People's History Museum (PHM)

More in Common project: Voices of Manchester transcripts

PHM's More in Common project involves a group of over 30 people from different backgrounds who made Manchester their home, coming together to share knowledge, experiences, and conversations. The project group have explored the life and legacy of Jo Cox MP, and have undertaken a journey in celebrating our commonality and challenging discrimination**.**

The Voices of Manchester project was led by four volunteers from the project group and was inspired by Jo Cox's words: 'We have more in common than that which divides us'. They wanted to know if this was true.

The project team invited local people to step forward for an experiment. They matched strangers from different backgrounds and asked them to take part in a recorded conversation.

The conversations took place via a video communication platform called Zoom during April 202. Each conversation was facilitated and moderated by one of the project volunteers. The volunteer was accompanied by PHM's project manager for this project, Abir Tobji.

This document includes the transcripts from those conversations.

Conversations between: Megan and Daniella.
Moderator: Roger.
Date of Interview: 9 April 2021.
Transcriber: Roger.
Overseen by PHM staff: Abir Tobji (More in Culture Labs Project Manager).

Megan: What would be really nice would be to be able to donate the food somewhere - and this year I've been really lucky. I've actually just moved to Manchester at the end of November - well, I'm in Salford - but where I've moved, we've got a community garden and so there's an allotment there that everybody is growing vegetables so I've been given an allotment bed which is a much bigger space to grow so potentially it would have the opportunity to grow enough that there would be significant amounts to donate. So that's a really good idea. Do you know of anywhere in Manchester that would be good to donate to?

Daniella: Oh there's masses of places in Manchester. I was just about to pick up on what you're saying but in a roundaboutish way. So, one of the things I can hear in what you're saying - I'm very much about that because of my background - I'm very much about giving back and that's kind of personally informed because of my background… Do you not think that you could then probably be a great encourager within your community to draw people in to, you know, become more passionate about that? Because I can hear that. For instance, younger I had a bit of time within residential care so I went back when I got older and I went and delivered drama workshops and stuff so what I could hear in what you were saying was that need and that want to give back...

Megan: Yeah, absolutely. It's so frustrating with lockdown because it's really hard to kind of meet the community at the moment. We've got all these neighbours that we would probably be having summer parties if it wasn't for lockdown. I thought, you know, the community garden would be a nice way to meet the rest of the neighbours and then hopefully the wider community too.

Megan: [...] Because there's one thing that I've found since moving here, I've felt a bit disconnected to the wider community. I've just been living within these four walls.

Daniella: I probably will be able to - you know as the lockdown eases – help you with. Because I think that's something that's always been kind of at the core of me, you know I am very interested in the community because it's important, we've all got to share the same space and live together [...] One of the things that I noticed for instance in my particular avenue, I'm quite well connected with the neighbours. Just who I am - 'Hiya love you all right?' I used to go in my neighbour – she doesn't live there any more – who was like in her 80s, and I'd go and sit and have a brew with her, you know, a natter, and what you find is, but not just older people, you've got a lot of people who are isolated, prior to lockdown, prior to Covid, and one of my main things was always considering older people who were isolated, but there are also a lot of younger people who are also isolated and what I find is that people tend to cover either the older people or the young people. What about the people in the middle?

Megan: Mmm, yeah, it's really true. Tell me more about your community and how you're involved with it.

Daniella: Ok. So now where I live on the other side of town, around the corner from the City ground again, but I lived somewhere called Hulme which isn't that far from Salford, and when I lived in Hulme I didn't live far from a centre called... well, it's now called the Z-Arts Centre, which is quite a big community space which is open to the public. It's been there for donkey's years and they do quite a lot of performance based projects, and that, there. So when I was younger – I've got two children by the way – but when I was younger, I was 19 I had my daughter, I was still personally feeding her, and they had a project on which was an exhibition of a West Indian front room and I was the curator on that exhibition. It worked well because I didn't live far, I was feeding my daughter, I could push her in the pram because it was literally like a living room, erm, and from there on I did stewarding which was basically – I was studying performing arts at the time but being a steward allowed me access to the other side of the audience. So when I was studying I was studying performing arts as an actress, so that was one side of the stage, but being a steward allowed me the access to see what the general public, the issues that they faced, whether it be seating or... just... I was able to access both sides. Then I became kind of heavily involved within the community.
At the same time, if I take you back a little further than that, when I was in residential care I met a man who greatly believed in my ability from being young and they basically took me to various exclusion schools and

children's homes and I acted as a bridge between the participants and, you know, the workers. I was kind of responsible for devising short pieces and short little films and stuff like that so I think that initial kind of need being within the care system, feeling that there was a lot of injustice for young people, it kind of propelled me to want to find my own voice. Then I met this Harry who greatly believed in me and gave me an opportunity at a very young age, I was very young when they gave me that opportunity but it put me in good stead so from there on – the reason I'm telling you is to give you a bit of a skeleton if you like – I think doing those kind of things at a young age - I was fifteen so still rebelling myself so rebelling on one hand but also trying to solve issues on the other, it just… let's put it to you like this, let's strip it right down, if I didn't have good people in my life younger I don't know where I'd be. So, going through that, it's made me, number one, able to identify things, a bit like what you were saying when you were saying about everyone being in their houses isolated and you noticed that by growing stuff you could get people out, I think for me, facing so many issues at a young age, it gave me the ability to be able to see when young people are going through things, because I have been that young person. But I also had the bravery to sit with the chief executive and say 'Hey! You need to make changes. You are not doing justice by people!' Er, yeah, before I end up going on a rant…

Megan: No, wow, it's really interesting. It's so cool that you've – I dunno – that you've really made the most of your experiences and used that in a positive way, you're obviously super passionate about it and have made an impact connecting with all these people… it's a really beautiful…

Daniella: You know what, Megan, all I can say is, I just know naturally I've got a heart for people and just by speaking to you only very briefly I can tell that you're the same kind of person as that and I feel like people like us are supposed to make changes to help people because, you know, today, even right now with this whole Covid we're living in unprecedented times we really are, you know it's... we're becoming more and more isolated and the impact of that on people's mental health is just…

Megan: I know. I think that in a way the pandemic has really brought forward the importance of community because, like you said, people are so isolated and I think before people wouldn't necessarily think about the other people in their community and what they were up to, they were so busy just

going about their own lives and now people have had the time to reflect on it more, erm, I think, hopefully that some good will come out of that…

Daniella: That's a really valid point and to be honest with you, personally, I've always felt that I've always considered the community, I think you're like that yourself, I just thought that everybody just considered one another and I think that you've made a really valid point I think we've got a new found renowned appreciation of one another that we didn't have before and, you know, a lot of people have lost a lot of people. Time's precious, life's short, you know. I can speak of my own experience of that. I lost my own mother, to cancer, prior to Covid, I lost my grandfather within Covid so you know we have to make the best and the most of what we've got while we've got it.

Megan: Yeah, absolutely. I think a lot of people have kind of taken that away from it at least but, yeah, it's just going to be interesting to see whether it sticks and it remains or whether people will go back to their old ways, I think.

Daniella: My worry, Megan, if I'm really honest - and I can't speak for the whole population - is that a bit like when we lose someone, you know, when you have that kind of, I don't know, that epiphany, that kind of, 'Right! from now on, we'll be doing…' and before you know it, a few weeks down the line, months, you get sucked into the same routines, you know. A lot of people, their whole lives are taken up with work. You find that people in this lockdown are only just getting to know their husband after twenty years of marriage…

Megan: Yeah, it's true.

Daniella: It's madness.

Megan: So, I think it was really interesting when you talk about adapting to new routines. Is there any kind of routine that you've picked up on that you weren't doing before that you would like to continue with?

Daniella: Most definitely. I think where you were saying in terms of growing the food, my little plantation has been music - planting seeds of music here and there - and I've surprised myself and I'm enjoying it and I want to develop it more.

Megan: That's great. That's really exciting.

Daniella: I think I've found myself somewhere within the lockdown, which has been interesting because I think that - similar to, well not that you were saying this, I'd better not put words in your mouth - but what you were saying about the live music and that, I think sometimes when we've got access to some of... for me anyway, I'm always so busy at times that I've even been distracted from myself.

Megan: It's interesting that you say that because at the start of 2020 I made a new year's resolution to spend more time by myself, with myself, but not - I mean I spent time by myself, but you know, like, enjoy the time you're - like make time for yourself, not just doing your own chores - and I just had such a busy life before and then obviously when lockdown happened it's completely re-changed the whole thing and I've felt like it's helped me re-set and, yeah, I definitely have a lot more time that I, like, focus on myself in - try not to be in a selfish way, in just like a self-learning and growing way.

Daniella: Yeah, definitely. Self-development. Dealing with self. It's true.

Megan: And I think that I've really noticed the benefits from it.

Daniella: I just… One of the main things about what you were saying there, the word jumped out at me when you said re-set, a re-set, and I find that a lot of people that I'm speaking to that's exactly how they feel. I don't know whether we've had some kind of global re-set, but a lot of people on a personal basis are describing some kind of personal re-set and I'm personally feeling that also so - like you said hopefully a lot of positives will come out of a very - I don't even know what to categorise the time as, an unprecedented time I guess, but…

Megan: So when things are back to normal, as they say, is there any kind of thing that you would like to do? What are you looking forward to the most?

Daniella: [...] I need to be out in nature, I need nature.

Megan: I absolutely agree. But it's something that I didn't realise until lockdown either. I used to live in London, and there's also green spaces actually which I felt like I had to be at, so maybe that was a sign, but coming out of London has made me realise that I don't want to go back there, there's too many nice green spaces up here and countryside that's easy to access and I think that, absolutely, it feels like it does the world of good being around nature.

Daniella: You know what's so weird about what you're saying, my mother was not from Manchester, my mother came from a very - I don't know how to put it, kind of background - her father worked for government - and my mum literally got on a train and got on the wrong train and came to Manchester, yeah, and never went back… It's just so interesting what you say about London because my mum, once she left down South, she was - she'd go and visit, as a child you know we'd go and visit my grandfather, but she didn't want that life any more down there, she wanted to come to Manchester and be free to live a Mancunian life…

Megan: [...] I think, for me, there's magic in London and I loved every second of living there and it's not that I wouldn't go back, but I think that being up here has made me realise how much I appreciate the countryside, because I actually grew up in Macclesfield, on the edge of the Peak District and I never appreciated it as a child and then living in London – I loved London and everything about it – but since coming back and re-connecting with... spending weekends in the countryside rather than in a busy city, it's just made me think actually I want that, and I want to have that access to that, which is why I think Manchester is a great alternative to London because it has all of the - you can do something different every week like you can in London, it's such a vibrant city and there's so much going on - well, in normal times - but it is so well-connected to the countryside.

Daniella: [...] Do you think it's that London is so very busy? Is it that? Is it that in Manchester we're a little bit more at a slower pace? For instance I remember being on a tube and trying to speak to somebody, well that went down well(!) And people in London basically saying people are so busy that people… I mean, I'm a Mancunian, I might be biased, but I always find as Mancunians we're friendly people, we've got time to say 'Good Morning. How are you?' It just seems that in London everyone is so busy that they don't even have time to just say 'Good Morning'...

Daniella: [...] Whereas me personally, I'm a Mancunian, but I don't know, as I get older it's just the city life, I've had enough of it you know - I've always - Manchester - I wrote a poem about Manchester recently that I released onto YouTube and all the rest of it, but basically I say I've travelled but yet I've always come home because Manchester is home, but as I get older I don't know whether I want the city air anymore…

Megan: Yeah, it's interesting, I think a lot of people feel that way, but the thing is Manchester will always be your home even if you move away.

Daniella: Definitely. And like you said I think that Manchester is the new London, but in a different way we've got the kind of - not as busy, but we've got the development - Manchester - even from me being a child, Piccadilly has completely changed. You know, if you look at the kind of outskirts of Piccadilly now - Castlefield - we've got some huge buildings, glass buildings and that, it's just changed dramatically now because there's a lot of new investment, really.

Megan: How do you feel about that?

Daniella: Awgh! Now that's a good question because on one hand I want my city to thrive, on the other hand I feel that the landscape of the city has changed dramatically, for instance when they knocked down the BBC. That was a building that my whole life has been there. On one hand it's a good thing, that there's regeneration, changes and all the rest of it. And on the other hand I'm slightly - I don't know how to explain it - I'm slightly nervous about my city because it's got these huge glass buildings up in the air, you know, they're like I don't know how much feet tall, do you know what I mean? I don't like the idea of all the glass …

Megan: Yeah, and there's a horizon of cranes at the moment with all the new builds coming in.

Daniella: I almost feel - and this is a very strong thing to say now - I might have to speak to the Mayor of Manchester after this! - I almost feel that they are invading the city - they're making too much, it's too many, it's too - I've not got the words for what I'm trying to describe, it's too - there's too much investment at the moment, we need a little bit more nature within our city, there's concrete everywhere you look, do you know what I mean? Don't get me wrong, I'm glad for the new investment and, you know, the

potential new jobs for people, and the boost to the economy and that, but what about Manchester's natural skyline that used to be there? What about the children running in the parks that now the parks are being demolished and the houses being thrown up, I realise that they're making money, but at what cost?

Megan: Yeah, it's interesting isn't it to know as well whether it's for the people of Manchester or not.

Daniella: That's a very valid point as well. Is it not just the mode of new international investment? Does it - like you've just said - does it even serve the people of Manchester?

Megan: Yeah, it's interesting. I think one thing about moving to Salford is that growing up in Macclesfield, every time I would come to Manchester it would be to the city centre and I always had the impression that Manchester was not a green place at all, but now, kind of exploring a little bit beyond the city centre I realise that it is surrounded by lots of parks [...]

Daniella: Not a green place? Yes, I totally agree. There are bits of Manchester that are absolutely gorgeous, for instance where I live right behind my house there's a vale and when you go in the vale it doesn't look like you're in Manchester. There's a stream running through it, it's gorgeous, and there's a hell of a lot of greenery in that vale. But you're right, you know, for you coming from somewhere maybe like Macclesfield, it wouldn't have appeared green to you, do you know what I mean?

Megan: I think it's because I would only ever go to the city centre and I still believe that the city centre isn't particularly green, but it's been really fun to explore beyond the city centre because Manchester is more than just that. That's been very interesting and I feel like I've started to meet locals a bit more, as well, which is nice, but I haven't really had the opportunity to speak to them about how they feel about all of the developments and the changes to the city so it's interesting to speak to you and kind of get that perspective from a Mancunian.

Daniella: Can I ask you, you know, after this lockdown would you be interested in - I can't even get my words out - would you be interested in interacting with the general community a little bit more?

Megan: Yeah, definitely. At the moment I'm like itching to join something, but I'm kind of waiting for things to open up.

Daniella: I can help you with that. I know so many… Obviously because I'm born in Manchester, there are so many... For instance, even in Hulme there's a massive allotment, I think they have a growing community, or something. Something like that would be good for you.

Conversations between: Alex and Anne.
Moderator: Jo.
Date of Interview: 10 April 2021.
Transcriber: Jo**.**
Overseen by PHM staff: Abir Tobji (More in Culture Labs Project Manager).

Alex: Manchester has a certain spirit. This is something I realised, I saw very early. Everybody somehow speaks the same language, wants the same thing, is generally open-minded, somehow. So there's a certain spirit that Manchester has which I saw and liked immediately.

Anne: [...] The thing that attracted me to live here in the first place is that it's a very diverse neighbourhood. There's a lot of Asian families here. There's a large Polish community, actually. You can go and walk around Alex Park and you hear so many different languages being spoken - a lot of European languages as well - and I really like that. My neighbours, just in my little bit of the street, I've got West Indian neighbours, some Asian neighbours, some Polish neighbours out the back, a Greek person lives over there - so a wide variety of people. I live right next door to the British Muslim heritage centre which is a beautiful old college and so I meet people all around really.

Anne: [...] Sometimes, when you just meet with your friends all the time, you can just… you all agree with each other. Don't you? You tend to choose your friends who've got similar ideas and values as yourself. So it's

nice to meet people and maybe discuss things and have a bit of challenge to your own ideas.

Alex: [...] The history of Manchester kind of requires that you have a lot of people from abroad and this is why a lot of people feel at home here. Myself included. I feel at home because the history of the city - what it is, where it wants to go to - has always been international.

Conversations between: Susan and Ann.
Moderator: Cat.
Date of Interview: 10 April 2021.
Transcriber: Cat.
Overseen by PHM staff: Abir Tobji (More in Culture Labs Project Manager).

Susan: It would be interesting, how, like for example, the difference between what it was like to come into England in the 20s and what it's like now, and how different it is and how people manage and how they adapt and that sort of thing, you know. That would be really interesting. You should write something!

Ann: [...] I've been here for four years now. Four years now in Manchester… It's been progressing, it's been progressing, yeah. It's been good in Manchester. I really love Manchester, I really, really do. Because you have that feeling of togetherness. You have that feeling that you're close to someone - that's how I feel. It just feel more at home in Manchester than in London. Every place was like busy, busy, busy… I'm not saying we're not busy in Manchester, but there is this feeling that somebody really cares, somebody really there for you. You can speak to somebody, you can talk to someone - just like this platform. Back in London, it feels like nothing can be accessed, everything just like high up, high up, high up. When it comes to Manchester, you find that support, help and everything you can literally, like, get people who will really be there for you, to support you. How I got involved in More in Common is from a

platform, Women Asylum Seekers' Trust, which they did immensely for me when I was really struggling to get my [remain to] leave. They were really supportive to me and my daughter then. I was quite heavily pregnant, I was struggling and all that. Really, really, really supportive. They provided things and made sure that we were okay and all that. I'm really, really appreciative to them.

Conversations between: Muliana and Benjamin.
Moderator: Asma.
Date of Interview: 11 April 202.
Transcriber: Roger.
Overseen by PHM staff: Abir Tobji (More in Culture Labs Project Manager).

Muliana: What do you think about what's happening with Covid and things like that, what do you feel about it?

Benjamin: So, first of all, I count myself really lucky, that for myself and my family we've sort of avoided the worst of it.

Muliana: Ah, ok.

Benjamin: It's made me, sort of, you know – most people I know are still sort of fairly healthy and they're getting on ok with work and that kind of thing and yeah it's made me feel relatively grateful and thankful for just, sort of, simple things like your health and, you know, and the well being of people you love. So, yeah, how about you, are you, sort of….?

Muliana: I find it, er - I miss people. I miss people, because as you know I'm a chatterbox, I like people, I love people, so I find it quite hard, mentally.

Benjamin: Yeah.

Muliana: Yeah, it's quite hard. Erm, but I'm trying to be positive, and I'm one of those positive persons, so every morning I have to do these self-affirmations, erm, to find something positive, to say something positive, to

think something positive every single day, just to give myself self-affirmation really, but…

Benjamin: Could you, could you share a couple of those?

Muliana: Pardon?

Benjamin: Could you share a couple of those? Could you tell me what sort of affirmations you use?

Muliana: Simple things, like, you know when you wake up, 'Thank God I woke up'. 'Thank God I woke up.' 'Thank God I got nice warm house and my children is here, healthy, and thank God I've got money coming in' you know because that's another thing too many people lost their job over a year. So that's three already instantly, that I'm going to say, but I find the last thirteen months is very hard - I found it very hard - and that's why I ask you because you work in a mental health charity - not charity, organisation. How do you think people feel like it? How, you know, in your views...

Benjamin: I think it is really hard for everyone, isn't it? You know, it's completely changed our way of life. I hope, in a way that people will, sort of, find some positives to take from it, that people will, you know, find some changes to their life that have been positive perhaps, sort of, just living life at a bit of a slower pace, making things sort of less hectic and, you know, I hope people can take some good away from it but yeah I don't think you should feel alone in sort of struggling with it, because I think that's, to one degree or another, I think that's the same for absolutely everyone. I don't know, what sort of community are you part of, do you have neighbours that you sort of speak to or…?

Muliana: Yeah, yeah, our neighbours very kind of – we chat, but we don't – we say hello, good morning, but we don't, we don't really do much. I'm still chatting with friends, you know like on Facebook, on things like that, but most people lie on Facebook. Because it's social media isn't it?

Benjamin: Yeah, it's kind of like people just put a very sort of positive spin on everything which is, which is good to look at the positives, but yeah it can make you feel like you are the only one who is not feeling positive sometimes. I don't know any of my neighbours here and I feel sort of really guilty about that, I think that's one thing I would like to do better at, it's just

sort of getting along with people in everyday life, because you know I am quite a sociable person but sometimes it's hard, isn't it, to make that first – just to break the ice …

Muliana: Do you find it hard as well, this last thirteen months?

Benjamin: Yeah, it's been, erm, it's been hard, just sort of trying to be as positive as I can. Hope that it's over soon as well, hope that we've through the worst of it.

Asma: ... How much contact do you both have with people from different ethnicities, religion, language, gender? I think it goes really nice with the question that you asked, Ben, about the neighbours. How much contact do you have?

Muliana: When we start lockdown my next door neighbour made this WhatsApp group, but none of us really talked with each other and we don't really use it. But, yeah, my neighbourhood, literally, this whole street of mine, estate, it's predominantly white, and I could say I'm the only person, except one house over there, who is, erm, coloured – I call myself coloured because, you know, I'm not white British – but everybody is very very friendly in here, across the road and next door we are very friendly, even though we are different. Well, I suppose, myself, I don't see myself as different from them.

Benjamin: Yeah, which you're not in some ways, but I guess [Muliana laughs] in some ways you might feel like, do you ever feel like you miss having sort of more of a community that shares your background or do you just feel like you fit in anywhere?

Muliana: Not really, not, because I got friends also who live in different place, in different village, and if I miss them, like yesterday we had a barbecue so, in the freezing cold snow we just have a barbecue, so what? [Both laugh]

Benjamin: That sounds brilliant, it's one way to keep warm.

Muliana: How about you, how's your neighbourhood like?

Benjamin: So I feel, like I say I'm not sort of ...

Muliana: Is it flats, sorry to ask

Benjamin: Yeah, I live in a block of flats, I'm not sort of super-involved in my neighbourhood, you know, we don't talk as much as I would like to. You do see the same faces around, you know, I know people by face, but yeah I wouldn't say we were sort of close friends or anything. But yeah, within my friendship group, within the sort of people I know, everyone I feel like is very much the same age as me, you know, the same kind of background. I feel like, you know, we live in such a diverse city and maybe I don't quite make the most of that, maybe I, maybe the sort of circles that I move in don't reflect that as well as they could.

Muliana: How about your friendship? Can I ask you what kind of, erm, we're talking about friendship now, how about your friendship, do you have predominantly white friends or do you have mixed or do you have more of an ethnic kind of friendships?

Benjamin: Pretty much, I would say most of my friendship group are white people, I don't know why that might be, erm, because as I say we do live in quite a diverse place.

Muliana: Yeah. So most of your friends is white English?

Benjamin: Yeah, erm …

Muliana: It's just one of those people you feel most comfortable with, or because of what?

Benjamin: I mean, I feel comfortable around anyone, certainly not, not sort of an issue with that. I guess it's maybe how you sort of make the introduction, how you sort of, you know, how you …

Muliana: Me? My hubby is white English and I live in proper white neighbourhood, really, but my friendship is, erm, sorry to, how without saying er thingy, but I have a group of friends that have come from my country and my culture and a group of friends that are white English, understand what I mean? And for me really when you er like me, I live in England and such a big town, we have Chinatown where me and my friends from my country normally go for shopping and blah blah blah in our

own language, and then I speak differently and I think differently compared with when I go with my English friends, understand what I mean? So when I'm with my white English girlfriends and things like that, I'm more like different side of me come out …

Benjamin: Yeah. [Muliana laughs.] Does that feel like a positive thing to you to have sort of a little bit of both … or would you rather you could mix everyone in in one big kind of melting pot and everyone would…

Muliana: I feel like, it's out of respect really. You know, like, for example some of my friends, my Asian friends, they don't drink, and they're quite religious and they don't drink and we don't smoke and things like that, so most of the time I'll dress as respectable Asian girl …

Benjamin: Yeah, a little bit more conservative.

Muliana: Conservative, yeah, and I wouldn't bring a bottle of wine with me if I come to their house - do you know what I mean? More likely I'll bring a flower, and more likely I'm not going to be as loud and, you know, but when I'm with my English girlfriends and especially preparing a night out, of course I'm going to bring a bottle with me and [Both laugh] and it might be a packet of fags, you know what I mean, so it's just, it's the way … behave, erm, I think it might be because of where we are in Manchester, in the daytime I could become conservative this so-called Asian girl, brought up by Muslim parents, and in the evening I could become this so-called liberal white girl, you know, mixing up with girls on a night out, a drunken night out, you know …

Benjamin: Yeah. I think that's very cool that you understand both of those things and you seem to enjoy both of them as well, it's quite nice, to sort of be able to …

Muliana: The thing is, in Manchester, because of this town where we live in, nobody bat an eyelid, you could become that in the daytime and that in the night-time and just, people just say ok that's how you do, you know, and it's great to me, I find it that that's a great kind of quality as a town to have, that you know within half an hour from city centre it's a village like in Bury, you know. It's a village in Bury in the middle of nowhere, and then, there you are in the city centre and you have a drunken night out with your friends, and nobody bat an eyelid [laughs] …

Benjamin: Did you, er, did you say earlier that you have children?

Muliana: Yeah, yeah. Do you have any?

Benjamin: I don't, myself, no, but how does, er? - so where do they fit in in terms of – like do they understand that they sort of have a background based in two different cultures or...?

Muliana: Oh, we never, er, really... Well, I am, I'm quite proud Indonesian, I'm Indonesian. And I'm quite proud being Indonesian. So, it's kind of... both of my children have their own personality. Five years ago I took them for one year living in Indonesia, for one year, to see what people in Indonesia lived like, compared with people in England, because they both born in England, they are English, even though they have dual nationality. So when we come back from Indonesia after one year in there and we come back to the same house, they view their life differently. They realised that they are quite privileged, they are very privileged in here, um, because most children I find in this country sometimes they don't realise how privileged they are. We don't realise how privileged we are most of the time and we're an adult.

Benjamin: We don't, and I definitely didn't as a child, you take it for granted so much, so I think that'll be, for them, yeah, that'll be such a powerful experience, to know their sort of background in that way…

Muliana: Yeah, it shocked them, it shocked them literally when I took them to villages and some villagers have no shoes, you know their children only have one shoe to go to school with and that's it, and in the daytime they're running around without shoes on, could be anything bite their feet and things like that, but come back to England they look at themselves not as white children any more, they look at themselves literally as a part of, I have a different blood in me as well as English. So, they are so very empathetic to their friends, anyone, and I'm so glad and thank God I did that decision. Nowadays if they see, erm, literally, even my boy and my daughter, they have a child come to a classroom, doesn't speak any English, come from different country, you know, plonked into the middle of this primary school on their own, normally, and this is I have heard from my children and the teacher as well, my children were the first person to go and say hello and try to make them friends, because they know how that

feel like, they know how that feel like to be somewhere in a foreign country you don't know anything about. They know because I took them. I just plonked them in the middle of the country and said, 'This is where I come from. Get on with it!' [Both laugh.]

Benjamin: And they do, don't they? They adapt to it so quickly. I imagine, like, you know, they know sort of how to get on, but yeah, you can never sort of, I don't think you can ever sort of understand any sort of country or culture or the tradition or the religion without being a part of it, without seeing it first hand for yourself. You know, we can watch things on TV and read about them in books but until you've been there and seen it and done it, then you'll never have a complete understanding.

Muliana: There's another thing I think I like about Manchester as well, because of the town, we have so multi-cultural, you just don't know who you're going to meet, you don't know who you're going to meet where they come from...

Asma: [...] Let me ask you another question, that might be something to think about. Do you both feel like you belong here, in Manchester?

Benjamin: I feel like I belong here completely. I think that's probably for a number of reasons. So, one, as we said earlier, I've not really come from very far away, it's pretty, you know, if you think of my home, my background, this is pretty similar, you know. Like, I can leave here, I can be on my mum's sofa in like thirty minutes... I don't have any sort of sense of distance from, like, my background, my culture. But also I think it's a very welcoming place, you know, I think people are generally sort of fairly friendly and open and sort of caring - and I know that's not true of everyone - but on the whole that's how I've found people here, yeah…

Muliana: That's the best question, that. That's the question some people ask me and the answer is, 'I don't know'. I love – when I'm in England, when I'm in here, I love Manchester, I love it in here, I really feel like this is my home, but I miss home, on the other side…

Benjamin: Maybe you can have more than one home, maybe you can feel, I don't know, equally at home in two places?

Muliana: Yeah, that's the thing, when I'm here, I miss home in Indonesia, when I'm in Indonesia I miss home in England, because both places have things we don't have, understand what I mean? So that is the best question people will ask me and I never know how to answer it because I love them both. And I could never answer, if I had to choose one over the other I can't.

Benjamin: So what would you, erm - if you could have two or three things from your life in Indonesia and just transport them here and you could kind of mix the two together, what things do you miss the most? Is it family, or is it kind of something about...? I'll let you answer.

Muliana: Yeah, yeah. It's a whole in general thing, because it's everything, so much of everything is not nice isn't it, and when I lived in Indonesia for one year, erm, I feel like so much of my family is not really good as well because I start arguing with them [laughs]. But, no – I miss them. I miss Manchester because I like things people do, like in here, like freedoms, you have so much museum in here you can go in and out in city centre, we don't have to book, we don't have to pay. How wonderful is that? Other countries you have to pay to go to museum, in here, you go in, no problem. Wide open spaces like in a park, children's park, exercise park, anywhere, walking park, great in England. I miss that when I'm in Indonesia. But in here as well in Manchester when I'm in here, like today, I miss the beach, the nice sunset over the sea, you know, you understand what I mean? The healthy food… things like that, but I can't take them because that is coming with the atmosphere, the feeling, understand what I mean? But at the same time when it's like this now, it's snowing like this morning, you open the curtain, I did, open the curtain, all nice and white, so beautiful, that is so beautiful from inside. I will miss that if I go somewhere else, in a hot country, it's beautiful in its own way, and then you go to the Pennines and you look out and all you can see these green fields… It's beautiful. And that I would miss in a tropical question. But that's a question I could never answer. Manchester's a home for me. But half, half of my heart - good job we have two hearts because I can have one there and one there. That's why I'd fight for Manchester. I'd never leave Manchester. But at the same time, I wouldn't live there as well. I'm still Indonesian, I'm not British, even though I've been here for nineteen years. That's why I always think of myself as Indonesian British.

Benjamin: I don't think you have to choose, you can be a little bit of both if that's what feels right for you, if that's what feels comfortable. Erm, I think in every part of our lives we're lots of different things, aren't we? You know, you might consider yourself a friend, a parent, a wife. You can play lots of different roles. And that's the same with your identity, really. You can be British and you can be Indonesian and you can… Yeah, I don't think you have to choose really.

Muliana: Yeah, I think so. You're lucky, you, it's only thirty minutes away and you're in your mum's living room having a cup of tea.

Benjamin: I know. [Both laugh].

Muliana: [...] To be honest, you know, I still get called names. I get catcalled – do you call it? Is that the right word? - catcalled, yeah, I still get catcalled, up until a couple of weeks ago. Erm, to be honest, you know, I wish – and up until now, and we are 2021 – I wish that somebody, a man especially, a white man, if somebody is catcalling me on the street in the city centre for example and you heard somebody catcalling me and you stood up for me, and that for me I would always remember. But so far, not many people do that, and that, to me, it's a bit disappointing.

Benjamin: Yeah, I think it is, I think you're right, I think people, people are quite quick to sort of just turn away, aren't they?

Muliana: Yeah, they don't want, they said, 'I don't want to get involved'. But, just by saying to the other person who catcalling me, in the city centre, all I'm doing is I'm walking back from work and I get '[inaudible] show me your face!' that's normally as it's always said to me. Erm, to me, for example you walk behind me and you just turn around to that man and said, 'Excuse me mate, can you not say something like that to her, she doesn't do anything to you'... I mean, that is really good deed, you know, and someone I'd remember...

Benjamin: Yeah. It makes you feel less alone, I guess, it makes you feel like people have got your back.

Muliana: Yeah, I would really, in my opinion, in my mind, I really wish, erm, English man will tell their friends, 'You shouldn't do that!', you know, even if you're with your friends, you shouldn't catcall them, and then if you do hear

anybody else doing it, tell them off instead of just said 'I don't want to get involved'. You're not getting involved, you're just trying to set the society to a better place, that's all you're doing. We have to get involved to set the society into the better place. How we going to do it if we're not going to get involved?

Benjamin: I think that's exactly right, I think it's – you know, when I sort of said I'm lucky enough that I've never sort of been on the receiving end of that, I think it's on me really to use that sort of privilege I have of not being a victim of that, to sort of speak up really. I think you're absolutely right.

Muliana: Especially now, we're talking about Jo Cox, isn't it, because this is the memory of her. And for her to get murdered because she stand up for minorities, to me that is so good, because not many times, sometimes, that people will stand up for us, especially woman, and, in the evening on your night out, or not even a night out, coming home from work, in the evening, like, seven o'clock, it's not even late, and then you're on your own and then this guy, some Friday night out and start to have… they're not even drunk, a little bit, a couple of beer might be, and they think they own England. It's a bit disappointing really, but we do need, I think, to start educating more people that it's not acceptable. But I don't know how to do it. Most of the time, when they do that to me, depend on my mood or my courage on that moment in time, I either stand up to them or, like you said, try to ignore it, go home, get on with it, go home, and just flush it out of my system flush it out of my mind. But it does stay with you. It's only a couple of weeks ago I've been called names on the street, in here, on the main road.

Benjamin: But it shouldn't be your problem to fix, you're not causing that problem, it shouldn't be left to you to sort of educate people out of doing that, you know. You should just be able to get on with living your life and feeling safe. It's not fair that you should have to be a victim to that problem and also find a solution to it. That's a lot of, that's a lot of work for you.

Muliana: Yeah, that's another thing, like I said, sometimes we need, erm, a person, somebody, you know, one person just saying to another person, just one person sometimes it's like a domino - a domino effect, isn't it? - so fingers crossed doing this hopefully we could, you know, live in a society where we could respect each other, regardless of my ethnics, my skin colour, how I look, you know in the end of the day I can't help it where I

born, and I'm sorry, just because you think you born in here and you have white skin mother and father and from Salford you think you are more privileged than me. No! We are all human in the end of the day, but I think we need work on that, that's my opinion - we still do need work on it. Um, that's why when people ask me 'Are you British? Why not become British?' and I said 'I don't believe I have to be a certain label to feel where I belong.' Because I belong, I'm in England, I'm in Manchester and I belong in here, I, I have the right to be here! Why do I have to be one or the other?

Benjamin: I can't understand the people who would even want that kind of thing where they would live in a place where everyone is completely the same and, you know I think that's a strength and like an exciting thing about where we live is that we do get to meet people from all over the world and sort of learn from them and, yeah, just like, it makes no sense to me, it just, yeah…

Muliana: Yeah, I think one day. Do you think you feel positive we will have that society in the future? A so-called Utopia? In your imagination?

Benjamin: I am positive. I think we've – you know, if you look back to, well as far as I can look back in my life, like to the 80s, 90s, I think there has been progress. I think, generally, you know, society does sort of improve but it's slow isn't it? It's like, you know, you kind of, you want to see that change now, you don't want to wait, sort of, 20 years just to be able to feel safe on the streets, you know, it's not hard, like it should, you're not asking for a lot just to be sort of safe and respected, like it's not ...

Muliana: [...] I find it a bit - how to say this? - uncomfortable, for me, myself, as so-called ethnic minority, erm, when football is on. Why do you think some people feel like that is, kind of, make them feel British?

Benjamin: What, you think it's kind of... is it the atmosphere or is it you find it quite, sort of, it can be quite sort of macho, can't it? It can be quite sort of – it brings out the worst in people in a way.

Muliana: Yeah, I suppose you might be right there. [Sighs] I just erm, I wish, I wish, that's another thing, I wish that one day we look at each other's face, and, you know, it doesn't matter what and where, that's another thing for me trying to teach my children, I personally teach my

children that it doesn't matter where they are, who they are, what colour they are, erm, that we just bleed the same blood…

Benjamin: Yeah.

Muliana: Yeah. But I suppose like you said, it's only starting with us, isn't it? And, I'm personally starting with my children, and my friends' children who trust me, erm, because that's the only way. Thankfully, like I said, neither of my children are getting bullied, because they are very strong persons themselves. But I spoke to - a week or so ago - I spoke to people about this, being bullied, because of their ethnics. And I do have friends – because part of the project I do with PHM as well, which is migrations, I have to speak to them about second generation migrants, and I've spoken to these people from the age of nineteen, until thirty-six, and they all say they've been bullied in school as well. And that's what made me realise that we do need to do something about it, without putting ourself in dangers… and that's the fine line, of how we're going to do it without putting ourself in dangers. Um, when, when to stand up, when to back down, when to walk away, learning all those, to me it's a bit, erm, yeah, balancing act, really. And we need your help, we need people's help, we need English people's help, literally begging for them to help us, just to stand up together, you know, to this little tiny minority, might be less than five per cent at the end of the day, but those bad fungus need to be destroyed before destroying the whole plant. I look at it as gardening because I love gardening… [both laugh]

Conversations between: Lynne and Hafsah.
Moderator: Jo.
Date of Interview: 13 April 2021.
Transcriber: Jo.
Overseen by PHM staff: Abir Tobji (More in Culture Labs Project Manager).

Hafsah: There are many of us that probably need that interaction with another human being. I found that I kind of took it for granted until it was taken away. Like those little conversations with the postman, or, people delivering things, or, I don't know, the supermarket. Suddenly it was like

everybody was really cautious of each other. It was sad to see that sometimes there was hostility but that hostility came from fear.

Lynne: Yeah, I completely get that. And it still feels weird to me. It's like you'll be walking down the street and occasionally you'll see someone literally shove themselves into the hedge to get away and it's like, woah! This is a very strange way of being. It has felt very unnatural this past year. Really unnatural in a lot of ways. I think it will take a while to sort of suddenly realise, ooh! For things to really get back to how they were before. But you're right, we didn't appreciate it did we? Because you don't appreciate what you have until it's not there. And then it's suddenly...

Hafsah: [...] What I've realised is, there's nothing like being in a physical space. There's more ways we communicate with each other. And I know we're doing this over the screen, and there is a certain intimacy that's created, but it's definitely not the same thing as people actually meeting.

Hafsah: [...] Coming from the East End of London which was very multicultural, coming into Tameside was a huge culture shock. And I mean absolutely, like... I remember... I mean that's going back 27 years. I came in 1993 and I just remember there were no black families in Tameside whatsoever. There were Asians and there were white people and it was very much separated. And I just remember feeling quite, it was such a shock to me coming from the East End of London. And over the years I've seen it change a lot. And then at some point I moved to Lahore for seven, eight years. I had my children and they were quite young. I wanted them to learn the language, learn the culture, so we went and lived in Lahore in Pakistan for eight years. And then I came back and moved into Tameside, and so everywhere I've gone, there's always been this sense of, 'do you actually belong here?'. So I used to go and visit London and they'd say you've got a Manchester twang in your accent. And yet, I can be here and my children have got broad Northern accents. So I remember picking up the younger one and I heard him going, 'Mumeh, it's chucking it down.' And I was like, where did you learn that? And not realising actually our accents are so different. So I say glass and class [Southern accent] and

they say class [Northern accent]. But they're very Northern. They're very Northern like their dad. And I just remember thinking, where do I… I went to Pakistan and if I spoke Urdu there, they could tell I had this British kind of twang to it. So they knew that I wasn't from Pakistan. And then I came here… yeah, language and the way that we speak and that idea of where is home, you know, for me... I mean, Tameside is my home for me, Manchester. I've been here for so many years, but I also do feel because I travelled and moved to different places, I feel like home is actually this body I travel in. You know, wherever that goes, that's home for me.

Lynne: [...] I feel quite rooted here. Maybe it isn't always a good thing. Maybe it should be a thing of... expand your boundaries a bit more. Especially with the pandemic.

Hafsah: Definitely. I just think you learn more as well. You see more of the world. You meet people.

Lynne: [...] I don't, probably because I'm not religious myself, I don't really engage with much. Because I would never sort of think, oh I'll go to a religious service, or oh I'll go to a religious setting or anything, because it wouldn't be something that works for me personally. So that is probably not so much on my radar [...] I think that's a very big thing that is definitely a thing when you're working in Manchester. People go out a lot. And people mix a lot with other people. And instantly as soon as you're doing that, you're seeing different perspectives to your own. We've lost that at the moment.

Hafah: [...] I remember one particular time of coming up to Manchester and being part of a project, a common word project that brought Jewish and Muslim women together in the leaves of a book. And I realised then that that was the very first time that I had sat with a Jewish woman in my life. And I remember thinking, why did it take so long? And it was nothing intentional, it's just our circles never kind of crossed each other. And I just remember thinking, wow, there's so many similarities with the Jewish faith and the Muslim faith and it's not often celebrated. You get a very mediated

lens on this kind of relationship. And so I found that interesting and it made me want to venture out more and learn just about a lot of different people's experiences. I remember that was like a lightbulb moment, just thinking, why did it take so long?

Lynne: It is interesting, isn't it? Because, as I say, because I'm not religious myself, it would never sort of probably occur to me to do anything that is in a religious setting. Just because I'd be thinking, ooh, ooh, is someone going to try and persuade me? Ooh. Not that I would find that offensive because I would just ignore it. But it would just sort of, you sort of think, well, maybe you're sort of cutting your nose off a bit there, with things like that.

Conversations between: Miriam and Amina.
Moderator: Cat.
Date of Interview: 15 April 2021.
Transcriber: Cat.
Overseen by PHM staff: Abir Tobji (More in Culture Labs Project Manager).

Miriam: So, my job now I have, like, 10 to 12 people that I work with one to one and I would say, I think probably actually every single one of them… So initially, over lockdown we were doing over the phone, talking to them, doing support sessions and each one of my service users at some point was racist either about someone else or towards me when I told them: 'Oh you know, I'm Chinese but I was adopted'. 'Oh my god, you don't sound Chinese. No, you can't be Chinese' - well, I am Chinese! Or comments of, like, you know: 'I wanna move out of this area because there are so many coloured people, there are so many black people, there are so many Asian people' and they're telling me they want to move from an area because there are so many Asian people - they don't know what I look like, they only know what I sound like and on the phone - because I am British, I've been in the UK since I was nine months old - you know, you say to them: 'Well, of course we can move you, but you know I'm Chinese' and it's that

awkward moment of it being like... I mean initially when I first started the job it did upset me quite a lot because I've had it my entire life. I've had people my entire life be like either 'Where are you really from?', 'Your English is absolutely fantastic', shouting things down the street at me, like racial slurs… and I was like, I don't want to go into a job where I'm - I don't want to say slaving away - but breaking my back emotionally and physically to support these people as much as I can because I see that they have such high needs, to then have them kind of insult me with something which my entire life has been something which until very, very recently has caused me so much upset and identity crisis of who I am or who I want to be. And then I realised that actually it's not them. I'm not angry at them because these people genuinely have absolutely nothing - they've left school when they were seven or 10 or however old. They have no idea what they're saying or what - I mean, maybe they do. I always struggle as well with the kind of responsibility that people have to kind of… you know, it's like okay, there's a reason but is that an excuse? Do you have to learn to not have, you know... do you know if you are being insulting? Do you know if you're being racist? Do you know if you're being classist or whatever?

Amina: [...] I really am passionate about connecting different types of people. I mean, I dunno, I'm really completely hippy-dippy. I'm out there, like, we're all the same, we all need to be connected. And like I said, intergenerational, different cultures... I was brought up in a really multicultural environment - my dad's from Iran, my mum's English and I was brought up in inner-city Birmingham in an area called Small Heath. It was just, so, like, so diverse, it was so culturally diverse.

Miriam: Birmingham is very diverse.

Amina: Yeah, it was so enriching for me to grow up amongst so many... I mean, as well, I was very lucky as my dad's an artist, my mum works in education, and they're just kind of, very, kind of, a bit hippy-dippy and kind of really bohemian, but like from working class backgrounds as well. So it's nice because I saw - I was mixing with people that were middle class, kind of like working class and from [inaudible] community, from Chinese

community... It was very, very mixed and I love to celebrate our diversity in this country and the melting pot that it is. I just think we should be really proud of it and we should be talking to each other, having dialogue a lot more than we do. And that's what makes me feel really, I dunno, I just feel really warm and fuzzy when I kind of connect with different types of people. At the moment, it is - I think it is older people as well I really, like we were saying, I think there's such a gap there. But, yeah, I dunno, I'm just really interested in people so it's perfect isn't it, because it's like you don't know who you're going to get, I could talk to anyone!

Conversations between: Kim and Vanessa.
Moderator: Roger.
Date of Interview: 29 April 2021.
Transcriber: Roger.
Overseen by PHM staff: Abir Tobji (More in Culture Labs Project Manager).

Kim: I came here in 1993, as a student, so I'm from Cumbria, a bit further north from here, originally, and so I applied to Manchester. It was the sort of city where we came for school trips and outings, and it just, you know, as a country girl, we came here every so often, and I thought, gosh, this is where everything happens... So I've been here since 93, really, and I've been here that entire time, erm, just lived one year in France, so we've both lived in different countries. I've never lived in London, but I… yeah, mental health wise, I've been working in prisons and probation settings for a very long time, so there's been a lot of mental health related work around that, and also it's interesting that you said you were involved in cancer screening because, yeah, a year ago I was diagnosed with a brain tumour, so, yeah, so I'm not given a very good prognosis, anyway, I'm still here! I'm still here and I'm sort of not doing treatment any more, but I'm just going my own way at the minute….

Vanessa: […] I had this dream as a kid, that I would come to the UK, and I would be on the West End. That was my ultimate dream [both laugh] and that was, you know, in school, those were my passions, was English, History and Drama, and Art, so I always had it in the back of my head that I

was going to come to this magical country, that, you know, you get to experience all these things, you know, because when I was growing up in South Africa it was still very sanctioned, so we had, erm, you know, we weren't... the UK to me was this, like, you know, that American Dream that you would get if you were looking at America, it was this amazing place that embraced art and diversity and culture, and that's just what I wanted. I learned The Phantom of the Opera, the score, word for word, so when I went to go and see it in London when I was about nineteen I was just in awe. So that was my plan. It didn't go to plan, as nothing does when you decide these things [...] Manchester has changed so much in the time I've been here. But even back then, it was just, it had this really chilled vibe, you know, from living in London and I was commuting from Hertfordshire into London central every day for work, you know, and I was doing three hour round trips some days and it was just this busy, busy, busy lifestyle […] it is real, that disengagement of humanity in London, it's just, you know, Don't look! If anything happens, don't get involved, erm, and then when I used to come here, it was just, you know, it was just a sense of camaraderie amongst the people in the city, so I made the decision that I wanted to move out of London and come up and try life up North, and I've not ever looked back...

Kim: [...] Probably one of the best jobs I've ever done was my next job after I was made redundant was at a place called Arts About Manchester [...] that was a really exciting project, it was like a three year funded project from the Big Lottery to develop Black, Asian and Chinese audiences for the arts. There's all this research saying the only black people in the buildings are the cleaners, there's no-one at the top. So that was four glorious years of working with musicians and DJs and writers, poets, dancers. It was just the best fun, we had a lot of budget, we made a lot of good things happen... really, really kind of connected me to the city, I've got so many friends today, even from back then […] I applied for a job to be Reader in Residence at Styal Prison, you know near Wilmslow, and got that job and that was just the best! Again that was the best fun, that was for about a year when I was, erm, going in and doing groups with the women and we were doing all kinds of artistic activity around what we were reading. We'd read extracts or poems and then we'd do a creative writing exercise or we'd do some capoeira dancing, or - gosh, what else did we do? - We did some beatboxing, we did some… yeah, all kinds of stuff. It was just the best... I really, really loved that. I t just kind of got me really interested in the criminal justice world, really, and the rehabilitation stuff you can do with

creativity [...] When I was in probation, I set up a reading group there which is one of the jobs I've done before in Prison and Probation Hostels, I absolutely loved it, it was the highlight of my week, we'd just sit around and read a short story, read a poem, and then discuss it and then… it was absolutely fantastic...

Vanessa: […] We don't have boxes in my home, so, you know, we don't say that's for boys and that's for girls, and that's… I came out as gay four years ago, and, you know, although I've always raised them to be who they are, it's allowed me to learn a lot more about gender and identity and what that means for people, and I've implemented that in my parenting, for the children, and on the back of that it means my daughter is comfortable to say to me 'Mummy, I don't want to wear girls' clothes I want to wear boys' clothes' and obviously they have talked a lot about gender at school […] I love the fact that my children are able to be who they want to be, and that's been really important to me, and I feel that that is, again, something that Manchester allows them to be, you know, in all the places that I've been, Manchester has been one of the places where - you know, yes there is still those elements of, you know, people saying inappropriate comments or, you know, things, but… I can be myself and I don't feel like I can't hold my partner's hand or, without, you know, and people do still look, and we understand that, you know, and a lot of people... it then brings me on to the conversation of, you know, well people say 'Why do you have Pride?' and it's because we, it's the one weekend where we celebrate that we are able to be free. Growing up in South Africa, you know, it was very difficult to be gay, especially when I was a child. But also, it's the one weekend where we can remember the people who haven't lived to see this, you know, and so yes, I'm very fortunate, I love the fact that my kids are growing up in Manchester, and that they are getting to grips with the street art, you know, and the cultural diversity that's in Manchester [...] The moment for me that really showed why Manchester can lead the North in showing how we all kind of are linked together and our camaraderie is the reaction to the bomings. I went to the memorial the day after and it was moving beyond how I've ever seen. I've never experienced an entire city coming together to mourn with people and the feeling of… it didn't matter, there was no… It was everybody. It was gays, straights, Asian, Chinese - we were all stood together. There was no segregation, it was all very… For me, it's the example of what this country should be looking at when they look at how a city comes together and then on then back of that, the idea of then bees and we're a hive and we're all sort of part of this hive of people. I think

anybody in Manchester, or anybody looking to come to Manchester, to make Manchester their home, if there was one clip that I would show them to really sum up what Manchester stands for and for the people that live here, it's that. It's that moment and it's that response to… you know, when one hurts, we all hurt. That, for me, is something that made me fall even more in love with this city and the people in it.

Kim: [...] It was quite phenomenal to go and like be in St Anne's Square, you know where there was the flowers they grew and they grew and they grew and just, I don't know, I felt very proud to be from here at that time, very very much so... it definitely made it feel more like home than it had done.