

Building a society where NO male survivor is left behind

BEYOND THE

# SILENCE

16<sup>TH</sup>

ISSUE SEVEN  
Summer 2025



FINDING YOUR  
**TRIBE**

+ THE IMPORTANCE  
**OF PRIDE**

Page 14

INTERVIEW

# POBOLY CWM'S MATHEW PRICE

**ACTOR MARK STUART ROBERTS SPEAKS**

"We can't skirt around this issue, because survivors weren't given that choice."

WE ARE  
SURVIVORS.



# BEYOND THE SILENCE

[ WE ARE  
SURVIVORS. ]

ISSUE SEVEN Summer 2025

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[ WE ARE  
SURVIVORS. ]

BEYOND THE SILENCE is published quarterly by We Are Survivors, and is edited, designed and produced by our Grahame. We'd love your feedback. What would you like to see in future editions? Let us know.

✉ [media@wearesurvivors.org.uk](mailto:media@wearesurvivors.org.uk)🌐 [www.wearesurvivors.org.uk](http://www.wearesurvivors.org.uk)

"Nid oes unrhyw oroeswr gwrywaidd wedi'i adael ar ôl."



# WHAT IS A COMMUNITY?

Have you found your tribe?

**Well my answer is simple... a community is anything you want it to be.**

It's a group, a collective, a shared space, a sharing of attitudes or interests, it's a commonality, it's togetherness – I guess it's the opposite of the contributing components of abuse... its not isolation, its not about siloing, its not about separation, and not about seclusion.

Many years ago, the author and activist, Mike Lew, said to me "abuse happens in isolation whereas healing happens together" and that has stuck with me through the building and development of We Are Survivors. My task as the CEO of the organisation has been to build communities, to foster the growth of community, and to ensure we are leading or being part of many communities, whether that is the male survivor community, the victim/survivor

organisation community, the voluntary sector... its all about togetherness. I'm extremely proud of the community we've built here at We Are Survivors, and even more proud of the community members. Every day these male survivors walk through our doors, express their vulnerability and ensure that they make time and space for their 'fellow man'. They stand up for each other, they fight for each other, they share their worries and support each other.

They ensure that they hold the door open for the next male survivor to walk through it, and they ensure they stand by and with female survivors for the same reasons they do what they do for male survivors... because no survivor should ever be left behind.

**DUNCAN CRAIG OBE**  
Chief Executive Officer

# NEWS

## ARE WE FIT FOR THE FUTURE?



Health Secretary, Wes Streeting, launches the NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England.

Our NHS is set to undergo one of the biggest transformations in decades through three radical shifts:

- from hospital to community
- from analogue to digital
- from sickness to prevention

The Prime Minister, Sir Kier Starmer, has said the time now is for the NHS to undergo major surgery and for the country to not use sticking plasters.

You can read the new strategy at [www.longtermplan.nhs.uk](http://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk)



## HM INSPECTOR RECOGNISES IMPROVEMENTS AT GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE

...BUT STRONGLY RECOMMENDS ADDRESSING TRAINING GAP AND PROBLEMATIC USE OF VARIOUS AUDIT TOOLS.

The Inspector and officials also identified the failings in some cases in GMP's initial response to supporting victims and survivors, and the inadequacy of some investigations.

The Greater Manchester VCFSE Victims & Justice Leadership group, made up of charities from across the city-region have welcomed the report and invited GMP to engage with them in addressing the Inspectors recommendations.

NO MALE SURVIVOR LEFT BEHIND

## HAVING OUR SAY

**We Are Survivors responds to the Government.**

Over the past three weeks, We Are Survivors has been busy collecting the ideas, opinions and evidence of experience from our staff, expert reference group, and survivors, so that we can submit an official response to Government's EHRC consultation.

We have now responded to the EHRC consultation on services Code of Practice, following the Supreme Court's judgement regarding trans women. Our submission made it clear that We Are Survivors have and will always welcome ALL MEN into our space, which includes trans men, and we welcome non-binary survivors into our male survivor space if they wish to be here. We do this because our vision is ensuring NO MALE SURVIVOR LEFT BEHIND.

We have also now submitted a response to the Home Office consultation on the request by CPS and Police for what is called Third Party Material - counselling records, ISVA records, etc.

We have always been clear that any records or notes taken in a counselling session have no place being in a court room, and that we will continue to protect client records from view whilst also strictly following the law and GDPR.

We will soon be submitting our response to the consultation on the Government's proposed Men's Health Strategy.

It is our responsibility to ensure we play our part in having male survivors voices heard, included, and that no male survivor is left behind.



# MEET THE TEAM

## MICHAEL JORDAN Nightingale Navigator

"I'm Michael and the I am the Nightingale Services Navigator at We Are Survivors. My role falls into two camps. I oversee the booking of our [Nightingale Suite](#) for video recorded interviews and remote probation hearings. It is important that survivors who are taking part in these interviews after reporting have the option to do so in a familiar and safe environment. This empowers them to have control over their survivorship and to give the best evidence they can. We are home to one of a number of similar suites that can make the interview recording process more accessible and convenient. I am also developing our [Nightingale Services](#), so that we can additionally help the supporters of survivors. The after-effects of sexual harms can have a knock-on impact on those close to the survivor, be that a loved one or professional supporter. We are therefore proud to say that we can offer support to them as well. We currently offer Advocacy and Therapy services to supporters, as well as the Nightingale Safe Room, where supporters of survivors can get together and share their experiences. ■



Find out more about our work at:  
[www.wearesurvivors.org.uk](http://www.wearesurvivors.org.uk)



# OUR STATS

THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE. AT A GLANCE.

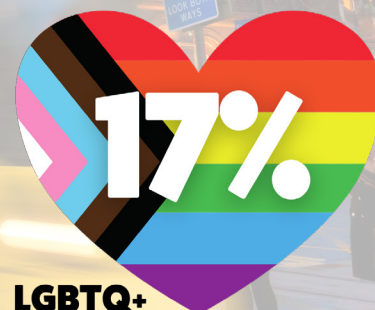


In this issue of *Beyond The Silence*, we're celebrating the power of community. At We Are Survivors we're proud to work across many communities within Greater Manchester. This page is just a snapshot of who we're reaching. Referrals to us come from across the region, from many different backgrounds. We're proud that 17% of those accessing our services are part of the LGBTQ+ community. *All data covers the period March 2023 - April 2024.*

## REFERRALS



## ETHNICITY







DCSRECRUITMENT



Handelsbanken

B&Q

FOUNDATION

AutoTrader Group



# YOU'RE IN GOOD COMPANY



Here are just a few ways your company can support We Are Survivors...

## CHARITY OF THE YEAR

Raise funds year-round by running a calendar of fundraising events, engaging employees and showing commitment to supporting male survivors of sexual harms

## PAYROLL GIVING

Enable employees to give regularly and tax effectively to We Are Survivors by setting up a payroll giving scheme. You simply need to register with a payroll giving agency who will manage donations on your behalf.

## SPONSORSHIP

Receive targeted branding, marketing and PR opportunities, show commitment to a vital cause and align your company with our sector-leading work by becoming a sponsor. Every sponsorship is bespoke and shaped to meet corporate objectives and priorities.

## CORPORATE GIVING

Does your company have a foundation or charitable trust? Or match employees' brilliant fundraising efforts for charities that have an important personal connection? Donations like these underpin every area of our work and support crucial services for male survivors in our local communities.

We'd love a chat over a brew to discuss fundraising ideas – please get in touch!  
[fundraising@wearesurvivors.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@wearesurvivors.org.uk)

## CORPORATE SUPPORT

# STANDING SIDE BY SIDE

We're grateful to the many incredible organisations who stand side-by-side with male survivors by raising funds and awareness, and making a positive impact on the lives of male survivors.

There are so many ways in which companies can get involved with We Are Survivors – from payroll giving and corporate donations to Charity of the Year partnerships and sponsorship. And this isn't just about raising vital funds for our life-changing support services; it is about helping us to achieve our mission of *No Male Survivor Left Behind*. We know that male survivors are in every community, in every workplace, but that it can be so difficult to talk about or even acknowledge this subject.

By supporting We Are Survivors – making a donation, showing solidarity, even displaying our name – our corporate partners could help one of their employees move a step closer to breaking their abuse silence and reaching out for support.

Over the last 12 months, our corporate supporters have:

- Funded refreshments for the lads attending our community activities
- Provided LEGO sets for our Builders Yard LEGO group
- Helped us to buy state-of-the-art soundproof booths for confidential phone support
- Provided generous matched funding for employees' fundraising efforts

To discuss an idea and find out more about how companies can support We Are Survivors, email [fundraising@wearesurvivors.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@wearesurvivors.org.uk) or call 0161 236 2182. ■



Scan the QR code to download your FREE fundraising info pack.





## WHAT IS ON IT

A harm reduction campaign like no other, led by George House Trust and We Are Survivors.

### INSPIRED BY CHEDDAR GORGEOUS

The ON IT campaign grew from the groundbreaking report on the Chemsex scene in Manchester by Cheddar Gorgeous, aka Dr. Michael Atkins. You can read Michael's report at the ON IT website. Just scan the QR code at the bottom of the page.

### NO NONSENSE ADVICE

The ON IT campaign is about harm reduction, not preaching. We give you the information, you make the decisions. The power is always with you.

### LIVED EXPERIENCE!

The heart of this campaign is about listening to - and learning from - the lived experience of Chemsex participants. No jargon.

ON IT CONFERENCE 2026

## MANCHESTER IS ON IT!

Groundbreaking conference will tackle sex, chems, HIV and consent head on! Manchester, we hope you're ready...

*'SEX! CHEMS! HIV! CONSENT! The ON IT Conference'* is the first event of its kind in Manchester. Exploring issues around sex, chems, HIV and consent, it's inspired by the joint harm-reduction campaign, ON IT, from George House Trust and We Are Survivors.

Manchester has a large ChemSex scene, and we think it's important to gather together venue owners, health professionals, content creators, and people with lived experience to explore the challenges around sex, chems, HIV and consent. This won't be a dry, corporate event. This is Manchester, we need to talk about

these issues openly, honestly and with that Manc 'can-do' attitude. Prepare to be challenged, entertained AND educated. We're absolutely thrilled that legendary Village venue, The Eagle Manchester has agreed to host the event. The team there fully understand the importance of consent, and we can't thank them enough for their support. Interested? Tickets are available now! ■



**GET ON IT  
NOW!**

Scan the QR code to visit the ON IT website and find out more!



# ONE TAP REFERRAL

Our referral app makes it easier than ever to access our services.

We Are Survivors is here to provide trauma informed/survivor focused support to male survivors (and their loved ones) of sexual abuse, rape and sexual exploitation in Greater Manchester. Our services are designed to support male survivors to empower themselves to work through personal and sometimes painful issues, guided and supported by our incredible trauma-informed team who underpin all of their actions with the three step trauma and recovery model – stabilisation, processing, integration.

Download our free app to quickly refer yourself, a loved one, or someone you're supporting — direct to our team. We aim to respond within 3 days and arrange assessments within 10 working days.

Search for 'We Are Survivors' in your app store, or scan the QR code to find out more. ■

Find out more at [www.wearesurvivors.org.uk](http://www.wearesurvivors.org.uk) ✎



Scan here to  
find out more



## SURVIVOR ALLY.

You can help make male survivors feel safe...

**We know that a visit to a barber, dentist, tattooist, sexual health clinic - or any service wherever physical contact is involved - can be triggering for male survivors.**

Survivor Ally is a joint project from We Are Survivors and Mandem Meetup and is a real commitment to support and help male survivors feel safe in places where they come into close physical contact with professionals. The mission is to educate professionals across various fields to create environments where male (including trans and non-binary individuals) survivors feel comfortable and supported when accessing services that may involve physical contact. We will do this through free, short courses aimed at creating awareness and understanding of the various factors that can contribute to making a survivor feel unsafe in a clinical and intimate setting. If you, or someone you know works in these environment, why not take the course today?

Find out more about at [www.wereallies.co.uk](http://www.wereallies.co.uk) ✎





# SILENT SILENT NO MORE

## A History of We Are Survivors

Part Three: 2017-2020

In the third of a four-part series celebrating sixteen years of We Are Survivors, we reach some of the defining years not only of the organisation, but of the entire world...

### 2017

**BIG NEWS:** Harvey Weinstein sexual misconduct allegations exposed, and start of #MeToo

**FILM OF THE YEAR:** *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*

**SONG OF THE YEAR:** *Shape Of You* - Ed Sheeran

**TV OF THE YEAR:** *The Handmaid's Tale*

We celebrated our 8th Birthday with an announcement that actor James Sutton (*Hollyoaks*) and comedian Richard Gadd were to become our official Ambassadors, joining male survivor Tom Leavesley and Sam Thompson. They would later be joined by writer Charly Lester and Ex-Professional Footballer, Steve Walters.. We also got to see Richard perform his award winning show, *Monkey See Monkey Do* as he opened in Manchester and then spent the next half a year travelling the UK and talking about the work of Survivors Manchester. Richard's show tackled the issues of male sexual violation and masculinity from an extremely personal perspective. We'd see similar

themes in Richard's stellar *Baby Reindeer* - only this time reaching a global audience - a few years later as his star ascended. Richard also supported us this year by hosting the first ever 'Manchester's Got Busker Talent'. Speaking of Ambassadors, our amazing Ambassador Sam completed a 48 hour DJ marathon and raised over £6000, whilst shouting loudly about his own positive experience at Survivors Manchester. This year also saw our involvement in supporting the research of the biggest survey of male survivors needs as part of the 'Forced To Penetrate' report. This report was led by our friends at Lime Culture as part of the Male Service Standards, and written by Dr. Siobhan Weare at Lancaster University.

### 2018

**BIG NEWS:** Marriage of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle

**FILM OF THE YEAR:** *Black Panther*

**SONG OF THE YEAR:** *This Is Me* - Keala Settle

**TV OF THE YEAR:** *Killing Eve*

"These past ten years have proved that without a doubt, change is not only possible but plausible, and at the heart of change is HOPE!" As Survivors Manchester prepared to enter it's tenth year of operation, we were in a celebratory frame of mind. This year we were once again so proud to work with Lime Pictures and Channel 4 on a *Hollyoaks* storyline which shone a spotlight on abuse within a football club. The story was based on the real-life story of our Ambassador Steve Walters. We were proud to stand with Steve at the BAFTA launch of the *Hollyoaks* story and we were featured in a live online chat at the event. Working with writers, directors and actors is important to us, it offers a valuable platform to put the stories of male survivors front and centre in people's living rooms. Having these stories so visible can change lives. In 2018 we worked with the team at *Coronation Street* on the award-winning David Platt rape story. We were delighted to bring our Ambassador Sam Thompson on board to assist with this storyline. Sam's own story was the catalyst for the David Platt arc, and we were so proud to see Sam put himself forward as spokesman in various media interviews during this time. The impact of this work speaks for itself: working with our colleagues at the National Male Survivor Helpline, the 72 hours preceding the airing of the episode, we saw a 1700% increase in calls and a 64% increase in requests for support to Survivors Manchester. To this day we continue to work with popular dramas on centring male survivors stories. You can read about our most recent contribution to the Welsh soap opera *Pobol Y Cym* in this issue of *Beyond The Silence*. Just turn the page...







## 2020

**BIG NEWS:** The Covid Pandemic

**FILM OF THE YEAR:** *Tenet*

**SONG OF THE YEAR:** *Watermelon Sugar* - Harry Styles

**TV OF THE YEAR:** *I May Destroy You*

"How do we begin to describe the year 2020, other than unlike any other in living memory?" So opened our annual report for the year. None of us could have predicted just how much the Covid global pandemic would impact us, and for us as an organisation, how much we would have to review every single action we take to keep our team safe and those that use our services connected. A plan was developed to enable survivors to continue to access support, using technology, that meant everyone could be safe. With the world 'working from home', our leadership team had to explore new forms of communication that did not rely just on human contact and interaction, and therefore developed our new

standard communication processes, digitised our referral process, and undertook work to develop a mobile app to ensure professionals no longer needed a pen and paper to complete a referral for support. We invested in computer hardware and software that put our 1:1 and groupwork into a virtual space safely, securely, and confidentially. As technology became an enabler and key to the success of our delivery programme, it also became not just a platform to meet the men we serve, but an 'office online' in the absence of the ability to have a full complement of staff in our support centre. Despite the shift to a majority digital offer, our provision in prison services and particularly those at HMP Buckley Hall continued to go from strength to strength, remaining face to face. Out of this crisis, our 'OUT Spoken' prison based talking therapy service emerged as a beacon of hope, building in size and extending its reach. So much of what we learned during this hugely challenging year helped shape and influence our future ways of working. ■

## NEXT TIME

**2021-NOW.** Coming of age and changing our name...

## 2019

**BIG NEWS:** Reynhard Sinaga

**FILM OF THE YEAR:** *Joker*

**SONG OF THE YEAR:** *Bad Guy* - Billie Eilish

**TV OF THE YEAR:** *Years & Years*

Our 10th birthday, and what should have been a celebration takes a dark turn, as news emerges of the biggest rape case in British legal history, that of Reynhard Sinaga. This case, which Survivors Manchester had been deeply involved with for the previous 18 months, erupted not only in the demand for our services but through our legal system and the entire media circus that comes with such a high profile, heinous crime. Our ISVA team worked tirelessly and relentlessly supporting victims/survivors, managing the process with Greater Manchester Police and the Crown Prosecution Service, whilst our therapy team supported those directly and indirectly affected by this crime; and working with our partners, we collectively provided a world class service to hundreds of people affected by these abhorrent acts of abuse that spanned years. In more positive news, this year saw us develop the pilot of what would become our ground-breaking OUT Spoken service - offering talking therapy services in HMP Garth and HMP Hindley. This year also saw us develop our groupwork service - something which continues to thrive to this day. In May of this year, we had the privilege to visit Uganda to talk at the 4th SSI (South-South Institute) on Male Sexual Violence in Conflict to stretch out our hand to those boys and men who have experienced sexual violence in conflicts across the world. On 27th December at 10:20pm an announcement was made that our founder had been honoured in the Queens New Years Honours with an OBE for services to male victims of rape and child sexual abuse.







# CYSGODION YN Y CWM

Cawsom sgwrs gyda'r actor  
**MARK STUART ROBERTS** am weithio  
gyda **WE ARE SURVIVORS** ar stori  
cam-driniaeth rywiol ei gymeriad yn  
yr opera sebon Gymraeg boblogaidd,  
*Pobol y Cwm*.

**M**AE GAN **WE ARE SURVIVORS** hanes balch o weithio  
gyda dramâu teledu boblogaidd sy'n gwneud y  
penderfyniad dewr i ymdrin â straeon sy'n ymwneud  
â cham-drin rhywiol yn erbyn dynion. Rydyn ni wedi  
gweithio'n agos gyda *Hollyoaks*, *Coronation Street* ac  
*EastEnders*. Mae'r traddodiad hwnnw'n parhau heddiw  
gyda'r sebon Gymraeg boblogaidd, *Pobol y Cwm*.

*Pobol y Cwm* yw opera sebon deledu hynaf y BBC. Wedi'i lleoli ym  
mhentref amaethyddol ffuglennol Cwmderi, mae'n adrodd straeon  
cymuned wledig glos yng ngorllewin Cymru. Mae'r gyfres wedi'i  
darlledu ers dros hanner canrif, ac mae ganddi le arbennig yng  
nghalonnau ei gwylwyr selog. I'r actor Mark Stuart Roberts, sy'n  
chwarae'r cymeriad boblogaidd Mathew Price, mae'n stori gyfredol  
– stori am gam-driniaeth rywiol yn ystod ei blentyndod dan ddwylo  
ei daid – ac ar fin cael effaith ddofn nid yn unig ar ei gymeriad, ond ar  
Mark ei hun. Mae'n her actio y mae Mark wedi'i chofleidio'n llawn  
a chyda gonestrwydd emosynol sy'n trosglwyddo i'r sgrîn. Os nad  
ydych chi erioed wedi gwyllo'r sioe o'r blaen, dyma'r amser perffaith i  
ddechrau.

Roedd y daith tuag at y stori hon yn un anarferol, fel yr eglura Mark:  
“Beth oedd yn amlwg iawn o'r eiliad cyntaf yw na ddechreuodd  
y peth gyda'r syniad ei hun, na'r sesiwn sgriptio. Y man  
cychwyn oedd gyda Duncan.” Duncan Craig OBE yw Prif  
Weithredwr We Are Survivors ac mae wedi gweithio  
wyneb yn wyneb gyda Mark a'r awduron i ddod  
â stori Mathew yn fyw. Mae dylanwad Duncan  
wedi cael effaith enfawr ar Mark a'i bortread  
o'r stori am gam-driniaeth. “Mae Duncan wedi  
bod yn amhrisiadwy trwy'r holl brofiad 'ma.  
Do'n i ddim yn gwybod be i ddisgwyl pan  
ymddangosodd Duncan ar y sgrîn yn ystod  
cyfarfod ar-lein cyntaf, ond yna fe ffrwydrodd  
ar y sgrîn! Buon ni'n siarad ychydig am gefndir  
a phrofiadau Duncan, ac roedd y cyfan  
frawychus. Mae gennych chi ryw fath o syniad  
ymlaen llaw o beth yw 'dioddefwr'. Ond

welais i yn Duncan oedd rhywun oedd wedi goroesi profiadau ofnadwy  
a throi'r cyfan ar ei ben. Ac mae hynny'n llwyddiant enfawr.”

Yn y sioe, mae Mathew'n dechrau dod i ddeall yr hyn ddigwyddodd  
iddo pan yn fachgen ar ôl i'w fam ddychwelyd i'w fywyd yn dilyn  
marwolaeth ei daid. Wedi bwlch o chwarter canrif, dychweliad ei fam  
yw'r catalydd ar gyfer profiad 'llifogydd' i'r cymeriad. Eglura Mark,  
“Y cyfan mae Mathew yn ei wybod yw bod ei fam wedi troi ei chefn  
arno flynyddoedd nôl, ac o'r herwydd dyma'r peth gwaethaf y gall  
ei ddychmygu ac mae'n sbarduno cyfres o ôl-fflachiadau hunllefus  
– atgofion sy'n corddi rhywbeth yn ddwfn oddi mewn iddo. Mae'n  
sbarduno pennod o 'llifogydd' iddo, ac mae angen atebion arno. Felly  
mae'n mynd 'nôl i'r tŷ lle roedd ei daid yn byw. Dyna yw'r sbardun  
go iawn, a dweud y gwir; swm y cloc, y giatiau'n gwichian, y grisiau,  
y papur wal. Mae'n dechrau rhoi'r jig-so at ei gilydd o ran beth  
ddigwyddodd iddo.”

Wrth gwrs, bydd effaith yr hyn ddigwyddodd i Mathew yn arwain at  
ganlyniadau parhaol i'w berthnasau ar y sgrîn, yn ogystal ag ar wylwyr  
rheolaidd, a fydd mewn sioc o weld cymeriad mor gryf yn mynd  
trwy drawma. “Ar hyn o bryd, rydyn ni'n ffilmio'r effaith y mae'n ei  
gael ar ei gyfeillion,” eglura Mark. “Mae ei berthynas â'i gariad wedi  
chwalu'n deilchion. Dwi'n meddwl mai'r llinell sy'n taro galetaf yw  
pan mae pobl yn dweud wrtho, 'shgwla ar d'hunan.' Ond dyw e ddim  
yn barod i edrych yn y drych. Mae mor bwysig fod cymaint o wylwyr  
sydd wedi - neu sydd yn dioddef o gam-drin rhywiol - yn mynd i allu  
uniaethu â ni, ond mae 'na hefyd ddioddefwyr eraill i'w hystyried.” O  
ran gwylwyr rheolaidd, mae Mark yn glir ei feddwl: “Oherwydd bod  
Mathew yn gymeriad mor hoffus, gobeithio bydd bobl am ddod gyda  
ni ar ei siwrne. Mae'n ffrind i bawb. Ond mae beth sydd wedi digwydd  
iddo wedi ei newid a'i ail-siapio

am byth. Mae e wedi drysu, yn  
grac, wedi cynhyrfu. Mae'r  
ffordd mae'n trin pawb o'i  
gwmpas yn anarferol, ac mae  
hynny'n mynd i fod yn eithaf  
ysgytswol i'r gwylwyr. Ond  
dyna wirionedd y sefyllfa.  
Mae mwy i'r stori hon nag







*adloniant, ac os yw'n cael ymateb cadarnhaol neu negyddol, y pwynt yw creu'r drafodaeth."*

Mae Mark wedi dod o hyd i gefnogaeth gref gan ei gyd-actor, Emily Tucker, sy'n chwarae ei gariad ar y sgrîn, Sioned: "Allwn i ddim fod wedi gofyn am gyd-actor mwy cefnogol, sefydlog a hael. Fe weithion ni'n ddi-flino i gael y stori hon yn iawn. Mae rhai golygfeydd yn gofyn am fwy na pherfformiad yn unig - mae nhw'n mynnu ymddiriedaeth, y math o ymddiriedaeth lle does dim angen geiriau. Y math sy'n gadael i chi syrthio, gan wybod y byddan nhw yna i'ch dal chi - nid yn unig fel actor, ond fel person. Rwy'n hynod ddiolchgar i Emily, sydd wedi dangos cefnogaeth gadarn bob cam o'r ffordd. Rydyn ni wedi gwthio, tynnu, a rhoi popeth i wneud hyn mewn ffordd ddilys a gonest. Ac fe wnaethon ni fe. Gyda'n gilydd."

Mae taflu eich hun yn llwyr i mewn i stori ddramatig a thrawmatig yn mynd i gael effaith aruthrol ar yr actor hefyd. Yn ystod ein sgwrs, mae'n amlwg bod Mark wedi ymrwymo'n emosiynol i'r gwaith hwn, ac mae'n galonogol gweld ei ymroddiad. Yn ffodus, mae ganddo dim cefnogol y tu cefn iddo yn *Pobol y Cwm* a *We Are Survivors*. "Mae'n stori fawr, anodd. Rydw i wedi colli cwsgr. Wedi dod oddi ar y set, mae 'na adegau lle dwi jyst wedi eistedd mewn ystafell am ryw chwe awr yn ceisio prosesu popeth. Gan fy mod i'n paratoi ac yn gweithio weithiau am 14-16 awr y dydd, rydw i bron yn cysylltu cymaint â Mathew nes i fi anghafio pwy yw Mark. Mae Duncan wedi taflu llawer o oleuni ar fregusrwydd, a phethau doeddwn i erioed yn ymwybodol ohonyn nhw. Ces i wythnos bant yn ddiweddar a bu'n rhaid i mi ffonio Duncan oherwydd roedd hi'n un o'r wythnosau anoddaf i mi ei chael erioed. Roeddwn i wedi dod mor gyfarwydd ag actio bod yn flin neu'n grac drwy'r amser, roeddwn i'n cario hyn i fy mywyd fy hun. Mae wir yn ddryslyd ac yn achosi gwrthdaro mewnol." Mae Mark hefyd yn cael cefnogaeth emosiynol yn nes at adref. "Mae fy nghariad Rhiannon wedi bod yn angor tawel i mi trwy hyn i gyd. Ar ôl diwrnodau hir emosiynol ar y set, lle rydw i wedi rhoi popeth, mae hi wedi bod 'na. Dyw hi erioed di ceisio trwsio unrhyw beth na siarad dros y blinder. Yn hytrach, mae fel ei bod hi'n reddfol yn deall 'mod i ddim angen sŵn, ond presenoldeb. Dim pwysau, ond heddwch. Gwnaeth hi le i'r tawelwch, i'r trallod, a'n helpu i ail-adeiladu." Er yr anawsterau, does gan Mark ddim amheuaeth am bwysigrwydd y stori hon: "Mae hwn a bydd hwn yn un o brofiadau mwyaf emosiynol a phwysig fy ngyrfa i. Mae clywed yr hyn mae Duncan a dioddefwyr eraill wedi bod drwyddo yn rhoi cyd-destun i bobeth, a rwy'n falch o beth rydyn ni wedi'i gyflawni a'i greu."

Mae pawb yn *We Are Survivors* yn ymhyfrydu yng ngwaith Mark a'r tîm yn *Pobol y Cwm*, a sut maen nhw wedi mynd i'r afael â'r stori hynod bwysig hon. Rydyn ni'n gwybod o brofiad yr effaith gadarnhaol



“Doedd dangos y fath lefel o fregusrwydd byth yn mynd i fod yn hawdd i mi na fy nghymeriad, ond mae'n ddiferyn yn y cefnfor o'i gymharu â'r hyn y mae goroeswyr wedi gorfod ei ddioddef. Dydw i ddim yn ofni beth sydd i ddod.”

y bydd yn ei gael ar oroeswyr gwrywaidd a fydd yn gwyllo'r rhaglen ac yn gweld eu profiad nhw'n cael ei adlewyrchu. Does gennym ni ddim amheuaeth y bydd yn arwain at nifer gynyddol o fechgyn a dynion yn estyn allan at *We Are Survivors* am gefnogaeth. Meddai Mark, "Mae rhywbeth anhygoel o bwerau am weld materion anodd yn cael eu harchwilio'n drylwyr, gyda chymeriadau mae pobl wedi tyfu lan yn eu gwyllo. Mae'n chwalu rhwystrau. Mae'n ein hatgoffa ni nad yw'r pethau 'ma yn digwydd 'yn rhywle arall' - maen nhw'n digwydd yn ein trefi ni, ein strydoedd ni, hyd yn oed o fewn ein teuluoedd ein hunain. Rwy'n credu bod gan ddrama a sebon gyfrifoldeb, nid yn unig i ddiddanu, ond i hysbysu a chreu lle ar gyfer empathi a newid. Ac mae'r gwaith sy'n cael ei wneud yma yn dangos pa mor bwysig a thrawsnewidiol y gall hynny fod."

Mae'n amlwg bod Mark yn cymryd y cyfrifoldeb am y stori hon a'i bortread o ddifri. "Yn aml, yr hyn mae pobl ei angen yw cael eu clywed a'u gweld. Mae angen i ni roi gwybod iddyn nhw fod eu llais yn bwysig, a diolch iddyn nhw am fod yn ddigon dewr i fod yn onest, a defnyddio'r dewrder hwnnw i fod yn agored gydag elusennau a all wneud gwahaniaeth cadarnhaol i'w bywydau nhw, fel *We Are Survivors*." Wrth i ni ddod â'n sgwrs i ben, mae Mark yn sôn eto am yr effaith y mae Duncan a *We Are Survivors* wedi'i gael ar y daith hon, "Wrth siarad â Duncan trwy gydol y broses hon, rwy'n atgoffa fy hun dro ar ôl tro pa mor anhygoel yw e i roi o'i amser, a siarad am hyn bob dydd gyda fi. Mae'r dealltwriaeth, y tosturi, a'r ymroddiad cyson i gefnogi goroeswyr wedi fy nhywys bob cam o'r ffordd. Mae Duncan wedi siarad gyda chymaint o sensitifrwydd a gonestrwydd, ac mae ei barodrwydd i rannu gwybodaeth, gwrandao a'm dysgu am realiti goroeswyr wedi gwneud gwahaniaeth enfawr. Oherwydd hynny rwy'n gwybod y bydda i a phawb yn *Pobol y Cwm* yn ddyledus iddo fe a *We Are Survivors* am byth." ■

BBC  
iPLAYER



Daliwch i fyny â stori Mathew ar *Pobol y Cwm* ar BBC iPlayer. Mae penodau newydd ar gael bob dydd Mawrth, dydd Mercher a dydd Iau.



# SHADOWS IN THE VALLEY

In English



We speak to actor MARK STUART ROBERTS about working with *We Are Survivors* on his characters sexual abuse storyline in the popular Welsh continuing drama *Pobol Y Cwm*.

**W**E ARE SURVIVORS has a proud history of working with popular TV dramas that make the brave decision to depict stories of male sexual abuse. We've worked closely with *Hollyoaks*, *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders*. That tradition endures today with popular Welsh continuing drama, *Pobol Y Cwm*.

*Pobol Y Cwm* (which translates to 'People of the valley') is the BBC's longest running TV soap. Set in the fictional Welsh agricultural village of Cwmderi, it tells the stories of a tight-knit, rural community. It's been on the air for over 50 years, and has a special place in the hearts of its faithful viewers. For actor Mark Stuart Roberts, who plays the popular character Mathew Price, his emerging storyline of childhood sexual abuse at the hands of his grandfather is about to have a profound effect not just on his character, but on Mark himself. It's an acting challenge Mark has embraced fully and with an emotional integrity that radiates from the screen. If you've never watched the show before, this is the perfect time to jump on-board.

The journey towards this storyline was unusual, as Mark explains: *"What was really evident from the outset is that it never really began with the idea itself, or a scripting session. It started with Duncan."* Duncan Craig OBE is the Chief Executive at *We Are Survivors* and has worked one-to-one with Mark and the writers to bring Mathew's story to life. The impact of Duncan's involvement has had a tremendous effect on Mark and his portrayal of the abuse storyline. *"Duncan has been invaluable through this whole experience. I don't know what I was expecting when Duncan came on screen during our initial online meeting, but he just burst onto the screen! We had a bit background information about what Duncan had been through, and it was so harrowing. You almost have a pre-conceived idea of what a 'victim' is. But what I saw in Duncan was*

*someone who had taken everything horrific that had happened to him, and just turned it on its head. And that's an absolute triumph."*

In the show, Mathew's realisation of what happened to him as a young boy is triggered by the return of his estranged mother after the death of his grandfather. The return of his mother is essentially the catalyst for a 'flooding' experience for the character. Mark explains, *"All Mathew has known is his abandonment from his mother. So his mum coming back after 25 years is the worst thing imaginable and triggers a series of unsettling flashbacks – fragments of memory that stir something deep within him. It sparks a 'flooding' episode for him, and he needs answers. So he goes back to the house where his grandad lived. That's when everything really triggers; the sound of the clock, the gates creaking, the staircase, the wallpaper on the wall. He starts to put together the jigsaw pieces of what actually happened to him."*

Of course, the impact of what happened to Mathew will have lifelong consequences for his on-screen relationships, as well as on regular viewers, who will be equally shocked to see such a well-established character going through trauma. *"At the moment, we're currently filming the impact it's having on Mathew's nearest and dearest,"* explains Mark. *"His relationship with his girlfriend is in tatters. I think the hardest hitting line is when people keep saying to him, 'Just look at yourself.' But he's reluctant to hold the mirror up. It's so important that we're going to relate with so many viewers who have been, or are victims of sexual abuse, but there are also the victims of the repercussions as well."* In terms of regular viewers, Mark is clear: *"People are going to be on both sides of the fence with us because Matthew is such a loveable character. He's everyone's friend.*

*But what's happened to him has reshaped him. He's confused, he's angry and he's upset. The way he's treating everyone around him is so out of character, and that's going to be quite jarring for the viewers. But that's the truth of the situation. There's*







more to this story than entertainment, and whether it's received positively or negatively, the point is to create the discussion." Mark has found tremendous support from his fellow actor Emily Tucker, who plays his on-screen girlfriend Sioned: "I couldn't have asked for a more supportive, grounded, and generous scene partner. We worked tirelessly to get this storyline right. Some scenes demand more than just performance - they demand trust, the kind of trust that doesn't need words. The kind that lets you fall, knowing they'll be there to catch you - not just as an actor, but as a human being. I'm grateful beyond words to Emily, who has shown unwavering support every step of the way. We pushed, pulled, and poured everything into executing this authentically and truthfully. And we did it. Together."

Throwing oneself so completely into a traumatic storyline is also going to have a tremendous effect on the actor. During our conversation, it's clear that Mark is hugely emotionally invested in this work, and it's heart-warming to see his commitment. Luckily, he has a supportive team behind him at *Pobol Y Cwm* and We Are Survivors. "It's a big, difficult storyline. I've lost sleep at night. Coming off set, there have been times where I've just sat in a room for about six hours afterwards really trying to process everything. Because I'm doing this 14-16 hours a day, you almost become so connected to Mathew that you forget to be Mark. Duncan has shed a lot of light on vulnerability, and things that I was never aware of. I had a week off recently and had to ring Duncan because it was one of the hardest weeks I've ever had. I'd become so accustomed to playing at being upset or angry all the time, that I was carrying it over into my own life. It's really confusing and conflicting." Emotional support for Mark is also coming from closer to home. "My girlfriend Rhiannon has been my quiet anchor through this. After long emotional days on set, where I've given everything, she's been there. She's never tried to fix anything or speak over the exhaustion. Instead, it's like she intuitively understands that what I needed wasn't noise, but presence. Not pressure, but peace. She made space for the silence, for the unravelling and the recharging." Despite the difficulties, Mark is in no doubt about the importance of this storyline: "This will and has been one of the most emotionally demanding and deeply important experiences of my career. But it's a drop in the ocean compared to what survivors have had to endure - I'm not afraid of what's to come. I'm proud of what we've achieved and created."

Everyone at We Are Survivors is beyond proud of Mark and the team at *Pobol Y Cwm*, and how they have approached this hugely important story. We know from experience the positive impact it will have on male survivors, who will be watching the show and

“Showing such a level of vulnerability was never going to be easy for me or my character, but it's a drop in the ocean compared to what survivors have had to endure. I'm not afraid of what's to come.”

seeing their experience reflected back. We have no doubt it will see increasing numbers of boys and men reaching out to We Are Survivors for support. Mark reflects, "There's something incredibly powerful about seeing difficult issues explored in a familiar setting, with characters people have grown up watching. It breaks down barriers. It reminds us that these things don't just happen 'somewhere else' - they happen in our towns, our streets, even within our own families. I think drama has a responsibility, not just to entertain, but to inform and to create space for empathy and change. And the work being done here shows how important and transformative that can be."

It's clear that Mark is taking the responsibility of this story and his portrayal with great pride. "Often, people just want to be heard and seen. We need to let them know their voice matters, and thank them for being courageous enough to open up, and to have the same courage to open up with charities that can really make a positive difference to their lives, like We Are Survivors." As we bring our chat to a close, Mark reflects again on the impact Duncan and We Are Survivors has had on this journey, "Speaking to Duncan throughout this process, I keep on reminding myself how unbelievable he is after what he went through, and how brave he is to give up his time, and talk about it every single day with me. The insight, compassion, and unfaltering dedication to supporting survivors has guided me every step of the way. Duncan has spoken with such sensitivity and integrity, and his willingness to share knowledge, to listen, and to educate me about the lived reality of survivors has made a profound difference. For that I know myself and everyone at *Pobol Y Cwm*, will forever be indebted to him and to We Are Survivors." ■

BBC  
iPLAYER



Catch up with Mathew's story on *Pobol y Cwm* on BBC iPlayer. New episodes are available every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. All episodes carry subtitles in English.



Grahame and Daniel from We Are Survivors on why Pride is so important to us.

**ONCE AGAIN THIS YEAR, ON IT - THE JOINT HARM REDUCTION CAMPAIGN FROM WE ARE SURVIVORS AND GEORGE HOUSE TRUST - WILL BE JOINING THE MANCHESTER PRIDE PARADE. WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT FOR US TO BE A PART OF PRIDE?**

At We Are Survivors we value community. We take great pride in the community of male survivors that use our services every day. Making connections with people who have similar experiences can create a life-long bond and help the healing process. Feeling accepted and finding your 'tribe' makes life worthwhile.

Grahame at We Are Survivors is one of the thematic leads for HIV and sexual health, and is a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community. We asked him why it's so important for We Are Survivors (and the ON IT campaign) to be seen and visible at Pride. "Male survivors of sexual harm come in many shapes and sizes and are part of virtually

every community, including the LGBTQ+ community. Events like Pride shine a light on marginalised communities. It offers an opportunity to show 'strength in numbers', it's an arms-open welcome to those who feel 'othered' and a celebration of everything that makes us unique. And, unashamedly, it's a party! For We Are Survivors, marching at the Manchester Pride Parade is a show of visibility to men and boys who may not be aware of who we are and the services we offer. For the ON IT campaign, which we deliver with our friends at George House Trust, it's a valuable opportunity for us to share harm reduction messages around issues of sex, chemo, HIV and consent - four pillars that are a big part of any Pride event."

Daniel at We Are Survivors also shares a thematic lead on HIV and sexual health and told us, "Pride is a party! It's a party because we celebrate the courageous LGBTQ+ community who stood tall and walked the pavements, campaigned against injustice, rights and laws being overturned, to bring equality. But the fight continues, because when we

# PRIDE

## WHY DO WE DO IT?







**"Events like Pride shine a light on marginalised communities and help us show strength in numbers."**

stand, our voices can be amplified. It was amazing that Grahame and I had the opportunity to attend the community Prides across Greater Manchester last year to promote ON IT, a partnership campaign from We Are Survivors and George House Trust - two organisations who know all too well that activism and coming together makes a difference. People are seen, heard and supported. Pride is everything, but won't stop until we have equality for ALL!"

We'll be marching proudly with the ON IT campaign and our friends at George House Trust. We'd love you to join us. Everyone is welcome... and you'll get a free t-shirt!

To book your place with us on the Manchester Pride Parade, which takes place on Saturday 23rd August, drop an e-mail to: [onit@wearesurvivors.org.uk](mailto:onit@wearesurvivors.org.uk)

**WE ARE  
SURVIVORS.**

GEORGE  
HOUSE TRUST

**ON IT**

SEX, CHEMS, HIV & CONSENT

# COMMUNITY

We understand how important the strength of community is. We work with a diverse range of communities at WE ARE SURVIVORS...

## THE REFUGEE COMMUNITY

"Men who have experienced displacement (those seeking asylum and with refugee status) face further stigma, isolation, and barriers according to the culturally complex circumstances impacting their survivor stories. Displaced survivors face daily hostility and distress impacted by systems which intensify their trauma experiencing; it is important for us to provide a safe and trusted space for them, not only to heal from past trauma but to show them we care enough to support them through their present challenges too."

REBECCA

## THE HOMELESS COMMUNITY

"It is important that we continue to work with homeless survivors because for many of those that we work with sexual harms are the root cause of their homelessness, an effect of their homelessness, or both. So, by continuing our work with this community, we hope to simultaneously tackle the reason someone may have found themselves rough sleeping and provide support to those who continue to be more vulnerable by nature of their housing situation."

KAELIN

## THE FAITH COMMUNITY

"Survivors from the Faith community can face unique barriers in getting the support they need. While faith can sometimes be a huge part of their trauma, it can equally be a large part of their healing. Indeed, in some cases, survivors who have faith can find that their trauma brings them closer to their faith. It is therefore important for We Are Survivors to work with the Faith community to ensure that all male survivors are seen, heard, and supported."

CHRISTOPHER

## THE PRISONER COMMUNITY

"Men who've found themselves on the wrong side of the law are among the hardest to reach in men's mental health, often due to deep mistrust in systems. Many have experienced trauma, including sexual abuse or rape, leading to harmful behaviours. Without We Are Survivors, they may never break their silence or begin healing. By supporting prisoners, we not only help them process their trauma, but also build a growing network of allies who encourage others to seek the support they deserve."

ROB





# STRENGTH & CONNECTION

In April and May this year, We Are Survivors hosted our very first six-week Bootcamp...

**We know the importance of inner strength in the male survivor community. We see it every day at We Are Survivors. But a few weeks ago, we took it literally and offered an opportunity to focus on physical strength, and the results were amazing!**

From April 23rd to May 28th, We Are Survivors hosted our very first six-week Bootcamp – a major milestone for our community. Led by personal trainer and professional actor David Tag at Gym Etc in Stalybridge, the sessions ran for 45 minutes every Wednesday and were followed by an optional coffee shop meet-up for survivors to connect and unwind post-workout.

Places were limited to 20, and we were thrilled to see every spot filled. It was a fantastic turnout and a true testament to the strength and enthusiasm of our male survivor community. This pilot Bootcamp marked a powerful step toward promoting both physical and emotional well-being, and the level of engagement exceeded all of our expectations.

Karolina Gallow from Gym Etc was thrilled to be a part of this project, saying, “We’re thrilled to have opened the doors of Gym Etc and teamed up with We Are Survivors to host their very first bootcamp. A brilliant start to what we hope will be a strong partnership. It’s been a real pleasure, and we’re proud to be part of such a meaningful collaboration.”





**"I just wanted to congratulate you on a successful Bootcamp. It was an honour to have been a part of it. It was a fantastic event all round!"** LIAM @ Live Great Adventure

As for the guys that took part, feedback was amazing. *"I thoroughly enjoyed the session. I haven't undertaken that kind of training for quite a while, so I was apprehensive about it. Also, engaging and participating in a group setting is a personal milestone for me, as I have socially excluded myself for quite a while now."* Another attendee told us, *"It was a positive and lasting experience."*

Here at We Are Survivors our Community Development Team offer a variety of groups and events, and every so often we'll organise special events like Bootcamp. If you want to get involved in any of our groups, or you want more information, just drop us an email at [community@wearesurvivors.org.uk](mailto:community@wearesurvivors.org.uk), or scan the QR code opposite to sign up for regular updates. Keep an eye on our website and socials too!

Find out more at [www.wearesurvivors.org.uk](http://www.wearesurvivors.org.uk)

## COMMUNITY GROUPS

### MONDAYS

#### DROP IN

A safe space to connect.

#### HEALTH WALK

Fresh air and good company. Join us!

#### MANDEM MEETUP TALKING CIRCLE

A judgement free talking circle hosted by our brothers at Mandem Meetup.

### TUESDAYS

#### WELLBEING SESSION

A weekly session in a safe space.

#### THE COFFEE SHOP

Let's grab a brew and have a chat.

#### THE HANGOUT

A brand new group for survivors 18-35.

#### THE SAFE ROOM

Confidential, peer-to-peer support groups. Talk, listen and learn.

### WEDNESDAYS

#### THE SAFE ROOM

Confidential, peer-to-peer support groups. Talk, listen and learn.

#### THE WRITER'S ROOM

Get creative. All abilities welcome!

### THURSDAYS

#### THE BUILDERS YARD (LEGO)

Come and join other survivors and get building with Lego.

#### THE COFFEE SHOP

Let's grab a brew and have a chat.

#### THE SAFE ROOM

Confidential, peer-to-peer support groups. Talk, listen and learn.

### FRIDAYS

#### THE ART ROOM

Express yourself artistically - all abilities!

#### HEALTH WALK

Fresh air and good company. Join us!

#### THE GARDEN AT RHS

Get out of the city for a gardening session in beautiful surroundings.

### SATURDAYS (Twice a month)

#### THE SAFE ROOM (ONLINE)

Confidential, peer-to-peer support groups. Talk, listen and learn.



**Scan the QR code to sign up for regular updates!**



# GALLERY

Share your art, poetry and creativity with us.

Every issue we want to celebrate the creativity of male survivors. Expressing yourself through art, poetry and writing can be an important part of healing. If you'd like to share your work, send them to the e-mail on page 2.

## AN EXTRACT FROM SEASONS

by Peter

### SUMMER

sun is shining  
it's a beautiful day  
sunlight disinfects darkness  
I feel a glow over me  
Will it shine on the guilt  
Shame  
Blame  
That's haunted me?

Angel whispers  
"it wasn't your fault"  
I have heard it all my life  
But she sounds different  
Warm  
Compassionate  
Be free  
It's my angel, my wife  
Talking to me  
The darkness leaves my soul  
I stand strong and bold  
I look up to the heavens  
Shout and see  
'THERE'S NO DEVIL IN ME'

You know where you're going  
You know where you have been  
One angel  
No devil  
You have no sin

### AUTUMN

TO ALL SURVIVORS  
WHAT IS THE MORAL OF THE 'SEASONS'  
I'VE WROTE STAND UP BE STRONG  
AND FREE  
LOVE LIFE AND BELIEVE IN HOPE  
IF ANYTHING I HAVE SAID  
BRINGS BACK MEMORIES OF YOU  
SHOUT OUT LOUD AND ALWAYS FIGHT  
THEY WERE ALWAYS WRONG  
WE WERE ALWAYS RIGHT

You know where you're going  
You know where you have been  
One angel  
No devil  
You have no sin



## I WISH YOU KNEW

Christopher from We Are Survivors previews a new book of survivor creativity.

In recognition of our 16th anniversary – 16 also being the age of consent – male survivors attending the Art Room group here at We Are Survivors have created artworks exploring the theme of consent and what it means to them.

As part of this same initiative, and as an off shoot from The Writing Room, Christopher from Community Development partnered up with Kaelin from the ISVA Team and launched *I Wish You Knew*. This is a creative project enabling clients to share the impact of sexual harm through poetry, music, short stories, and personal testimonies.

This aligns with the Victims' Code, which upholds the right to make a Victim Impact Statement under Right 7.



You can see lots more creativity and read some powerful words from male survivors on our website. Scan the QR code opposite to visit our online Gallery.



# THE LAST WORD



**EDWIN**  
Expert Reference Group  
We Are Survivors

[ WE ARE  
SURVIVORS. ]

**NO male survivor left behind**

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## ■ A MESSAGE OF UNITY



**The Expert Reference Group, our lived experience board at We Are Survivors, issues this message as we stand in solidarity with Trans survivors and the community as a whole.**

This year we've seen the President of the USA making an unfounded link between a deadly Washington plane crash and diversity hiring policies, a state-wide ban on trans healthcare, and a concerning rhetoric that focuses on division not community. Here in the UK, we've seen divisive media stories on the Supreme Court ruling and the associated impact on Trans survivors.

In May's local elections, the Reform party took power in some areas of England making it a priority to ban the flying of various flags. As a Pride organiser myself, I've had messages from fellow regional Pride events telling me they have either been cancelled or scaled back, as commercial sponsors reduce their support. And then we have social media, and the deregulated environment in which it operates. It really is a nasty place to be at times.

The effects of hate on social media platforms, the divisions sewn by politicians and political parties, and the Supreme Court decision are making 2025 a tough year for the LGBTQ+ community,

particularly Trans survivors. The efforts to split up the LGBTQ+ community itself seems to be in full swing. It doesn't take a genius to work out that sexual orientation and gender identity and expression are two different things - but that does not mean they should be divided up. Both communities have enough shared ground to be and stand together - as they have done for decades, if not centuries. LGB should be with the T - now and forever. We have more in common than in difference. It's clear to see, that those who want to gain power, whether political or cultural will use the tactic of division to spread fear and stir hatred.

As a male survivor, a cis gay man, and a Pride organiser, my "Last Word" is a message of unity. Everything gets better when we all work together. Survivors know this more than anyone! The need to stand in solidarity with the Trans community is greater than ever, and I'm proud that our charity, is ensuring that it doesn't divide, but welcomes Trans men and non-binary people into our male survivor space.

Looking after your neighbour is not a new concept. When we show up for each other, it is noticed. As survivors, we know that small acts of support can mean the world, and can become treasured memories. We can, and we will, end discrimination in our lifetimes.

**We just have to choose unity. ■**



**@thisissurvivors**

We Are Survivors is a Company Ltd by Guarantee (06811096). Registered Charity in England & Wales (1144941)

## OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

### 24/7 Support Line

**0808 500 2222**

[247sexualabusesupport.org.uk](http://247sexualabusesupport.org.uk)

### Shout

**85258**

This is a 24/7 text service that supports people if they are feeling overwhelmed or anxious.

**Free and confidential.**

### Samaritans

**116 123** (available 24 hours a day)

[jo@Samaritans.org.uk](mailto:jo@Samaritans.org.uk)

### Mankind

**018823 334 244** (Domestic Abuse

Support) Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm

[www.mankind.org.uk](http://www.mankind.org.uk)

### Dad Matters

**0161 344 0669**

[dadmatters.org.uk](http://dadmatters.org.uk)



Supporting Men's Mental Wellbeing  
Through Community, Activity & Purpose.

[info@mandemmeetup.org](mailto:info@mandemmeetup.org)

[www.mandemmeetup.org](http://www.mandemmeetup.org)





## *Raise the roof*

**MASH** IS A CHARITY IN GREATER MANCHESTER  
FOR WOMEN WHO ARE SEX WORKING.

Providing non-judgemental support around health, safety and improved wellbeing; their services range from a sexual health clinic to a night time outreach van offering support and safety to sex workers.

Sadly MASH's main drop-in space, visited by hundreds of women every year, is closed as their roof is leaking and in need of urgent repairs. Please consider donating to the **RAISE THE ROOF** appeal so they can open their much-needed and beloved drop-in centre once again.

**PLEASE DONATE TO PROTECT  
A VITAL WOMEN'S DROP-IN.  
RAISE THE ROOF FOR MASH!**



SCAN  
HERE  
TO DONATE

