.

During our training we got our first chance to look at items in the archive.

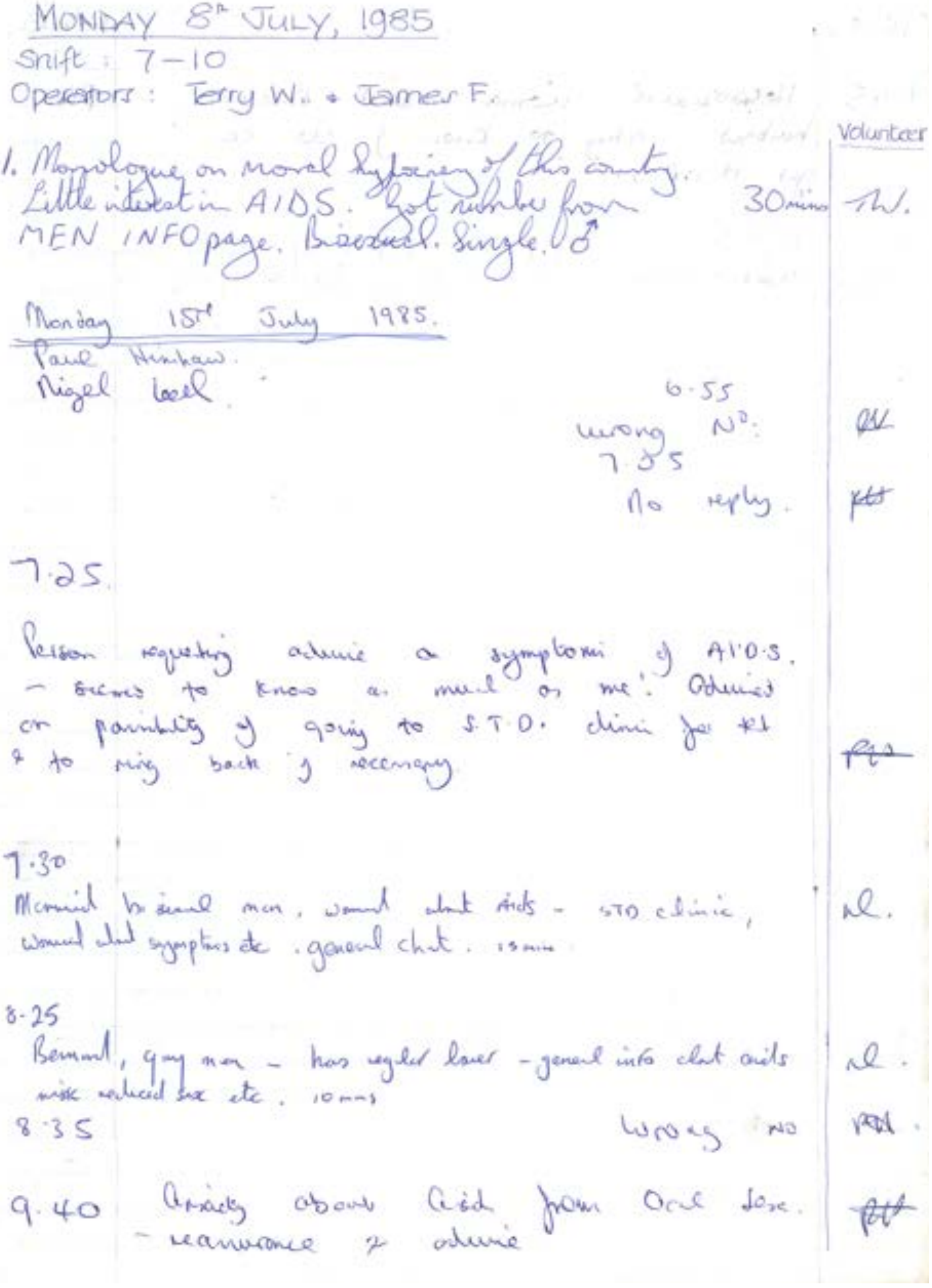
The first item I sought out was a memorial book for people that died of AIDS. I looked through the pages to find my partner Paul John Higson who died in 1996, passing the names of many others who I remembered as I turned the pages. That simple album felt so precious and important. It was a real honour to catalogue the album, wrap it in protective tissue and nestle it into its archive box. ■

> "I looked through the pages to find my partner Paul John Higson who died in 1996, passing the names of many others who I remembered as I turned the pages."

MANCHESTER AIDSLINE LOGBOOKS

"In 1985 I was part of the small group that started Manchester AIDSline. Setting up a community helpline is rarely easy – there's usually little money for publicity and very few calls at the beginning. The real test is staying motivated, and we did, knowing the need for reliable information was enormous. What George House Trust has gone on to achieve is inspirational. From small beginnings, projects that help tens of thousands of people can grow." ■

TERRY WALLER



MONDAY 8th JULY, 1985
Shift: 7–10
Operators: Terry W. + James F.

Volunteer

1. Monologue on moral hypocrisy of this country. Little interest in AIDS. Got number from MEN INFO page. Bisexual. Single. ♂ 30mins TW.

Monday 15th July 1985.
Paul Hinshaw.
Nigel Leel.

6.55 wrong No.

7.05 No reply.

7.25.

Person requesting advice on symptoms of A.I.D.S. – seems to know as much as me! Advised on possibility of going to S.T.D. clinic for test & to ring back if necessary.

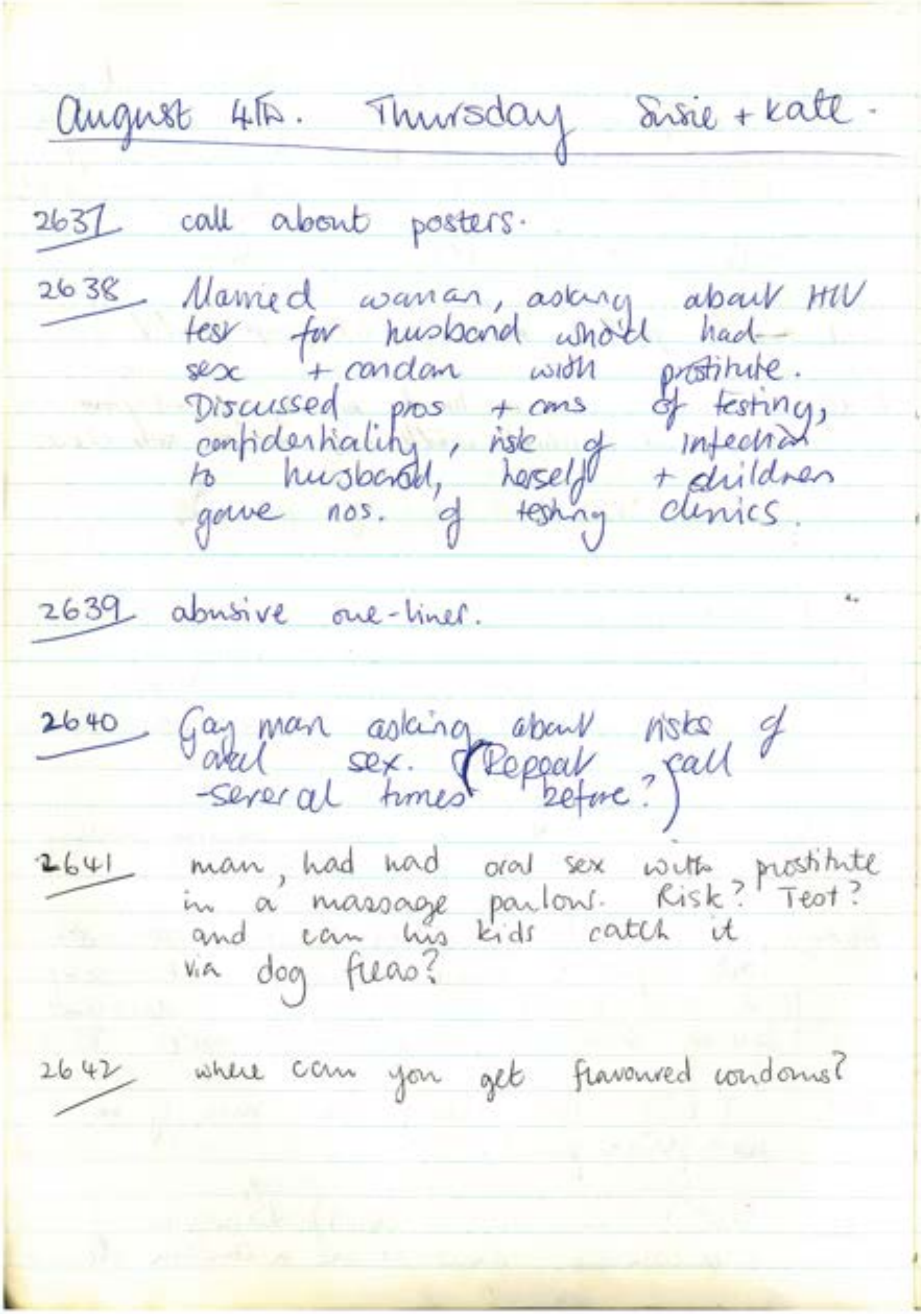
7.30
Married bisexual man, worried about Aids – STD clinic, worried about symptoms etc. general chat. 15 min. NL.

8-25
Bernard, gay man – has regular lover – general info about aids risk reduced sex etc. 10 mins NL.

8.35 Wrong No

9.40 Anxiety about Aids from Oral Sex. – reassurance & advice

First page from Manchester AIDSline log book 1, July 1985



August 4th. Thursday Susie + Kate.

2637 call about posters.

2638 Married woman, asking about HIV test for husband who'd had sex + condom with prostitute. Discussed pros + cons of testing, confidentiality, risk of infection to husband, herself + children gave nos. of testing clinics.

2639 abusive one-liner.

2640 Gay man asking about risks of anal sex. (Repeat call -several times before?)

2641 man, had had oral sex with prostitute in a massage parlour. Risk? Test? and can his kids catch it via dog fleas?

2642 where can you get flavoured condoms?

Pages from Manchester AIDSline log book 4, August 1988

Friday August 5th. Steve H + John B.

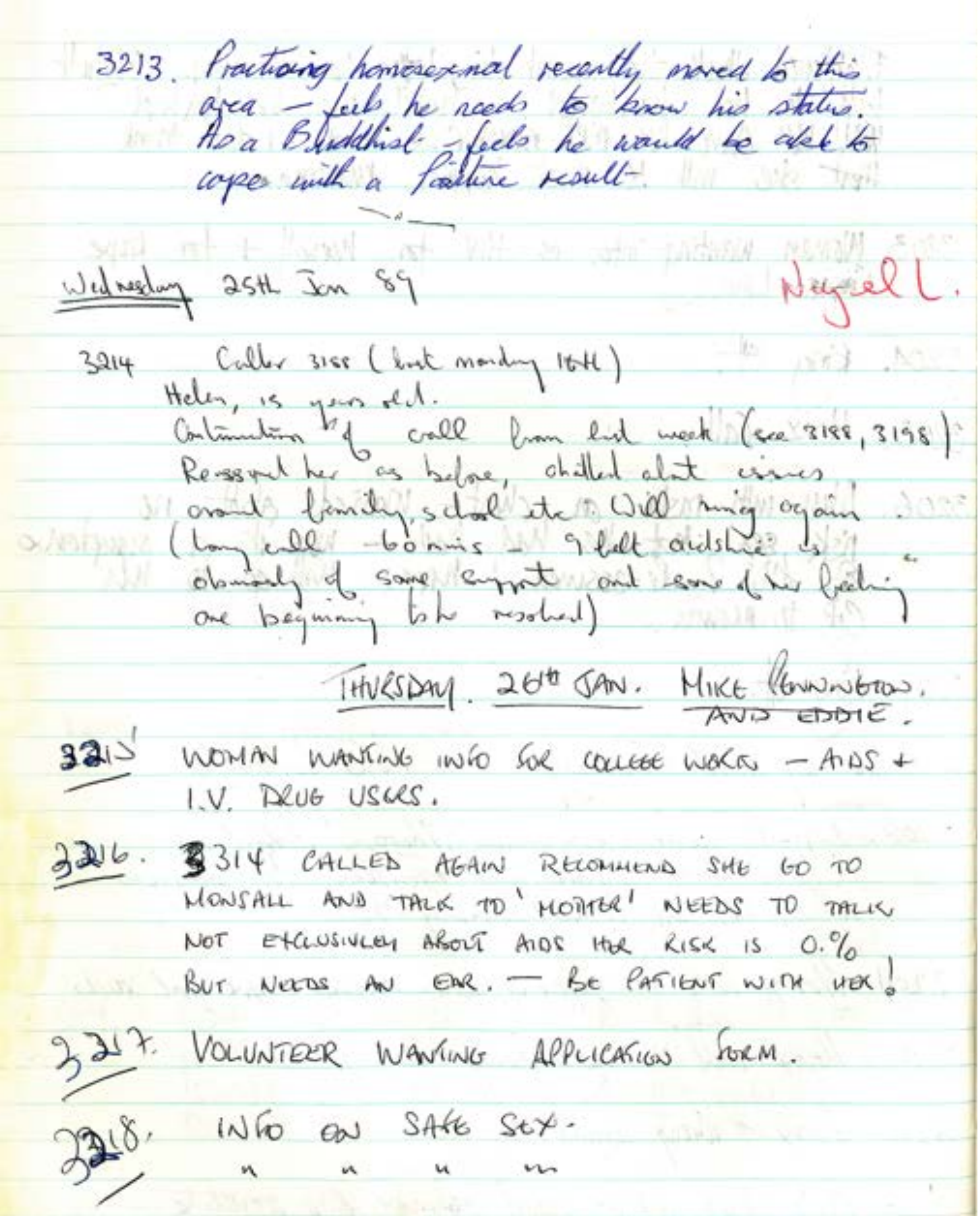
2643 Short call from ♂ concerned about possibility of AIDS because of a relationship (ended 4 yrs ago) with ♀ whose husband travelled to middle east periodically. had to end call as someone could overhear his conversation.

2644 Rang off.

2645 Gordon rang.

2645 Rang off.

2646 Woman who has just found out her son has A.I.D.S. - he's been in South Africa for 6 years, and is now being flown home because of this. She had spoken to T.H.T. and they gave her our number. Spoke about support and told her about Family Support + Frontliners - gave her B.P. no. to phone about there. Also suggested Chester as it's nearer her home - she has their no. Talked about family, fears etc. - very distressed. John B. to contact someone in Chester re. support and then to write to her (she



3213. Practising homosexual recently moved to this area – feels he needs to know his status. As a Buddhist – feels he would be able to cope with a Positive result.

Wednesday 25th Jan 89 Nigel L.

3214 Caller 3188 (last monday 16th)
Helen, 15 years old.
Continuation of call from last week (see 3188, 3198)
Reassured her as before, chatted about issues around family, school etc. Will ring again.
(long call – 60 mins – I felt AIDSline is obviously of some support and some of her feelings are beginning to be resolved)

THURSDAY. 26th JAN. MIKE PENNINGTON. ~~AND EDDIE.~~

3215 WOMAN WANTING INFO FOR COLLEGE WORK – AIDS + I.V. DRUG USERS.

3216. 3314 CALLED AGAIN RECOMMEND SHE GO TO MONSALL AND TALK TO 'MOTHER' NEEDS TO TALK NOT EXCLUSIVELY ABOUT AIDS HER RISK IS 0.% BUT NEEDS AN EAR. — BE PATIENT WITH HER!

3217. VOLUNTEER WANTING APPLICATION FORM.

3218. INFO ON SAFE SEX.
" " " "

Pages from Manchester AIDSline log book 4, January 1989

Friday 27th Jan Dave & Andrea

③②①⑨ Mother wanted details of testing centres
- ~~North~~ M/C re son - suggested contact Monsall
Not willing to discuss further - hadn't made up her mind

3220 ~~2320~~ Nigel phoned.

3221 ~~2321~~ Male enquiring re testing clinics in the Manchester / Salford area.

MONDAY 30-1-89 Sara

3222
~~2322~~ - Man worried about prostitute giving him "hand relief" and risks involved
re-assured

3223
~~2323~~ - Gay man risks of Oral Sex

3224 - Mike Jones rang doing doing project wanting more info

3225 - Woman wanting to be vol.

3226 - Man thinking he might have Chlamadia? ← spelling

3227 Woman who's brother HIV+ discussed Fam Supp + BP+

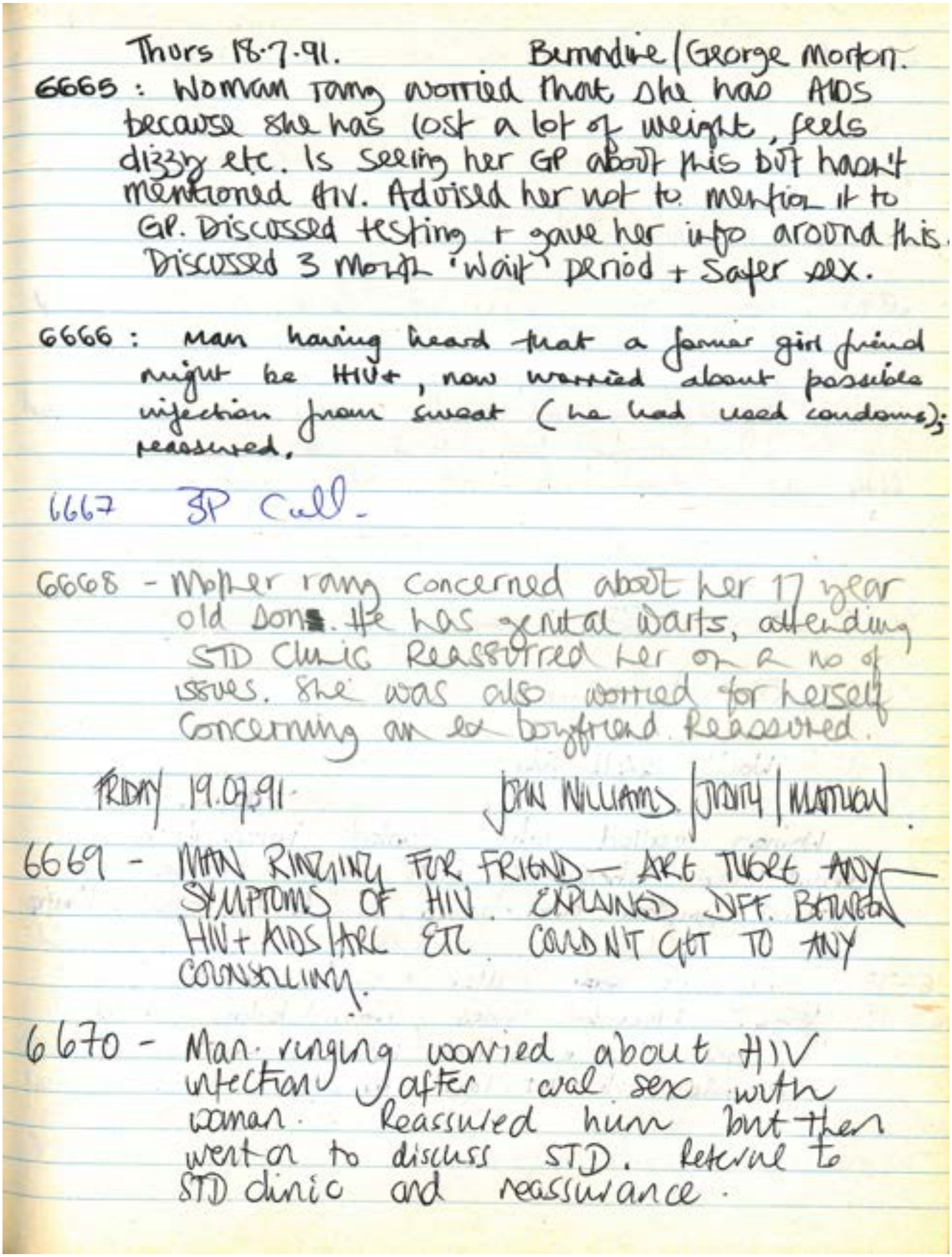
“This experience has been my lifelong touchstone. Whenever self-doubt crept in, I remembered: we built this from nothing against impossible odds”

“While the 1980s AIDS crisis was a grim period, it was also a time of incredible community resilience. The story of Manchester AIDSline’s founding—a true, grassroots response—holds powerful lessons that remain vitally relevant today. Many of the organisations that helped us are gone, but I have found that if you don’t ask, you don’t get. People you thought would run from any association with HIV/AIDS turned out to be absolute stars.

Working with Dr. Joyce Leeson and medical photographer Clive Preece—long before the age of the internet, TikTok, and Instagram—MAL produced the UK’s first safe-sex videos. We filmed one at the Archway Club and another at North Manchester Hospital, with the latter focusing on safety protocols for staff and patients. These videos were broadcast on television and copies even found their way onto the HMS Ark Royal aircraft carrier. I recall a wonderfully odd letter from the captain—now sadly lost—which noted, “You never know—we might need them!”

This episode encapsulates just one of my many experiences as the first Chair of MAL. To paraphrase Oscar Wilde: the truth about HIV and AIDS in the 1980s was rarely simple and never dull, and “to live is the rarest thing in the world.” I consider myself lucky to have contributed to the foundation of what we now know as George House Trust. This experience has been my lifelong touchstone. Whenever self-doubt crept in, I remembered: we built this from nothing against impossible odds. That perspective has driven me to contribute however I can ever since.” ■

JOHN BROWNE
First Chair of Manchester AIDS Line



Thurs 18.7.91. Bernadine / George Morton.

6665 : Woman rang worried that she has AIDS because she has lost a lot of weight, feels dizzy etc. Is seeing her GP about this but hasn't mentioned HIV. Advised her not to mention it to GP. Discussed testing + gave her info around this. Discussed 3 month 'wait' period + safer sex.

6666 : Man having heard that a former girl friend might be HIV+, now worried about possible infection from sweat (he had used condoms); reassured.

6667 BP Call.

6668 - Mother rang concerned about her 17 year old son. He has genital warts, attending STD clinic. Reassured her on a no of issues. She was also worried for herself concerning an ex boyfriend. Reassured.

FRIDAY 19.07.91. JOHN WILLIAMS / JONTY / MATTHEW.

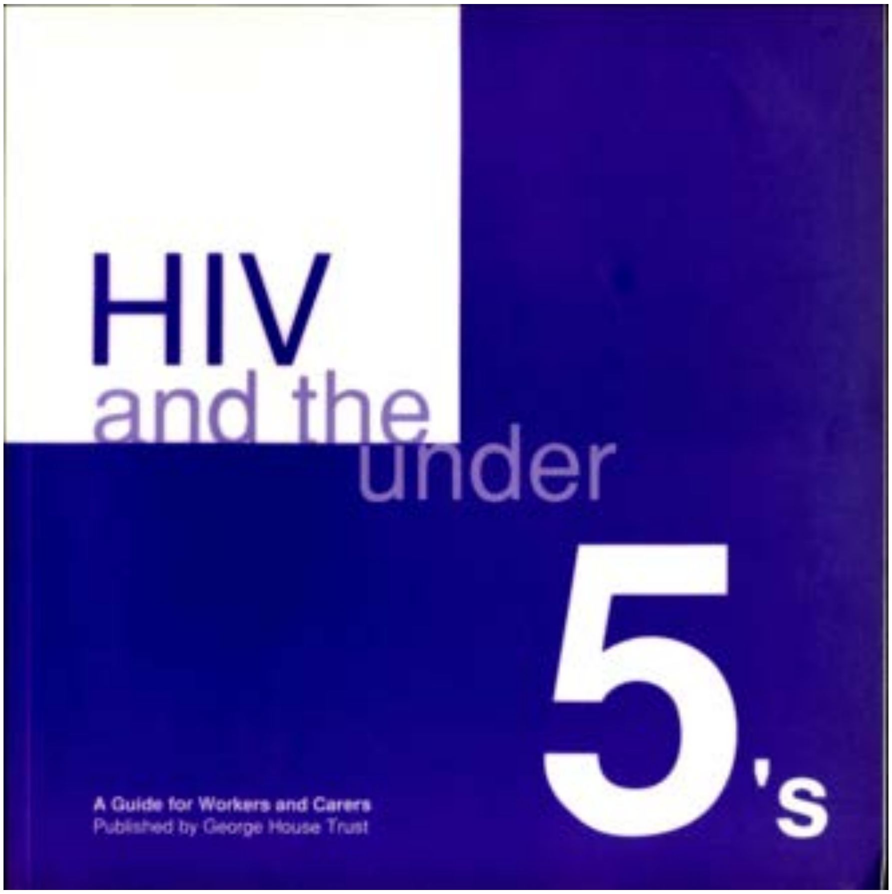
6669 - MAN RINGING FOR FRIEND — ARE THERE ANY SYMPTOMS OF HIV. EXPLAINED DIFF. BETWEEN HIV + AIDS/ARC ETC. COULDN'T GET TO ANY COUNSELLING.

6670 - Man ringing worried about HIV infection after oral sex with woman. Reassured him but then went on to discuss STD. Referral to STD clinic and reassurance.

Page from Manchester AIDSline log book 6, July 1991

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GEORGE HOUSE TRUST ARCHIVE

Poster c.1990



Guide for workers and carers by George House Trust, c. 1989

10 actions on HIV

for the new Parliament

1 **National HIV Strategy**
IMPLEMENT a National HIV Strategy setting out how the country will tackle HIV in the future. Give HIV its own Strategy not just tagged-on to a sexual health strategy.

2 **Repeal Section 28**
REPEAL the homophobic Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act which discourages effective HIV education. Give schools guidance to ensure all children receive effective sex-education.

3 **Rights for People with HIV**
SECURE the rights of people with HIV through equality and disability legislation. Ensure that people with HIV are not discriminated against in employment, financial services, travel, healthcare and in law.

4 **Don't Criminalise HIV+ People**
END the use of courts to criminalise people with HIV - no forcible testing, no prosecutions for HIV transmission

5 **Rights for HIV+ Asylum Seekers**
GIVE asylum seekers with HIV access to healthcare and support. End the disgraceful voucher system.

6 **HIV Prevention that Works.**
TARGET HIV prevention resources effectively on communities most affected by HIV such as gay men, not the uneccessary routine testing of all pregnant women.

7 **Support for People with HIV**
ENSURE quality support for people with HIV with long term funding of voluntary organisations, HIV health services and HIV social services.

8 **Tackle Third World Debt**
REDUCE the burden of debt owed by developing countries and increase international aid to 0.7% of GDP - enabling all countries to tackle HIV.

9 **Make Medicines Affordable**
ENABLE all HIV+ people in developing countries to have access to HIV drugs though local production and patent law reform.

10 **Tackle HIV Worldwide**
WORK internationally to ensure a world-wide response to HIV including long term development of effective vaccines and prevention methods.

ght
george house trust
still life with HIV

Campaign flyer directed to the new Labour government, 1997

GHT/5/4/2

LESBIANS HIV and AIDS CONFERENCE

MANCHESTER TOWN HALL
27TH & 28TH APRIL, 1991

LIMITED PLACES BUT ALL LESBIANS WELCOME TO APPLY.

CRECHE FULL DISABLED ACCESS FREE

LESBIANS HIV and AIDS CONFERENCE

MANCHESTER TOWN HALL
27TH & 28TH APRIL, 1991

LIMITED PLACES BUT ALL LESBIANS WELCOME TO APPLY.

CRECHE FULL DISABLED ACCESS FREE

"I became involved in the Lesbians HIV and AIDS conference in 1991 as I had been one of the workers appointed to the North Manchester Women's Health Team when it was established in 1985. I'd also been on the planning group for the Northern Women's Health Conference in 1985 and some of the lesbian women from that group were involved in this conference.

The mid 80s and early 90s were a powerful time in the UK Women's Health movement. In the early 90s there was a lack of information and many myths around HIV transmission in relation to lesbians and sex/drug use. The conference aimed to be an inclusive and safe space to discuss our concerns, to support each other and to learn the facts about HIV.

There were many learning points that the planning group addressed, post conference, in relation to feedback from participants. One of the main issues that arose was around not creating a truly inclusive well-advertised conference encouraging Black women to attend and safely participate.

My personal memory of the weekend was that the majority of the women were, as usual, really up for being open, honest and vulnerable around sex and sexuality. There was a really good atmosphere and some amazing conversations." ■

SALLY CAWLEY

LESBIANS HIV and AIDS CONFERENCE

MANCHESTER TOWN HALL
27TH & 28TH APRIL, 1991

LIMITED PLACES BUT ALL LESBIANS WELCOME TO APPLY.

CRECHE **FULL DISABLED ACCESS** **FREE**

For an application form write to:
Lesbians & AIDS Group, PO Box 201, Manchester, M60 1PU

Opposite and previous pages: Images from the Lesbians' HIV and AIDS conference report, 1991

"I was involved in the planning group of eleven women who organised the Lesbians' HIV and AIDS conference in Manchester in April 1991. The idea for the conference came from a number of different strands. There was a recognition that there was little information on the risks attached to lesbian sexual activity for the transmission of the HIV virus. What information there was, was often conflicting and contradictory.

There had been several women's networking days at Manchester AIDSline in 1990 where the suggestion of a conference had been raised, backed by the women's group of AIDSline. Subsequently the AIDS Unit of Manchester City Council made £2000 available to Manchester AIDSline to fund it – along with a grant of £1780 from North West Regional Health Authority and £200 from Manchester City Council Equalities Unit. We also received £400 from Lesbian Link. The planning group had the benefit of a full-time worker at George House, which also served as a base for office support, postage, publicity and a venue for meetings.

The planning group spent many meetings discussing how to create a safe space for lesbians to feel open and comfortable in talking frankly about sexual practices. We decided the best way was to put conference participants into core groups which they would remain in throughout the two days. This would hopefully build trust and a sharing and safe environment. A lot of work was done to ensure that the conference was fully accessible. This included providing BSL signers, a crèche on both days, and full access details of the Town Hall and the venue for the social on Saturday night. We were also conscious of possible conflicts that might arise between those lesbians who identified as SM dykes and other women, and we put in place strategies for dealing with such conflicts. We drew up a clear set of ground rules which focused on confidentiality, respect, non-judgment, trigger warnings, and the responsibility of all women to make the conference work.

There was a lot of discussion both beforehand and during the conference about the use of dental dams, latex gloves, even cling film. This inspired some of the cartoons that one of the planning group did to illustrate the publicity. There was a display of sex toys alongside these safe sex items.

Most participants found the weekend useful, rewarding and informative, and although the planning group continued to meet during the next six months to supervise the creation of the conference report, they did not stay together afterwards to pursue other goals. Personally I found the whole experience hugely rewarding. Although often challenging and way outside my comfort zone, I felt I learned a lot about group work and working as a team." ■

LIZZIE GENT

"GRAB A GRAND" raffle

1999 FOR WORLD AIDS DAY

£1000

"IT'S NOT OVER!"

ght-HIV

georgehousetrust

Raffle tickets, 1990s

02051

GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

EASTER DRAW

Name.................................

Address.................................

....

....

....

Tel.................................

Cash, counterfoils and unsold tickets to be returned to the Promoter by 11 April 1998

GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

Registered Charity No. 700364

02051

EASTER DRAW

1st Prize: 4 Day Cruise to Norway for 2 People

donated by V2 and Via Fossa

Runner up prizes donated by Midland Crown Plaza Hotel, Manto Bar and Trailfinders

To be drawn at the Easter Fete, Via Fossa,
Sunday 12 April 1998, 5.00 p.m.

Promoter: Tim Pickstone, 75 Ardwick Green North, Manchester M12 6FX

Registered under Lotteries & Amusements Act 1976 with Manchester City Council

TICKETS £1 EACH

Raising awareness: stickers
from the 1990s

TIME TO ACT

In World AIDS Week 1993, George House Trust is planning to hold a public meeting and to lauch an open letter about the issues raised in this leaflet. Other initiatives are under discussion. If you would like details of these activities return the slip or telephone our office.

Please send me details of:
George House Trust initiatives on the change in Government Strategy on HIV

Please send me details of the services of George House Trust for people living with HIV disease

Please send me details on becoming a volunteer with George House Trust

Name ____________________

Address ____________________

____

Return to: Enquiries, George House Trust, P.O. Box 201, Manchester M60 1PU. Tel: 061 839 4340.

George House Trust is the voluntary HIV organisation for the North West. One of the largest charities based in the region, our paid and voluntary workers are dedicated to proving that there is 'still life with HIV disease'.

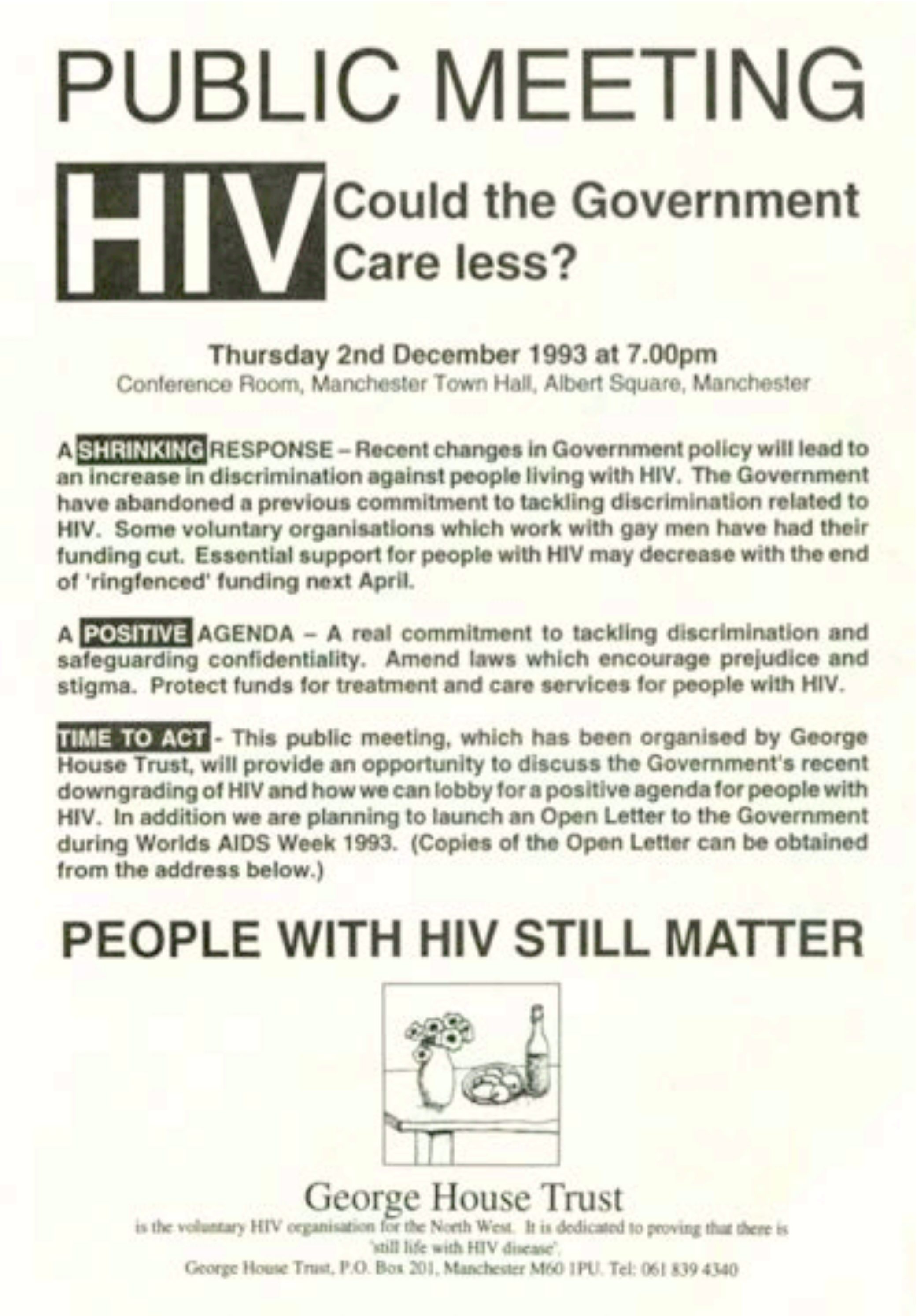
P.O. Box 201, Manchester M60 1PU.

Tel: 061 839 4340 Fax: 061 839 6540.

A registered charity No. [illegible]

HIV COULD THIS GOVERNMENT CARE LESS?

Campaign flyer, 1993



PUBLIC MEETING

HIV Could the Government Care less?

Thursday 2nd December 1993 at 7.00pm
Conference Room, Manchester Town Hall, Albert Square, Manchester

A SHRINKING RESPONSE – Recent changes in Government policy will lead to an increase in discrimination against people living with HIV. The Government have abandoned a previous commitment to tackling discrimination related to HIV. Some voluntary organisations which work with gay men have had their funding cut. Essential support for people with HIV may decrease with the end of 'ringfenced' funding next April.

A POSITIVE AGENDA – A real commitment to tackling discrimination and safeguarding confidentiality. Amend laws which encourage prejudice and stigma. Protect funds for treatment and care services for people with HIV.

TIME TO ACT - This public meeting, which has been organised by George House Trust, will provide an opportunity to discuss the Government's recent downgrading of HIV and how we can lobby for a positive agenda for people with HIV. In addition we are planning to launch an Open Letter to the Government during Worlds AIDS Week 1993. (Copies of the Open Letter can be obtained from the address below.)

PEOPLE WITH HIV STILL MATTER

George House Trust
is the voluntary HIV organisation for the North West. It is dedicated to proving that there is
'still life with HIV disease'.
George House Trust, P.O. Box 201, Manchester M60 1PU. Tel: 061 839 4340

Flyer for public meeting, 1993

Manchester Mardi Gras poster, 1996

WHERE'S THE CRIME IN HIV Jack Straw ?

In July 1997, Home Secretary Jack Straw announced that the Government was considering making it a criminal offence "to intentionally infect" another person with HIV.

Criminalisation of HIV transmission is wrong. It is counter productive. It won't work.

HIV is not a crime

Sex between consenting adults is legal. Criminalisation of HIV transmission puts all the responsibility on people living with HIV. This is wrong - every adult has responsibility for their own consenting sexual behaviour and for protecting themselves.

Don't drive HIV underground

Making it illegal adds further stigma to people with HIV. It would be highly counter productive. Fewer people would take HIV tests (if you don't know you can't "intentionally" infect). Fewer people would benefit from new HIV treatments. It would make it harder to educate about HIV.

Criminalisation won't work

In 1992 Home Secretary Ken Clarke concluded that creating an offence would drive HIV underground, discouraging people from having a test or seeking treatment. The Law Commission's more recent paper stated that "the effect would be simply to discourage people from agreeing to be tested for HIV".

Don't make HIV a crime, Jack Straw

The real crime is discrimination (still legal) surrounding HIV and threatening to criminalise positive people. The real criminals are those who promote prejudice, hysteria and fear - and then blame its victims. Instead we should all be working, world-wide, to improve education, remove discrimination, and support all people with HIV.

Tell Jack Straw and your own MP what you think!

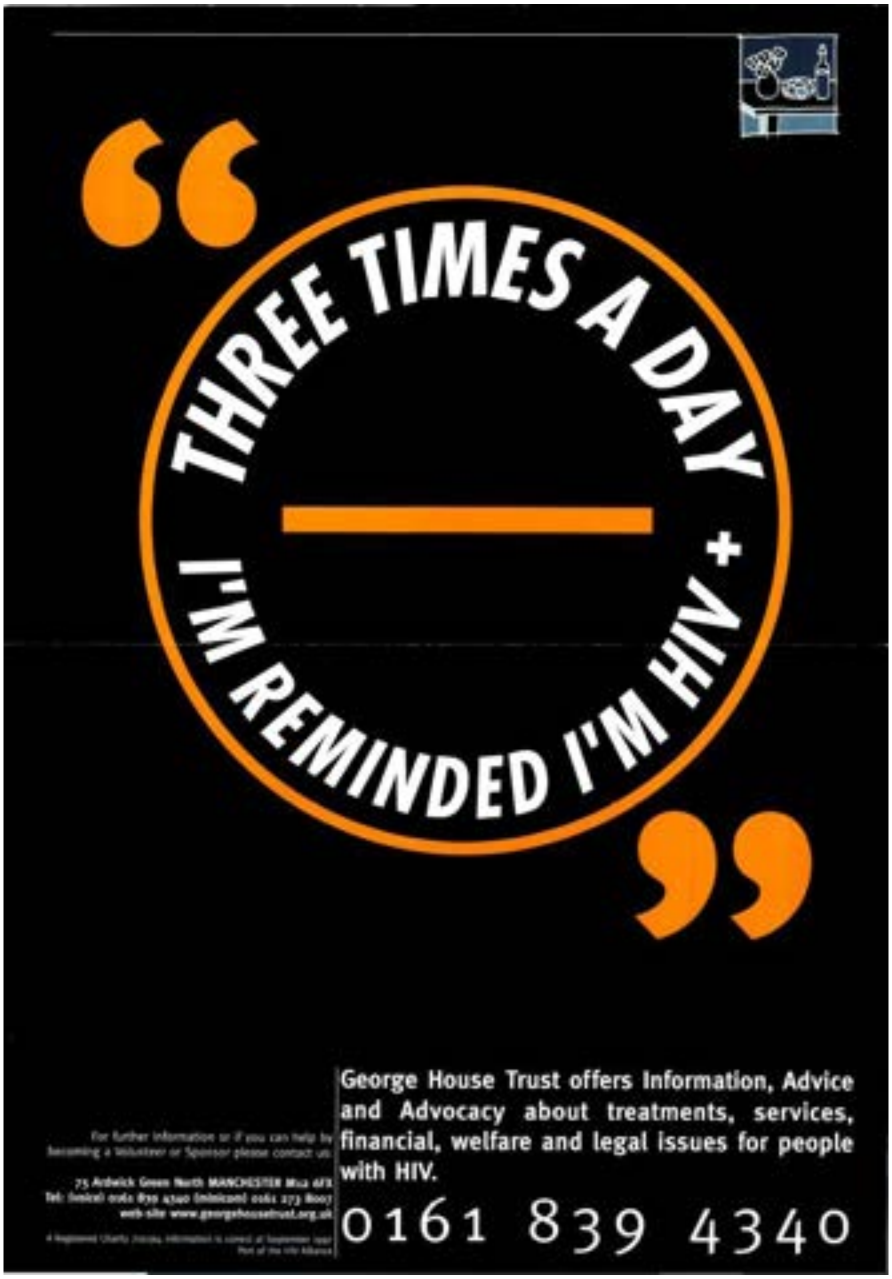
Use the latest George House Trust postcard or write to them at:
House of Commons, LONDON SW1A 0AA.

George House Trust
75 Ardwick Green North Manchester M12 6FX 0161 839 4340
e-mail info@georgehousetrust.org.uk Web Site www.georgehousetrust.org.uk
Information is correct at August 1997. Registered Charity 700364

Part of the HIV alliance

Campaign flyer against the criminalisation of HIV transmission, 1997

Flyer, 1997



George House Trust offers Information, Advice and Advocacy about treatments, services, financial, welfare and legal issues for people with HIV.

0161 839 4340

For further information or if you can help by becoming a Volunteer or Sponsor please contact us:

75 Ardwick Green North MANCHESTER M12 6FX
Tel: (voice) 0161 839 4340 (minicom) 0161 273 8007
web-site www.georgehousetrust.org.uk

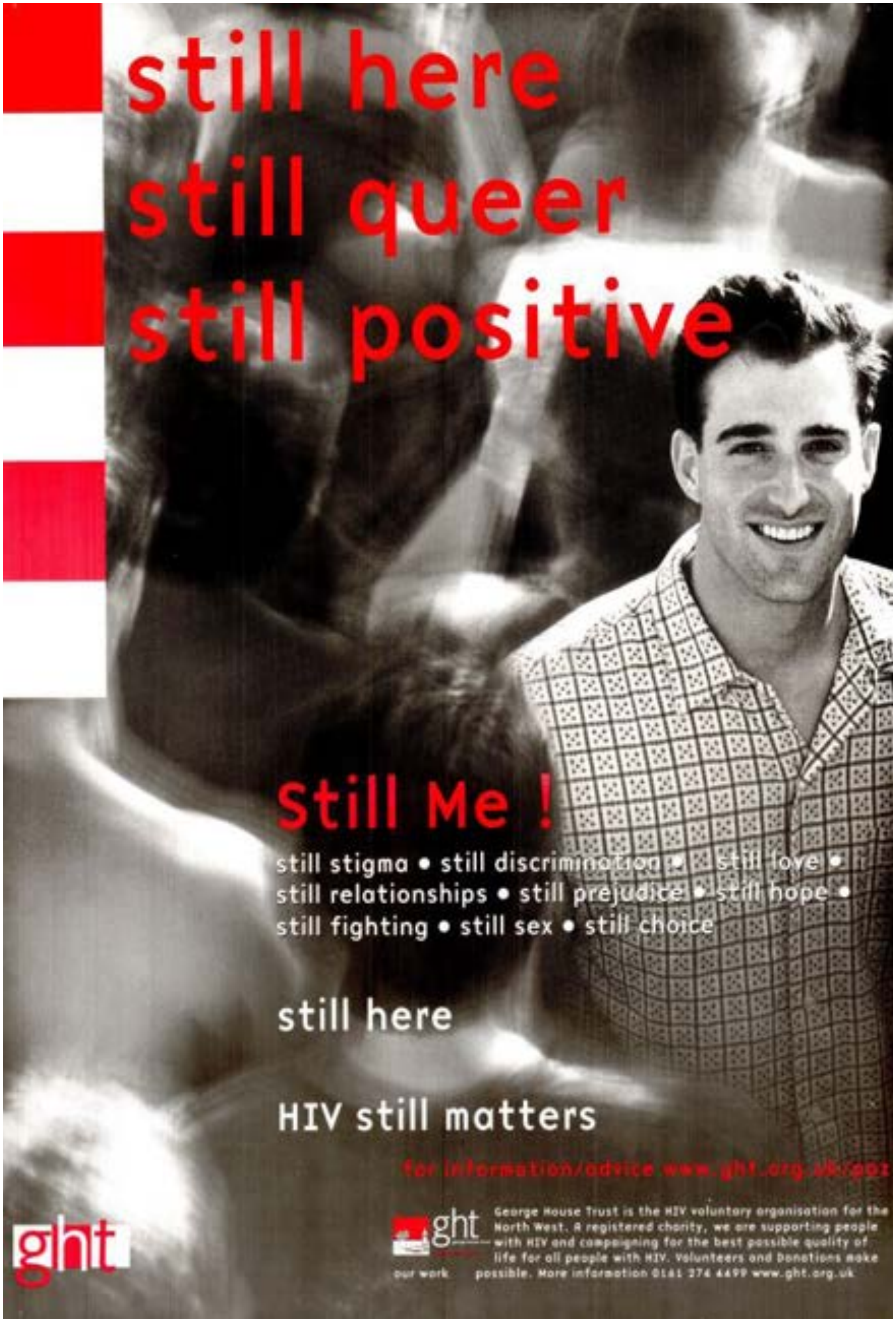
“To many, George House Trust is a lifeline; to me, it’s a family.

After being diagnosed with HIV in 2017, I was immediately referred to the organisation for support by the HIV specialist nurses in Manchester. That referral gave me everything I needed to grow confident with my status and begin to see a future that wasn’t defined by fear and stigma.

Every time I attend a check-up appointment at the HIV clinic and see George House Trust’s posters on the walls, I’m taken back to that moment of learning I wasn’t alone — that there is a whole community of people living with HIV, supporting one another. Those posters are more than information; they are an open door.

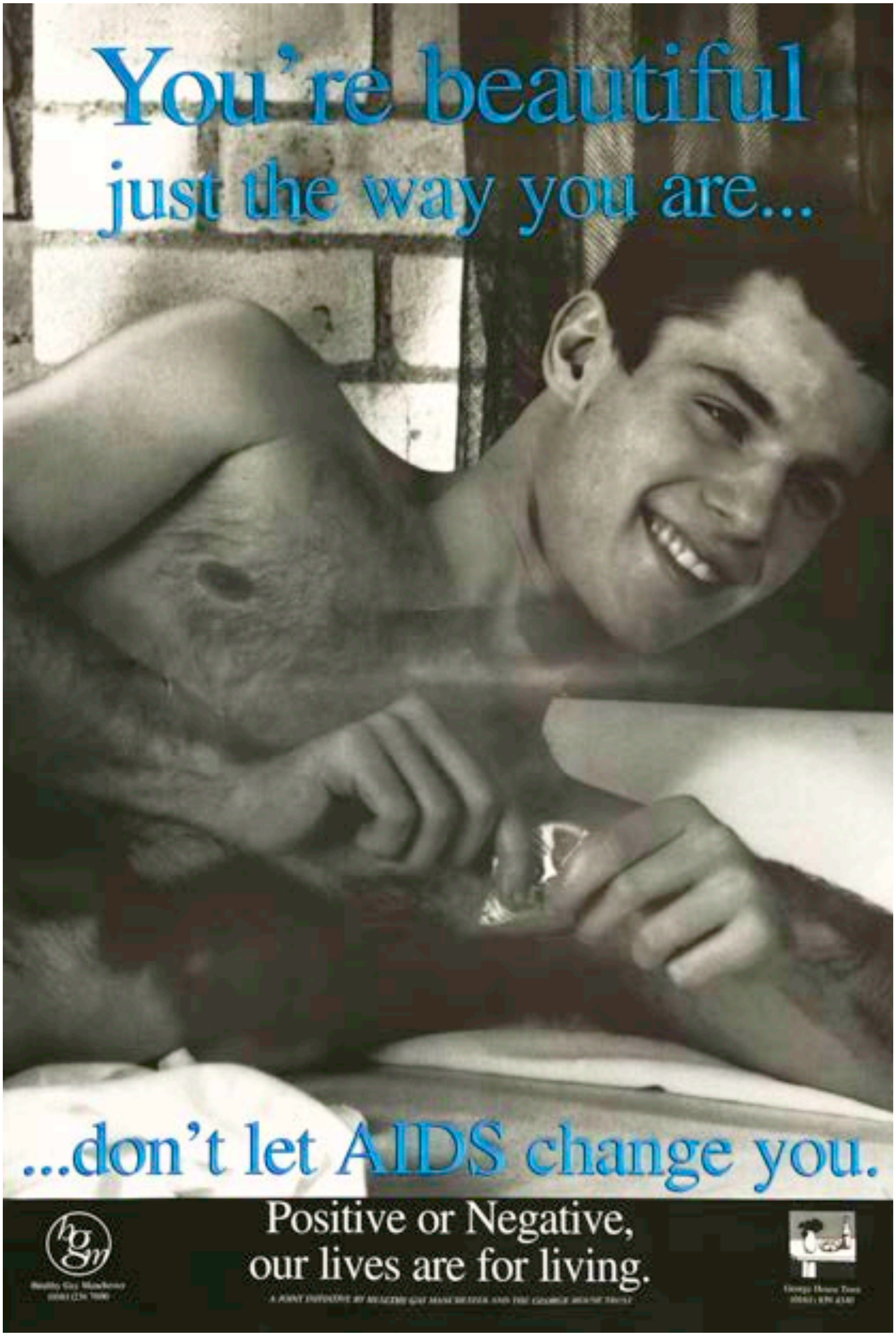
They make me feel hopeful for others living with HIV — whether they are attending their first appointment after diagnosis, or have lived with HIV for many years and are only just considering seeking support. I hope that seeing those posters gives them the same courage it gave me to reach out, ask for help, and ultimately join our family to fight for a world where HIV holds no one back.” ■

KIERAN YATES

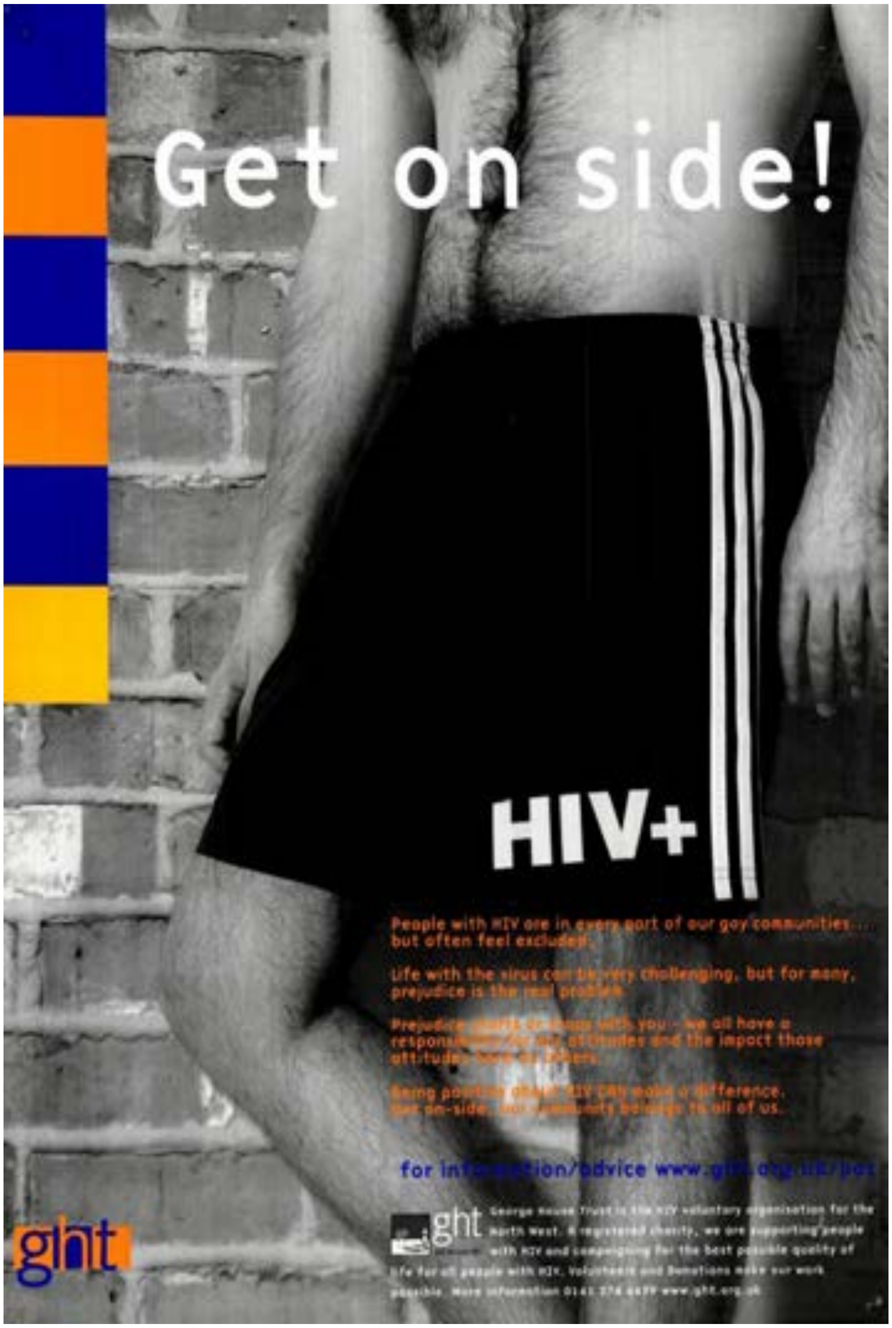


George House Trust is the HIV voluntary organisation for the North West. A registered charity, we are supporting people with HIV and campaigning for the best possible quality of life for all people with HIV. Volunteers and Donations make possible. More information 0161 274 4499 www.ght.org.uk

“still here still queer” poster, 2002



Poster c. 2003



People with HIV are in every part of our gay communities... but often feel excluded.

Life with the virus can be very challenging, but for many, prejudice is the real problem.

Prejudice starts or stops with you – we all have a responsibility for our attitudes and the impact those attitudes have on others.

Being positive about HIV can make a difference. Get on-side, our community belongs to all of us.

for information/advice www.ght.org.uk/pos

George House Trust is the HIV voluntary organisation for the North West. A registered charity, we are supporting people with HIV and campaigning for the best possible quality of life for all people with HIV. Volunteers and Donations make our work possible. More information 0161 274 4499 www.ght.org.uk

Poster c. 2000s

"I first came up with the idea of hosting a drag ball after my friend lent me a copy of *Paris is Burning*. I was so inspired by how a community can come together and celebrate in such a vibrant way. Drag was just starting to kick off in mainstream UK culture and I felt like it would be a great way to awareness raise with young people, as well as fundraise. Through working with the Village, I'd built up quite the network of drag queens that I knew would be able to help. Anna Phylactic, Cheddar Gorgeous and Misty Chance. We met in Taurus to formulate a plan over a bottle of wine. Cheddar suggested it would be brilliant if the ball really celebrated a uniquely British sense of drag, rather than the American drag culture that was increasingly becoming popular with younger people. People like John Hamilton (Bar Pop) and Nick Curtis (Eagle) also massively helped. The George House Trust Drag Ball was born and with the help of many of the bars across the Village we held our first drag ball at the Freemasons Hall, on George House Trust's anniversary in 2015, £20 a ticket and 16 drag queens performed on the night.

By 2016, the word had spread throughout the drag scene, we had a bigger venue and over 30 queens taking part, all giving their time for free on a Saturday night. I'm immensely proud of how from my little idea and of course the guidance of Anna, Misty and Cheddar, we turned this around to create an event that still happens every year. Still raising awareness, still doing vital fundraising and still lovingly supported by the incredible community of drag queens that Manchester has."

SUSIE ELLIOT
George House Trust Staff 2010-12


George House Trust's
Drag Ball
2016
Saturday 2nd July 7pm until late. Tickets £25
(Includes glass of fizz on arrival)
Victoria Warehouse Hotel, Manchester
Buy tickets via ght.org.uk/dragball
Manchester's drag community comes together to support people living with HIV
Dress code - Red Carpet Glamour
GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

Poster for Drag ball, 2016

Lynda Shentall at immigration demo, 2006

"I was involved with George House Trust from about 1991 – 2013. Initially I was a volunteer and was on the Board for several years. I chaired the Board and stood down when I was pregnant in 1997. I started to work for George House Trust in about 2003 and was Director of Services when I left. My daughter came to Pride when she was three weeks old in 1995, and both of my children (adults now) have been at many Pride parades with me over the years.

This photograph for me sums up the George House Trust that I was part of. It is taken at a pro-Immigration March in 2006. I love it because it has the kids in, because I am shouting and because there are slivers of several George House Trust relevant people in the shot; Michelle Reid – CEO at the time; Norma Turner – former Chair; MT long term diagnosed service user; CM worked at George House Trust at the time and E – an asylum seeking service user who was deported later that year. At the time we thought she was being deported to her death. We are still in touch and she visited Manchester two years ago – finally from a European country that gave her sanctuary after many years in other African countries that were safer for her (because of her sexuality) than her home and other African countries.

George House Trust remains the best place that I have ever worked in terms of staff camaraderie and the support offered to service users. At the time we talked about rottweiler advocacy to get the outcomes that the people we worked with needed and deserved. Though we fought hard we could not stop E being deported." ■

LYNDA SHENTALL

information
women's group

Support for African People
with HIV

web site
financial support
advice
treatment advice
volunteering
African group
volunteer support
children's activities

George House Trust

family days
immigration help

George House Trust flyer, 2000s

"Working with George House Trust from 1996-1999 was at a moment of transformation. Combination therapy was beginning to save lives. But we were still campaigning to challenge a whole world of discrimination against people living with HIV." ■

DAVID MOTTRAM

GEORGE
HOUSE TRUST

5

FACTS ABOUT HIV

www.ght.org.uk

1. Effective and easy to take treatment means that HIV is now a manageable medical condition.
2. People who are on effective HIV treatment with an undetectable viral load cannot pass HIV on during sex. Undetectable equals Untransmittable or U=U.
3. HIV testing at a clinic is free and confidential. You can also test for HIV at home.
4. Knowing your HIV status – whether positive or negative - means you can play a part in ending all new HIV transmissions by 2030.
5. The red ribbon is the symbol of HIV awareness. Wear yours every day to show your solidarity with people living with HIV.

@georgehousetrst
@georgehousetrust

Raising awareness: 5 facts about HIV card, 2018 (front and back)

GEORGE
HOUSE TRUST

U=U

UNDETECTABLE = UNTRANSMITTABLE

#sciencenotstigma
#factsnotfear
#uequalsu

The science is clear.

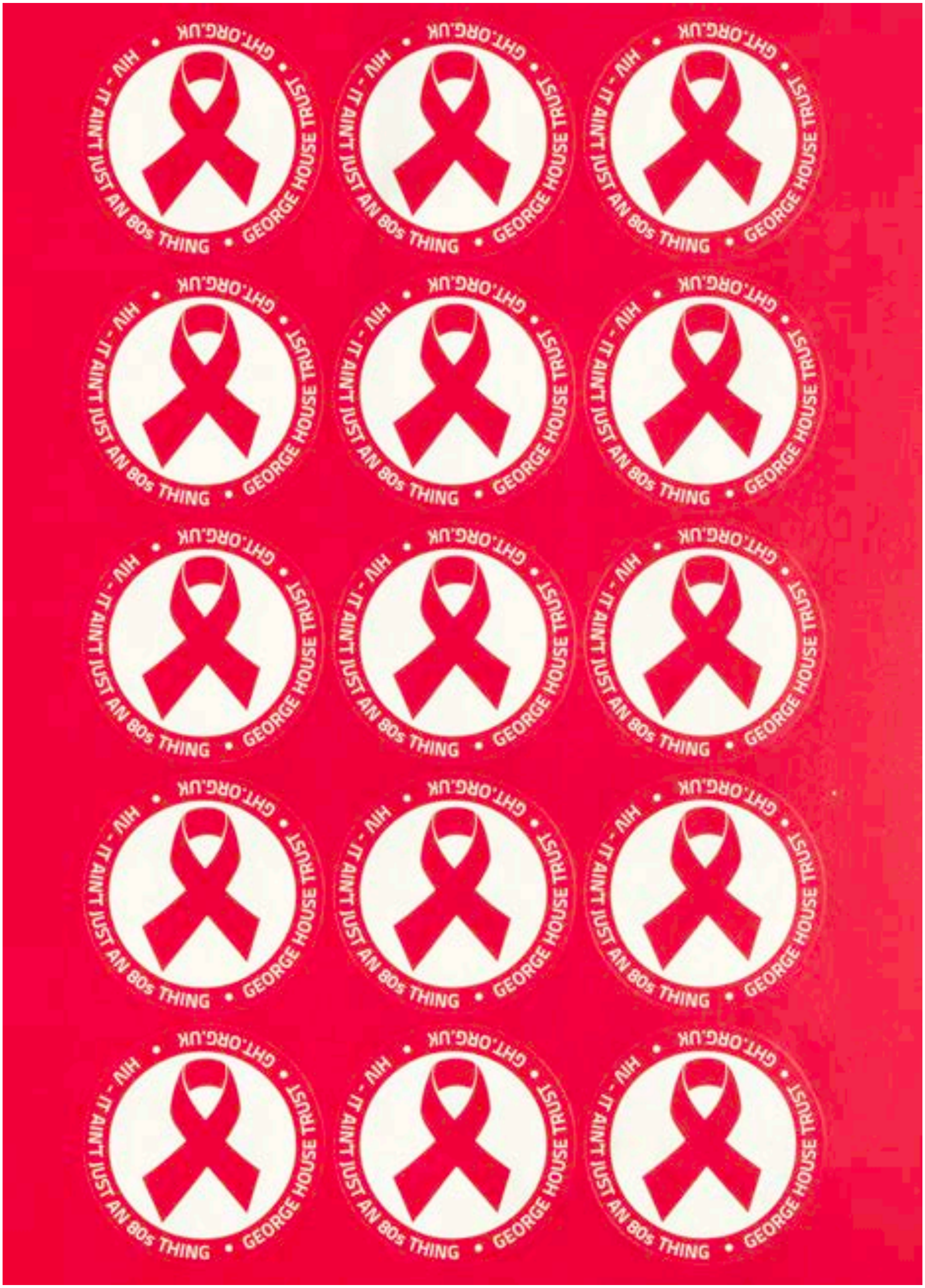
HIV treatment effectively reduces the amount of the HIV virus in the body to the point where it cannot be detected.

This means that people who are on HIV treatment with an undetectable viral load cannot pass HIV on during sex.

We believe that fear around HIV transmission fuels stigma. The U=U message is one of the most powerful ways to challenge and defeat HIV stigma.

@georgehousetrst

Raising awareness: U=U, the science is clear card, 2019 (front and back)



George House Trust stickers, 2010s

“I have had a connection with George House Trust on and off since the early 90s. It has always felt like a safe and welcoming space, and over the years I have seen it evolve and grow into the amazing charity it is today.

I first went there with my friend to get information and education because we had a close friend who was dying. We wanted to be as supportive as we could and help him feel reassured and we were given so much support and all the information that was available at that time. Unfortunately our friend became very sick and was taken back to his parents and we never saw him again.

None of us were allowed to go to the funeral and it was such a feeling of limbo and I now realise prejudice and ignorance.

Following this I have stayed in contact, many friends have received support over the years, and I have raised funds and volunteered for them. I can honestly say that George House Trust is the most remarkable charity I have ever worked with. It is a beautiful, inclusive, loving community. It is family.” ■

JANE CRAGGS

Judith Kramer at Manchester Pride, 2013

"I didn't know what to write about as someone who volunteered for Manchester AIDSline and then George House Trust for 27 years. I had many different roles from telephone volunteer, fundraising, campaigning, Vice Chair, volunteer trainer, supporter for Positive Speakers at many venues. I decided I will explain how I came to be a volunteer.

In 1988 I applied to be a volunteer with Manchester AIDSline, there was a very long wait to be trained so I looked for something else that I could do around HIV. I was one of many who was disgusted by the then Chief Constable of Manchester police James Anderton, who talked of people with AIDS as "swimming in a cesspit of their own making." I found Manchester ACT UP – Aids Coalition to Unleash Power. We were a direct-action group and attracted publicity by firing condoms into Strangeways Prison to highlight the need for safe sex in prison. There were other actions too.

In 2013 the theme at Pride was 'acceptable in the 80s' and I was asked to speak about our actions from the stage alongside Paul Fairweather, one of the founding fathers of George House Trust." ■

JUDITH KRAMER
Volunteer until 2018

Flyer with George House Trust's vision 'for a world where HIV holds no one back'. Designed by Grahame Robertson for the annual Drag Ball 2023.

"I moved from Dunfermline to Manchester in the Spring of 1999, just a few short years after the death of my best friend to HIV. His death motivated me to do something... *anything.* I quickly became a volunteer at Gay Men's Health in Edinburgh which gave me an outlet to reach out to my community, and help educate and inform them about HIV. The only skills I could offer were in graphic design and copywriting, so I created a safer-sex zine called 'Spurt' that invoked the wrath of The Sun and The Church Of Scotland. It certainly made an impact, and I'm very proud of it. Then, in 1999, an opportunity arose to work at Healthy Gay Manchester (HGM) and with *Queer As Folk* shining a blazing light on queer Manchester, I grabbed the opportunity to move to the city with both hands.

During my 15 years at HGM, and then The Lesbian & Gay Foundation (LGF) I worked on countless campaigns, designed all of the famous condom packs, and edited/designed 121 issues of outnorthwest magazine. George House Trust were a constant presence during that time, and I collaborated with them on many design and branding projects. I was always a huge supporter of their work and their campaigning. Today I'm privileged to work regularly with the team at George House Trust, collaborating on many design assets. It has been the honour of my life recently to work on the design and branding of the 40th anniversary exhibition at the Central Library - and this accompanying book. It was also a great source of pride to see so many of the designs I'd worked on over the last 27 years in the exhibition. Thank you George House Trust for enabling me to continue to honour my best friend." ■

GRAHAME ROBERTSON
Graphic Designer

5

DOCUMENTING UNDER-REPRESENTED VOICES

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

For the 40th anniversary project, George House Trust recorded oral history interviews with women whose pioneering work in HIV services, education and activism was not fully represented in the historical record.

Their stories encompass the complex realities of living with HIV whilst caring for family and challenging stigma, and serve as an important testimony of what it was like to work in HIV care at the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Edited extracts from three of these interviews are presented here.

You can find the full interviews and their transcripts at **www.ght.org.uk/hiv-activism/stories**.

Interviews conducted by Emma Woods, Sally Cross and Robert Broughton

AGATHA PHIRI

Agatha Phiri is a Malawi-born HIV activist, community organiser, and social justice advocate based in Greater Manchester. She is the founder of Agatha's Space, a project in Oldham under the Support and Action for Women's Network (SAWN) which empowers African women living with HIV to live confident and fulfilling lives. Agatha's activism is deeply rooted in personal experience and dedicated to raising awareness, challenging stigma and changing narratives around HIV. She is a volunteer Positive Speaker and Peer Mentor at George House Trust, delivering impactful HIV awareness sessions for schools, community groups and medical professionals.

When did you first hear about HIV?

It was in Africa. My mum died of AIDS, but we were not told that she died of AIDS. But growing up remembering everything she went through, I know it was AIDS. Because it's like a taboo in Africa, and AIDS is described as death, really. So, because there's not much information, that's the only information that's in your head. HIV is death. AIDS is death. If you touch someone with HIV, you're going to die. But then, living in the same house as my mum when she was unwell, when she was suffering, and I didn't get it that time, that kept giving me questions of - is it real? Can you get it with just touching someone, looking after someone?

How did HIV change your life?

I lost my mum, that's the negative side. But if I have to be really real, HIV changed my life in a way that I feel more powerful. If I had a wing, I feel like I could have been one of the humans to be flying around, not walking. And HIV gave me a purpose really. I choose to look at the positives that HIV has done to me than the negatives, because obviously I'm on medication. I really focus on what did I get from this that now I can look behind and say— if I wasn't HIV positive, I wouldn't be where I am. And it has given me the confidence to do what I do now. Sometimes I feel like if I wasn't HIV positive, I wouldn't be doing what I do now.

How did you get involved with George House Trust?

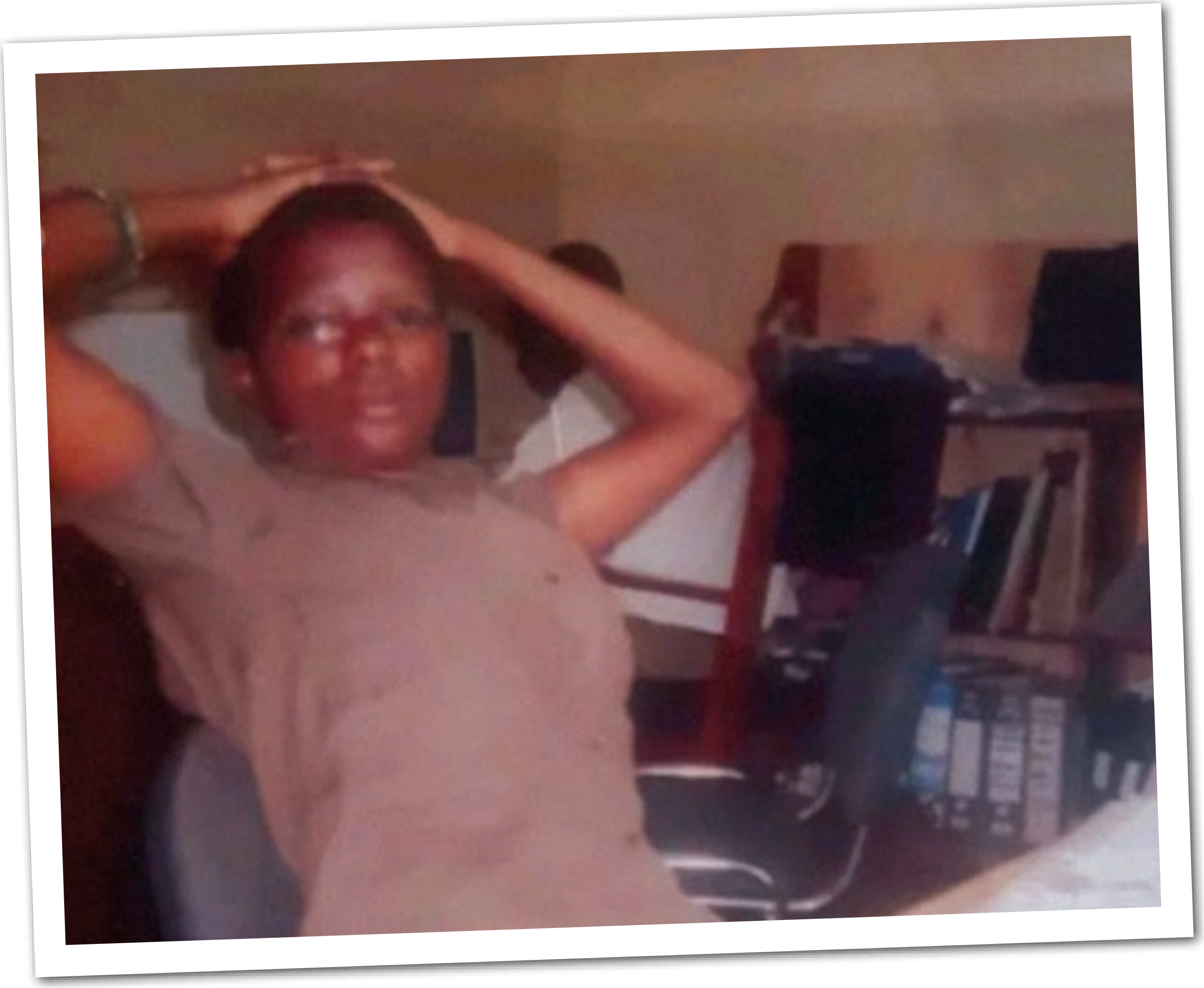
When I came to Manchester I kept myself to myself. Professionals were the only people I could trust. I built a cage around me that I didn't want anything personal about myself to be shared with anyone. But that kept me lonely, even when I had people around, when I went to meet friends, I was lonely. Because I was living in my own body, without anyone involved. And then the hospital referred me to George House Trust. And I came here. I remember every Thursday we used to have, I think it was African day. There would be loads of African people here on a Thursday. So that made me connect to people of my colour. But also, I saw Malawian people in here looking so gorgeous. Makeup, what?! I was like… so I can look like that! I can be that person. So that gave me an inspiration, and also motivated me to start looking after myself, because I literally just neglected myself, because I

Agatha after treatment

was a disease, I was an infection. That's what everyone thought I was, so I started accepting that. And coming here more and more now, I opened up to the team that was here at that time, and they sent me for counselling. I went through therapy. I just went through everything that I needed to be empowered.

How did you come to tell your story as a person living with HIV?

Paul Fairweather trained me to be a positive speaker. Since then, I have loved everything about myself. The first event I ever went to was World AIDS Day. I hosted World AIDS Day in 2021, and I had never told anyone outside the hospitals or outside George House Trust that I was HIV positive. But this was my



Agatha before treatment

first time to stand in front of hundreds of people on stage, hosting World AIDS Day, and disclosing my status to people. To me, that was power. It gave me the power; it was like I challenged myself. Something that I thought I would never, never do. I just openly said it. And it was like a chain that was tangled, broken now. I was free, and I grew wings.

What are your hopes for the future?
I'm really passionate about system change, because we need an equal system. If there's no racial equality, if no one can stand up in parliament and say, "I'm a woman living with HIV and I need this law to change", I want to be that person. Because we have systems that discriminate and throw stigma at us. And we need to challenge those systems. There are countries I cannot go to in 2025 because they don't allow people living with HIV. And we're living in a generation where U equals U, undetectable is equal to untransmissible. I am untransmissible. I am undetectable. Why can I not go to Australia? I am untransmissible. Why can I not insure my home if I buy a house? We need someone to go and change all these systems. And I don't believe in just talking and complaining about things. Everyone is busy with their life, I can't wait for anyone. I'm the one looking at the system being a problem. So, I want to be the one going to change these systems. So hopefully this will be my next journey in life. ■

> "...if I wasn't HIV positive, I wouldn't be where I am. It has given me the confidence to do what I do now."

ANITA BINNS

Anita Binns is a Positive Speaker at George House Trust, sharing her experiences in schools and healthcare settings to challenge HIV stigma and educate the public on life with HIV. She was previously a care worker for people living with HIV and has volunteered for HIV organisations including Body Positive North West and HEAL (Health Education AIDS Liaison) in Blackpool. Anita was diagnosed with HIV in 1995 after she volunteered to donate blood. Her infant son and husband were also tested and received the same diagnosis. Her status meant that she was not able to complete her degree in social work. Despite originally being told they didn't have long to live, today Anita and her son are both thriving. Her husband passed away in 1998 from injuries sustained during army service.

What was your first experience with HIV?

At that time I knew about this illness but HIV never had anything to do with us. It was a gay thing. It was happening to my gay friends. It was this weird thing. They were getting thin, or they were getting these funny scars and then they were just disappearing and that's it, they were gone. And even among close friends, where we knew people who'd got it, we never really talked about it.

But I knew what was happening in the hospitals. I knew what was happening in treatments. There wasn't any. And a lot of my friends were involved in community groups and voluntary groups that were set up throughout the gay community in helping people at home because that was the only way they were getting care. You can give people as many tablets as you want, but without love, without care, you might as well just end their life because there is nothing for them.

What was your experience working in HIV care before there was effective treatment?

I went to work for a community AIDS support team, which looked after people in the home with HIV and supported families living with people with HIV.

I worked for Body Positive and HEAL in Blackpool as a voluntary worker. Gay men were so isolated because they didn't know people and their expectations of care were a lot higher than what we knew they were ever going to achieve. Because people could opt out. So if someone had HIV on a ward, you could say I'm not looking after them. And a lot of nurses did. So the good thing, for us that volunteered, was that we could look after them. Most people that you were looking after with HIV, well, with AIDS, didn't speak out because they were so ashamed. The fear was awful because there was no treatment, there was no cure. You were dying, that's it. And the devastation to their partners, you know. They're living in this whole cave of horror. They don't need someone to put gloves on just to give them a bloody bed bath. Be kind, just fucking be kind. It cost nothing to be nice.

How did you find out you were HIV positive?

It was in February, March, 1995. My son was five and a half then and I'd gone to the theatre and they had a blood donor

> "The medicines can give you anything. But if you haven't got a family, if you haven't got a safe place, if there isn't something that's going to save you at the end of the day, then it's all pointless."

thing there and he asked what it was about. So we went in. We both got a biscuit and some juice and I donated blood. A couple of weeks later, I got a letter from the Lancaster blood donation people to say there was a major discrepancy in my blood donation and to contact them immediately. I was like, oh my gosh, like it's cancer. What could it be? Didn't even enter my head.

So off I trot to Lancaster and he said we need to take another donation and we need to confirm it first and then we'll get you to come back in. And I was like, look, I'm not giving you any blood until you tell me, I'm not leaving this room. He said we found your donation to be HIV positive. And I was soaking in what he just said and obviously I was upset. I was like, oh my God.

Anita with her husband and son

What are your memories as a mother of a child with HIV?

We're in 2024 now. In 1995 I was writing out my will and getting a memory box ready for my child, because I was about to die. When we came to George House, Barnardo's was helping George House because Glen wasn't the only child around and there was so much love that was given to the children, and understanding. I mean, my son knew the truth. A lot of children didn't. We spent a whole day here on a session at George House when my son was six, doing memory boxes for each other, you know, what would be important. So you've gone through all the awfulness of preparing to die and then you don't. But then you could, but then you might not. But then you get ill again. By the time he was twelve, my son had been on end-of-life care five times. When you've been through all that and then someone treats you like they don't wanna touch you or they don't want to be in the same room as you, I'm like, can you even imagine what all that's been like?

How did you first get involved with George House Trust?

The first time we came was at the end of '95. Someone said you need to go to George House, they've got more for children there than what we did at HEAL and Body Positive in Blackpool. So we came in and there weren't many women's groups and I was like, what's that? And all I could hear were these bloody women laughing their heads off. Anyway, there was an African women's group meeting downstairs. So I just went in and started chatting to these ladies and they were so amazing. They were such good fun. My kind of girls, and so welcoming. And then the next time I came, I brought my son and he met the people at Barnardos and you just knew you were safe.

What's it like being a Positive Speaker?

Going into the schools I love more than anything. I think we underestimate the knowledge that young people have just because they've got this smartphone in their hand. The knowledge isn't always there, and they don't always understand how hard the gay community have fought just to be gay.

What have you learned from your experience as an HIV activist?

I think that the most important thing that organisations like George House Trust, Body Positive, HEAL, Terrence Higgins Trust, Pos UK and places like that give us, it's the love. The medicines can give you anything. But if you haven't got a family, if you haven't got a safe place, if there isn't something that's going to save you at the end of the day, then it's all pointless. The only reason we survived is because we were literally covered in a massive blanket by the gay community and so protected and loved and made sure that we were OK. ■

MICHELLE CROSTON

Dr Michelle Croston has been working in HIV care for over 25 years at national and international level to improve outcomes for people living with HIV. During this time Michelle has developed a special interest in mental health and psychological wellbeing, with a focus on sleep. Michelle holds a clinical fellowship with the European Society of Person-Centered Healthcare (ESPCH). Her research focuses on ways to improve psychological wellbeing for people living with HIV. Michelle is the host of the podcast HIV Matters and trustee for a charity called Mini's Village who aim to improve outcomes for people with HIV/Hep B in Sierra Leone.

What was it like starting work as a nurse in infectious diseases before there was treatment for HIV?

Looking back now, I was 19, 20, if that, and at the time we had a lot of young males on the ward at North Manchester. Because it was on the cusp of treatment. So there were a lot of young people, very similar ages to myself, being diagnosed or being very unwell, and it just felt like a really sad time. But also a really privileged time, because we were supporting lots of people through really tricky times in their life. We saw a lot of death, but we also saw a lot of joy as well. So it was quite a dark time when I initially started.

How did you cope with seeing people pass away?

Now, there's lots of stuff around this idea of secondary trauma and looking after yourself better. But I think knowing what we did at the time, we used to just go out and dance. We would finish our shift and we would head to the Village. And we would just dance. Because actually we were out, we were together and we were dancing. And when you're dancing, you don't have to talk, but it does actually do something for you. The music, being around people. So, yeah, so that's how we coped as a team, we just used to go out and dance. And sometimes on the ward, because it was like isolation cubicles, and sometimes I remember one particular shift, we'd had quite a few deaths of young people, and it felt a bit overwhelming. So we just cranked the radio up really loudly and just danced because we didn't know what else to do.

How did you cope seeing friends and family deal with the trauma of their loves ones passing away in front of them?

I think that's always really, really hard when you're around somebody's grief like that. I also think it's a huge privilege to support somebody to leave this world as well, and be trusted to care for their loved ones. I think at the time, you know, we went to so many funerals, it just became too much, and I remember, I think it was probably at least every other week we were attending a funeral and as the team, we felt that was really important that we would want to go. And sometimes there was just us there, because families didn't show up. But then it did get too much because we were just like, this is, you know, it felt like every day off it was at a funeral.

> "I'm a really proud Northerner and I was at this conference and there were nurses standing up, sharing best practice, and I was sat there thinking, we do that in the north!"

Did you ever feel that something was happening within the LGBT community, fighting back against the way people were being treated?
Definitely. I think that's what attracted me to specialise in HIV care. That kind of activism, that kind of, you know, we're a community, we're standing together, we're not gonna accept poor care, we're not gonna accept no treatment. It felt quite an edgy place to be. I don't like injustice, and I think nurses inherently are activists in their own way.

From your experience, what's it been like for women who are living with HIV going through treatment?
There are often different layers of complexity for women being diagnosed with HIV. I've supported a huge number of women and because their voices are often silent, they're often not included, and obviously that's changing now. But back in the day, they weren't included in research trials. So all the data we had of how drugs would work were in men. So when we were starting women on treatment, we were watching and waiting to see what would happen for them, how this would affect their fertility. Women were concerned about will I be alive long enough to look after my child, and concerns about vertical transmission, worries about what it's like living as a woman and aging as a woman as well, alongside living with HIV.

Why did you decide to go back to studying and do a PhD?
North Manchester was a really big HIV centre with over 2000 patients at the time and I got invited to speak at the National HIV Nurses Association conference. Now I'm a really proud Northerner and I was at this conference and there were nurses standing up, sharing best practice, and I was sat there thinking, we do that in the north! I was just so proud, so I ended up joining the National HIV Nurses Association. But I also wanted to learn how to do research properly. It became really important to me to think about the quality of life of people living with HIV.

At the time there were advances in medicine, but actually those advances were very slow if existent, because all the focus tended to go into getting lotions and potions and pills. But I was really concerned about the psychosocial aspects of life. So I went back to

Michelle at her PhD graduation and as a recently qualified nurse

university to do a PhD looking at how we provide psychological support for people living with HIV - how nurses can connect with people to create better outcomes for people and provide that psychological support. I also became the chair of the National HIV Nurses Association, all because I couldn't bear that the North wasn't represented!

If you were meeting a newly qualified nurse today what advice would you share with them?
I think the main thing I've learned is, I know it sounds really corny when I say this, but put the person first. I know in healthcare, we have an agenda, that's, you know, why we're there. There's certain things that we need to know, but actually, always start with what the person wants to know first, and then build in your stuff around that, because you get to a different place and often to a better place, because it's about the person and not our agenda.

Looking ahead, what do you think the next 30 years will look like for someone who is receiving treatment? Do you think HIV will still be around?
We've got some really big global targets, to end HIV transmission by 2030, onwards transmission. I'd like to believe we get to that point. I really, really do. But we still have people living with HIV even if we reach that global goal. So I think care would probably look very different as a healthcare service as we move forward.

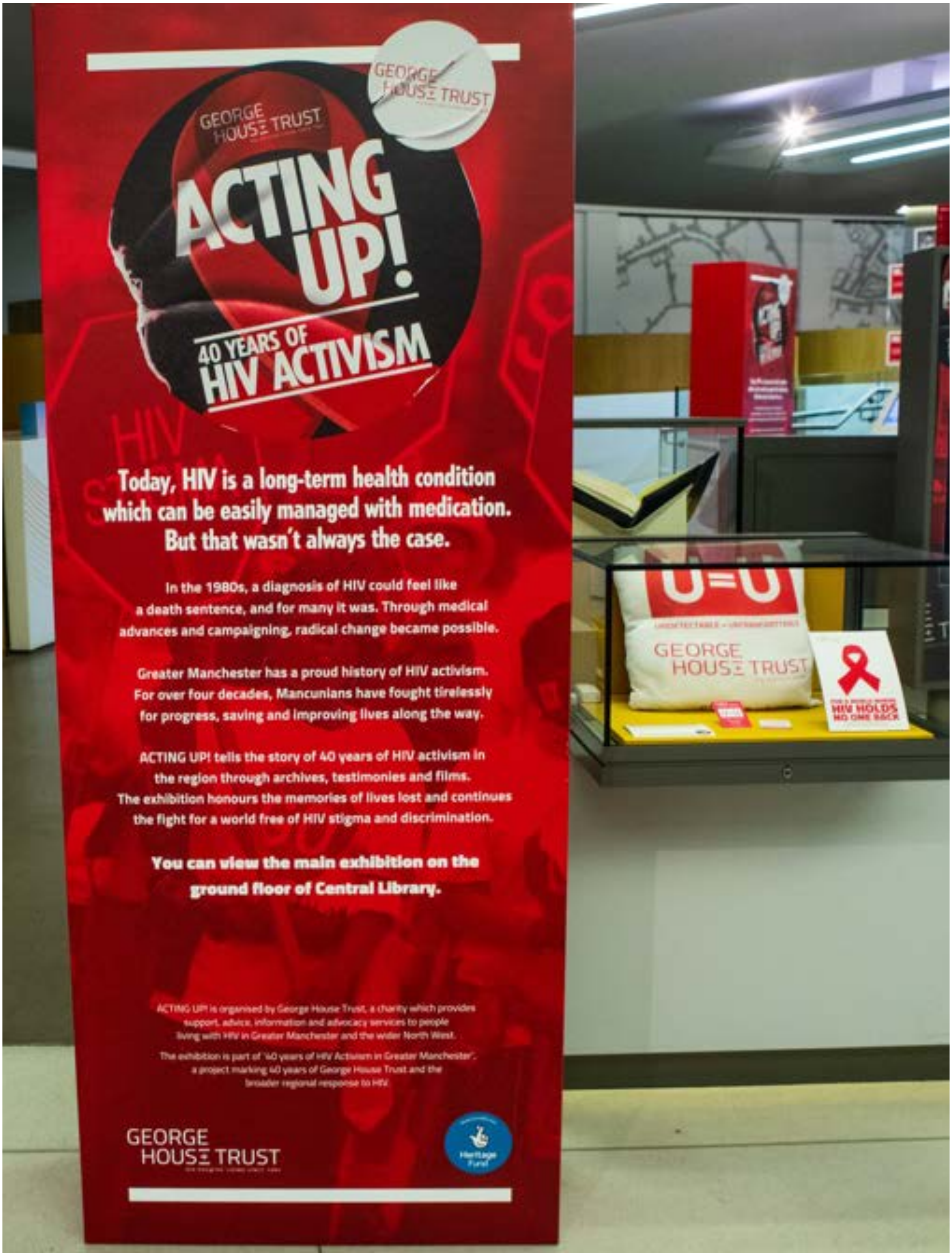
I'd like to think we fast forward into a sci-fi era where it's an injection if people want, or a tablet that isn't massive, once a year, blood tests are done quicker and easier.

But I'm hoping that society is different. To bring about that change we need to make HIV visible, promoting the U equals U message, challenging those misperceptions. I'm surrounded by wonderful people so actually I sometimes speak in an echo chamber about how HIV is now and the undetectable information. So I need to start spreading the word to people who wouldn't know or don't know - the next generation of nurses, medics, teenagers. We need to think of it as a generational shift.

6

ACTING UP! 40 YEARS OF HIV ACTIVISM

IN GREATER MANCHESTER



GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

ACTING UP!

40 YEARS OF HIV ACTIVISM

Today, HIV is a long-term health condition which can be easily managed with medication. But that wasn't always the case.

In the 1980s, a diagnosis of HIV could feel like a death sentence, and for many it was. Through medical advances and campaigning, radical change became possible.

Greater Manchester has a proud history of HIV activism. For over four decades, Mancunians have fought tirelessly for progress, saving and improving lives along the way.

ACTING UP! tells the story of 40 years of HIV activism in the region through archives, testimonies and films. The exhibition honours the memories of lives lost and continues the fight for a world free of HIV stigma and discrimination.

You can view the main exhibition on the ground floor of Central Library.

ACTING UP! is organised by George House Trust, a charity which provides support, advice, information and advocacy services to people living with HIV in Greater Manchester and the wider North West.

The exhibition is part of '40 years of HIV Activism in Greater Manchester', a project marking 40 years of George House Trust and the broader regional response to HIV.

GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

Heritage Fund

ACTING UP! 40 YEARS OF HIV ACTIVISM IN GREATER MANCHESTER

JOANNE ROSENTHAL, Acting Up! exhibition curator

In April 2025, *Acting Up!* opened in Manchester's Central Library, a free exhibition inviting the people of Greater Manchester and beyond to discover the region's extraordinary history of HIV activism over four decades.

From the earliest stages of its conception, we wanted everyone who saw the exhibition to come away with a few key messages, whether they spent hours reading every last word and watching every film clip, or caught just a brief glimpse. Through conversations with George House Trust staff and volunteers, we distilled the 'takeaways' that every visitor should understand: that Greater Manchester has a proud history of HIV activism; that the impact of HIV has changed dramatically in the past forty years; that HIV is a virus that can affect anyone, regardless of their sexuality, gender, racial background or age; and that today HIV stigma is often more destructive than the virus itself.

We designed the exhibition to leave people feeling empowered and inspired by the histories of activism, moved by the stories of tremendous loss and grief, and clear about what it means to live with HIV today.

For me, *Acting Up!* was as much an intervention as it was an exhibition. The ground floor galleries in Central Library occupy a wonderfully democratic and open space. Positioned between the café and library stacks, they're visited by everyone from researchers and writers to school groups, social clubs and anyone wanting a break from the rain in St Peters Square. Many of those who saw the exhibition would have stumbled across it as they passed through the building, rather than planning a visit. This meant that the exhibition had to speak to anyone and everyone – regardless of what they knew or felt

about HIV or the AIDS epidemic; we couldn't assume that anyone would come with prior knowledge of the topic. It also meant we had to design the exhibition in a way that grabbed people's attention and drew them in, flooding the space with colour and eye-catching graphics, and centring lived experiences of pain, resilience and joy.

The archive was central to the exhibition. As the exhibition was being developed, a team of volunteers were methodically working through the George House Trust archive, cataloguing and packing every item, so that it could be deposited at Manchester Archives where it now lives and is available for public access. All sorts of hidden gems surfaced as cupboards were emptied and posters dusted off. These archive materials helped us to tell the story of how George House Trust evolved from its founding as Manchester AIDSline to the organisation it is today.

But whilst George House Trust was an important focal point in the exhibition, *Acting Up!* told a much broader story, of the diverse organisations and community groups whose pioneering activism collectively shaped the region's response to HIV and AIDS. It was a joy to dig out these histories from the rich archival material held in Manchester Archives in collections like those of ACT UP Manchester, the LGBT Foundation and the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre. There are obvious drawbacks to relying on archives to represent the past. Not everyone gets to take their place in the archival record, and the voices of

> "All sorts of hidden gems surfaced as cupboards were emptied and posters dusted off. These archive materials helped us tell the story of how George House Trust evolved..."


GEORGE HOUSE TRUST
POSITIVE LIVING
POSITIVE LOVING
EST. 1985
GEORGE
SAYS
RELAX
HIV
NO
SHAME
BLAME
CRIME
attitude

marginalised groups are often missing. The exhibition was honest about this reality, acknowledging that it could not offer an encyclopaedic account of HIV activism in Greater Manchester as archives are never complete. Visitors were instead invited to reflect on this and consider what had been left out of the story. A ballot box and cards were stationed in the space, offering the public a chance to share with us what they felt was missing.

Acting Up! was on display until the end of 2025. From the comments written in the feedback book, it was visited by people from all around the UK, as well as Australia, Brazil, Canada, Italy, Mexico and the USA. The exhibition inspired some to share deeply personal experiences of living with HIV, supporting friends and lovers who died of AIDS and fighting ignorance and stigma in families and workplaces. Others thanked George House Trust for their work over the decades, or made connections between HIV activism in Manchester and that of other cities. A number of visitors marvelled at the mere fact of the exhibition's existence in such a public space.

For me, one of the defining lessons working on this project was the interconnectedness of the struggles documented in the exhibition, and the fact that we are all dependent on each other for our collective safety. This is most powerfully conveyed by one of the women featured in the oral history exhibit, when she thanks the gay men who fought for the treatment that now allows her to live a healthy life.

Sifting through the archives that these activists have left behind, I was struck by the many forms of action encompassed by the word 'activism'. Yes, activism is about taking to the streets, making your demands visible and forcing people to take notice. But it's just as much about the phonelines that need connecting, the minutes that need typing up and the countless acts behind the scenes that ultimately make things happen. All of these are transformative, radical ways of acting up. ■


ACTING UP! 40 YEARS OF HIV ACTIVISM
UNDETECTABLE = UNTRANSMITTABLE (U=U)
HIV AND MIGRANTS TO THE UK


HIV ACTIVISM
U=U


GEORGE HOUSE TRUST
ACTING UP!
40 YEARS OF HIV ACTIVISM
GEORGE HOUSE TRUST
HIV POSITIVE LIVING SINCE 1985
GEORGE HOUSE
and interact in a supportive and peer-led environment.
TRUST
POSITIVE LIVING SINCE 1985
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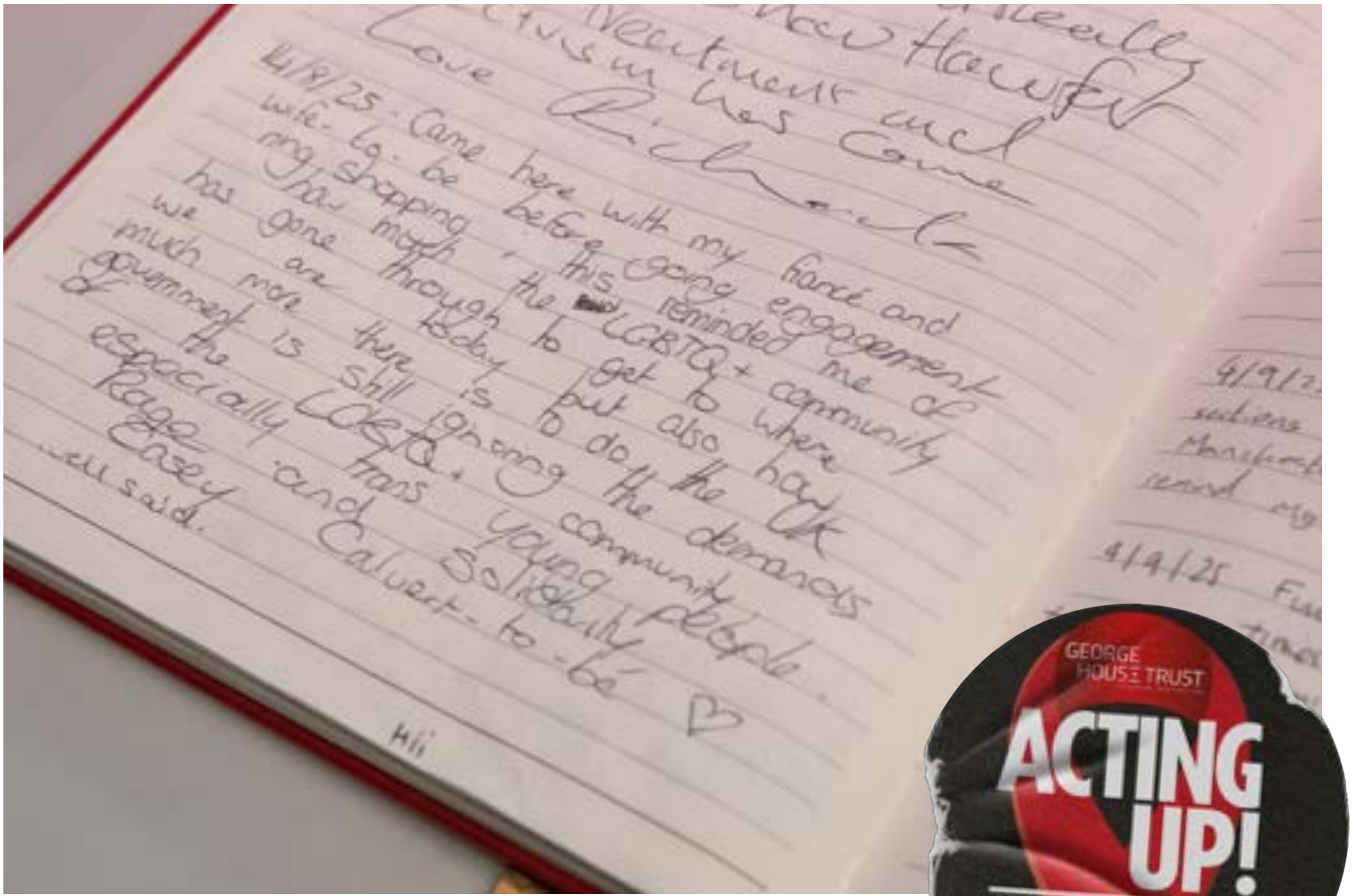
GEORGE HOUSE TRUST
ACTING UP!
40 YEARS OF HIV ACTIVISM



Treatment and
ctivism has come
Love Richard

4/8/25 - Came here with my fiancé and
wife-to-be before going engagement
ring shopping, this reminded me of
how much the LGBTQ+ community
has gone through to get to where
we are today but also how
much more there is to do. the UK
government is still ignoring the demands
of the LGBTQ+ community
especially trans young people.
Rage and Solidarity
Casey Calvert-to-be ♡
well said.

Hi!

4/9/2

4/4/25 Fu

GEORGE HOUSE TRUST
ACTING UP!
40 YEARS OF
HIV ACTIVISM

VISITOR FEEDBACK

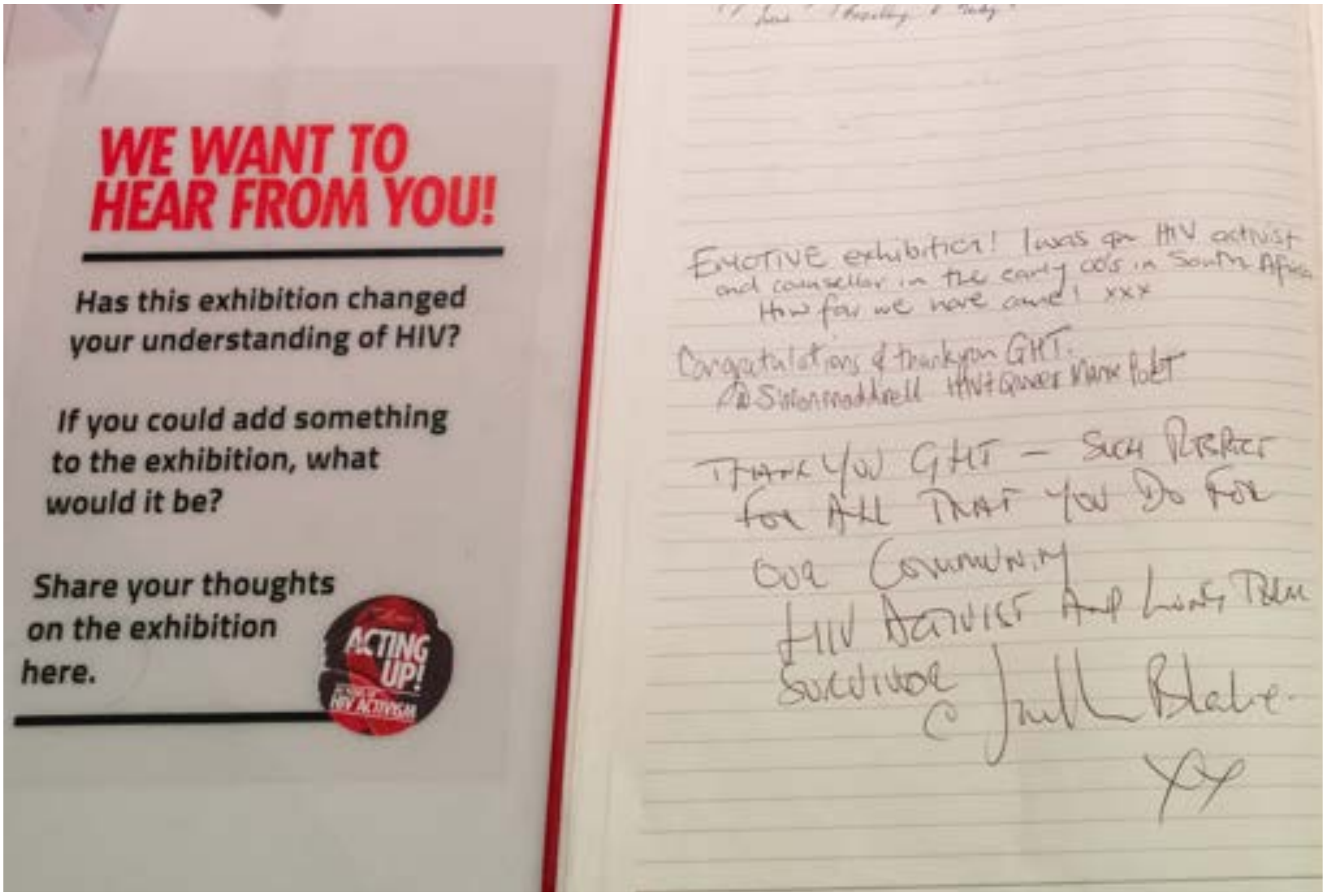
"Very glad this exhibition exists. It's so refreshing to see how far public understanding and acceptance of HIV and AIDS has come. The juxtaposition of seeing the work done years ago publicly in a central library today strikes a chord with me."

"I'm a visitor to Manchester and stumbled across this exhibition. I'm so grateful I did – to understand the hard work the groups featured did to provide support, knowledge and solidarity to the community. In these times, knowing that we can rely on each other on a local level really warms my heart. I'm going to speak to my friends about what I've learned today, particularly about how prevalent the illness is today – so we can respect and acknowledge it's something that affects us all. Thank you."

"Two years ago my life changed in the blink of an eye, my diagnosis of HIV literally made the world STOP… DEAD… IN ITS TRACKS. It was the most terrifying thing but now, with support from George House Trust I am slowly coming to terms with it. This exhibition has made me feel like people like me are heard."

"So very proud of what you have achieved with this but also as an organisation!!! My husband passed away from "AIDS related illness" to which he never knew he ever had HIV – I myself didn't know either and it was too far gone for help. I've never told anyone his cause of death! I also feel he passed away from shame and regret. He should have tested – not ignoring signs. I hope this saves at least one life by getting someone help xxxx"

"My brother contracted HIV in the 80s. It was the time of many deaths and research. He was lucky to start medications which saved his life. With improvements over the years, now he is undetectable. Thank you to all the organisations that made this possible!"



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Has this exhibition changed your understanding of HIV?

If you could add something to the exhibition, what would it be?

Share your thoughts on the exhibition here.

EMOTIVE exhibition! I was an HIV activist and counsellor in the early 90's in South Africa How far we have come! xxx

Congratulations & thankyou GHT.
@Simonmaddrell HIV+Queer Manx Poet

THANK YOU GHT – SUCH RESPECT FOR ALL THAT YOU DO FOR OUR COMMUNITY
HIV ACTIVIST AND LONG TERM SURVIVOR
© [illegible] Blake
xx

"I absolutely loved reading the AIDSline notes handwritten by volunteers, what a pivotal organisation. Thank you for sharing/creating this exhibition. Such a difficult time for our community, yet such wonderful strength in the face of hardship."

"I am visiting from NYC. This was a beautiful exhibition. It is fascinating to learn about the activism, that shaped gay life in Manchester. This was a great addition to my trip! Thank you for putting this display together."

"Listening to interviews made it real and broke down my own perception of the group of people who are typically associated with having HIV."

"Beautiful and affecting exhibition – it's important to hear all the stories about HIV and how we as a caring society respond positively to its challenges."

"Brilliant to have this exhibition. Important that this history is remembered, and the generations of queer people and others that this has affected. Telling stories is therapeutic. Thanks."

"Having lived through the AIDS/HIV crisis, it's important to reflect on the achievements. Pulling together, shouting, marching, fighting. We lost so many friends/lovers, community members. They must live on in our memories and in the pages of history. Well done for the exhibit." ■

“In these times, knowing that we can rely on each other on a local level really warms my heart. I’m going to speak to my friends about what I’ve learned today.”

EXHIBITION VISITOR


GEORGE HOUSE TRUST
WHERE HIV HOLDS NO ONE BACK
FOR A WORLD WHERE

JOE TANZER

40th ANNIVERSARY PROJECT LEAD

At the heart of the 40 Years of HIV Activism project was the George House Trust archive: logbooks, newsletters, photographs, posters, memorial books, and campaign materials. Historical items that bear marks of creativity, loss, improvisation, and urgency. They document how George House Trust and partner organisations responded to the epidemic in real time. Through the work of trained Community Archivist volunteers, over a thousand items were catalogued, preserved, digitised, and deposited with Manchester Archives. This is an extraordinary achievement, and I'm so proud to have been involved. The labour involved was meticulous and slow, and it has taught me to pay attention to material things in a new way.

> "Visitors to the exhibition encountered activism not as something distant or heroic, but as pragmatic, neighbourly, and collective. It asked people to listen, to reflect, and to connect past struggles with present realities..."

It is important that George House Trust's archive has been preserved, but also that it is now publicly accessible. By being deposited with Manchester Archives, the George House Trust collection moves from organisational memory into shared civic memory. It becomes something that can be encountered, questioned, and reinterpreted by people who were not there, or not yet born. Public access ensures that the history of HIV in Greater Manchester can continue to generate new knowledge, new questions, and new cultural work. Russell T Davies consulted George House Trust logbooks while writing *It's A Sin*, a British drama about a group of friends in 1980s London navigating the impact of the AIDS crisis. With open access, we cannot yet know what will come next, but we have created the conditions for it.

Alongside this material record sit the oral histories created during the project. Four women living with HIV, or working in HIV services, who shared their stories of care work, leadership, and struggle. Listening to them reminds us that history is messy, and that people are, quite often, brilliant.

The exhibition *Acting Up! 40 Years of HIV Activism* brought this history into public view at Manchester Central Library, a civic space where memory meets hustle and bustle. Visitors encountered activism not as something distant or heroic, but as pragmatic, neighbourly, and collective. The exhibition asked people to listen, to reflect, and to connect past struggles with present realities: ongoing HIV stigma, health inequalities, and the continued need for community-led care. As one visitor put it, the exhibition being "open to

Opposite: T-shirt worn by Paul Fairweather at Manchester Pride in 2009
when he came out as living with HIV

the public, visible, not hidden in a corner" mattered as much as what was displayed, and visibility itself became an anti-stigma intervention.

Making this history visible in Manchester matters because so much of Britain's HIV/AIDS narrative has been shaped through London. While London is undeniably important, it was never the whole story. Manchester was and is a crucial site of activism, service provision, community organising, and policy engagement.

As Michelle recounts in her oral history, "we were already doing that up North!" By foregrounding Greater Manchester's experience, this project resisted a London-centric account of HIV history and promoted a more regional, plural understanding of how communities responded to the epidemic across the UK.

Events throughout the year deepened public engagement with George House Trust's archive, with personal storytelling at the heart of the programme. It was important that these events were a place for people across generations and experiences to gather, to recognise a shared history, and its ongoing relevance. It was a privilege to work with volunteers to create and share these moments. Many of the volunteers and participants described gaining confidence, connection, pride, and a sense of belonging. The external evaluation has shown that we created a vision of heritage work not as extractive, but as mutual care, relational and participatory. As this project concludes, the work it documents continues. This book is offered not as an endpoint, but as an invitation: to learn, to listen, and to think about current struggles for healthcare access and community wellbeing. What responsibilities do we have to one another now? Whose stories are still missing? What forms of care and resistance are required next?

To everyone who contributed their time, labour, and stories - thank you. And to those who will encounter this book in the years to come: may it remind you that change is made collectively, that memory is political, and that remembrance itself is a form of activism. ■


STOP
HIV STIGMA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

George House Trust would like to thank The National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery players for making the 40th Anniversary Project *'Acting Up! 40 Years of HIV Activism'* possible.

The project was supported by Manchester City Council and Manchester Libraries and Archives. An extra special thank you is due to Neil MacInnes, Alison Gill, Eugenie Karen, Sarah Hobbs, Michelle Owen and David Govier. Thanks to Kevin Bolton for helping us to scope out our initial concept ideas and proposal for funding.

The 40th Anniversary Project was born out of an idea from Andrew Sloan, Chair of George House Trust. George House Trust's 40th Anniversary Project was supported by volunteer Community Archivists, Community Researchers, a volunteer Engagement Group, and a volunteer Steering Group. We are incredibly grateful for your time and commitment. Thank you.

George House Trust would like to acknowledge in particular the Community Archivist and Oral History Project volunteers:
Hafza Ali, Robert Broughton, Sally Cross, Elaine Fell, Simon Harkinson, Richard Scarborough, and Emma Woods.

A massive thank you to Joanne Rosenthal, curator of the exhibition Acting Up! 40 Years of HIV Activism, and producer of this legacy book.

Finally, thank you to Diego Garcia Rodriguez, who provided a detailed external evaluation of the project.

George House Trust's 40th Anniversary Project was led by Joe Tanzer and delivered with the help of volunteers. Between the autumn of 2024 and the spring of 2026, the project catalogued, archived, and digitised a vast array of records, created new oral histories, trained volunteers, curated a comprehensive programme of public events, delivered a nine-month exhibition at Manchester Central Library, and finally, produced this book.

IMAGE CREDITS

All images from the George House Trust collection, now held at Manchester Archives, except:

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Chapter 5: Photos courtesy of Agatha Phiri, Anita Binns, Michelle Croston

Chapter 6: Photos of Acting Up! exhibition by Nick Blandford

“Diagnosed with HIV at 16 in 2003, my hopes and ambitions for life seemed in tatters. Life trundled on, but as I got older things became more chaotic as the trauma from my teenage years compounded. In 2017 I decided enough was enough. I left an abusive relationship, sought help for my trauma and began a new journey telling my story on stage and to the UK media. From drug and alcohol-fuelled rock bottom in 2017, to life as award-winning theatre-maker and actor *(First Time, Toxic, It’s A Sin)* and HIV activist and campaigner in 2025, George House Trust has been with me every step of the way, quietly empowering and enabling me to not just survive with HIV, but to thrive. I am honoured to have been the Creative Producer of the Manchester Pride Candlelight Vigil and to be given a film commission to commemorate George House Trust’s fortieth year - a clear demonstration of how George House Trust enables people with HIV to succeed with their support.”

NATHANIEL J HALL
Theatre-Maker and Activist


GEORGE HOUSE TRUST
HIV POSITIVE LIVING SINCE 1985
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HIV POSITIVE LIVING SINCE 1985
ACTING UP!
40 YEARS OF
HIV ACTIVISM

In 1985, six gay activists established Manchester AIDSline to offer critical information and support, at a time of ignorance and fear.

Manchester AIDSline evolved into George House Trust, a charity which now provides support, advice and advocacy for people living with HIV and leads campaigns to educate and tackle the lingering stigma that still exists today.

Published to mark George House Trust's 40th anniversary year, *Acting Up!* chronicles four decades of HIV activism through the archives and testimonies of those on the frontline of the struggle for a world where HIV holds no one back.

This book showcases highlights from George House Trust's archive and other key collections, all held at Manchester Archives.

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