**The Accessibles Issue 2**

**Disability Hate Crime –What is it and how to report it.**

This is a description of the cartoon comic called the Accessibles.

The comic is a mix of text and drawn images. Drawn images are described.

**Front cover**

A crowd of people are holding up banners. A young man and woman are at the front. The woman (Kat) is wearing a stripy top and holding her fist up triumphantly. The man (Qaasim) is wearing a dark hoodie, holding a placard saying ‘Nothing about us without us!’

In the background you can see a young person in a wheelchair holding a sign saying ‘End Hate Crime Now’. There are other people holding placards, but they are partially hidden by the couple in the foreground.

**Inside front cover…**

In the last issue...

Using a time travelling pendant watch, both Josh (or Professor Accessible, if you prefer...) and Hannah, journeyed through the ages, witnessing the history of disabled people in Manchester. They also looked at how disabled people have been portrayed in the media and how disabled people started to campaign for their rights...

About the Accessibles

The Accessibles was originally devised by young disabled people at Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People for Disability History Month. The young disabled people felt that using comics was a fun and accessible way of telling a story and providing information. Working in conjunction with Archives+ and The Disabled Staff Group of Manchester City Council, the group drafted in local comic artist Jim Medway to help pull it together. The original issue ended up winning the Manchester Community History Award in March 2016.

When it came to producing some information about Disability Hate Crime, the group felt that continuing the theme of The Accessibles was a great way to put across information on this important issue.

The comic was developed through discussions about hate crime, and a wish to encourage disabled people to report any hate incidents or crimes they experience or see.

This comic has been written by a group of young disabled people involved in Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People: Jamie Alsager, Dominic Bennett, Josh Coy, Chris Dwyer, Kat Henshaw, Dan Lawless, Qaasim Safdar and Mat Warrington. The project was facilitated and supported by Linda Marsh and Brett Savage and with the invaluable help of Jim Medway.

(Funding from Manchester City Council and the National Lottery.)

**The Comic**

Three people are on stage being applauded by a crowd. A woman is saying “…And winning this year’s Manchester Communities Histories Award is – ‘The Accessibles’ comic! – Here are Josh and Hannah to receive the award.”

Hannah is stood next to Josh (in his wheelchair). Josh is holding the award.

Hannah says “Thank you so much! It’s great to think that a comic about disabled people in Manchester has come so far.”

After the presentation, a young man and woman (Kat and Qaasim) are speaking to each other.

Kat says “Wow that was a great result with such stiff competition!”

Qaasim replies “Didn’t they look so calm up there, Kat? I’d have been a bag of nerves if it was me!”

Kat says “Yeah, Josh told me he was nervous beforehand. Come on, Qaasim, let’s get going.”

Next we see Kat and Qaasim walking in front of Manchester Town Hall. There is a newspaper stall with a headline board by it saying ‘Manchester hate crime reports on the rise’.

Looking at this board, Qaasim says “What is ‘hate crime’, Kat?”

Kat brings out her mobile phone and says “I’m not quite sure, let’s look it up.”

We see a close up of Kat’s phone in her hand, the screen shows the wording:

**‘Hate Crime** is defined as any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person’s characteristic or perceived characteristic including:

* Alternative subculture
* Disability
* Race
* Religion or belief
* Sexual orientation
* Trans

A **hate incident** is defined as above but it is when a crime has not been committed.’

Kat says “That’s a right mouthful!”

Qaasim, still looking at the phone says “Hey, scroll down”

Kat looks at the phone “Oh yeah, look, there’s a meeting about hate crime tomorrow….”

Qaasim asks “Shall we go?”

And so, at the meeting...

We see a large group of people, some standing, some sitting, all facing a stage. A man and woman are on the stage in front of a large screen that says Report it to the Police. The man is interpreting the BSL sign for ‘police’.

Kat and Qaasim are sat at the back of the room, listening to various comments being made by the other people.

“I’ve been bullied for being a wheelchair user…”

“I’ve had my hijab ripped off in the street.”

“Since people learned I’m transgender, I’ve had nasty letters and packages through my letterbox.”

“You wouldn’t believe the amount of stick I get because of my piercings, tattoos, and the music I listen to.”

“I was threatened as I came out of a gay bar.”

“I’m constantly scrubbing racist graffiti from my door.”

Qaasim says to Kat, “I didn’t realise **identity** meant so many things.”

After the meeting …

Kat and Qaasim see Dominic, who waves at them. Dominic is with a young man in a wheelchair.

Kat says “Hi Dominic!”

Dominic says “Hey guys! This is my friend Jimmy.”

Qaasim replies “Good to meet a friend of Dominic’s. Have you been to this kind of thing before? This is our first time.”

They all gather around Jimmy, who starts to speak.

“After what happened to me I found this meeting really helpful. I feel I can talk about my experiences.”

Kat asks Jimmy “Would you be OK to tell us what happened to you?”

Jimmy says “I know some people can get beaten up or even killed, but for me it all started with them calling me names, then things like blocking the ramp outside the shop. That’s when I went to the police.”

Jimmy turns to Dominic saying, “That’s one way of reporting it. After coming to this meeting I know there are other ways.”

“Yeah, someone mentioned they reported it on the True Vision website,” says Dominic.

Jimmy continues speaking, “It got to the point where I didn’t want to leave the house anymore, and became pretty isolated and depressed. Plenty of people are driven to extremes like suicide.”

We now see a close up of Jimmy with drawings in bubble shapes above and around him. They show what happened to him.

“It started one day with a couple of brutal remarks.” We see Jimmy wheeling himself away from a young woman and two young men. One of the young men is shouting at him.

“Then they started to block the ramp, and not let me in the shop. Things got proper vicious.” We see Jimmy having fallen out of his chair and the three youths are standing over him. The young woman is bending over him and laughing.

“Enough was enough, and I decided to report this to the police.” We see Jimmy the next day wheeling up the ramp and into the police station.

Next we see Jimmy sat at a table with a police woman, who is taking notes. She says, “So, tell me in your own words what happened…”

 Jimmy says “It was easier than I thought. It’s important to report this stuff to the police.”

Back to Jimmy talking to Dominic, Kat and Qaasim...

Dominic says “There are other ways you can report it, Jimmy…”

“My friend got shouted at in the street”. We see a young woman, shoulders hunched, looking sad, walking away from two youths, one of them is shouting at her. The other is rubbing his fists together menacingly.

“She went home really upset, and her mum and dad asked her what happened”. We see her being welcomed through the door by her mum.

“She didn’t want to report it to the police because she didn’t think it was worth bothering them with.” Now we see her lying in bed looking worried.

“But her mum helped her report it on the True Vision website.” We see her with her mum using the computer.

Qaasim says, “Well, I’ve been picked on because of my impairment, but never felt it serious enough to get the police involved. Aren’t they busy chasing murderers?!”

Dominic replies, “If you feel anxious or embarrassed about talking to the police, you could do it through true Vision. There’s also some places called third party reporting centres who will help.”

Jimmy joins in by saying, “Even if you don’t want it investigating, it’s important the police know about it. They can build up a picture of what is happening and where. It can help them target resources too.”

Kat puts her hand on Qaasim’s shoulder and says, “The police **do** take hate crime seriously. And you know what?

...So do we!”

The last drawing shows Kat, Qaasim, Dominic, Jimmy, Josh and Hannah at a rally with lots of other people.

Someone is shouting through a megaphone, “Promoting positive attitudes to disabled people now!”

Qaasim is waving to Josh and the others, “Hey, nice to see you guys here!”

Josh replies “Come and join the rally!”

Some people are holding banners saying:

‘Celebrate the difference’,

‘Pride not prejudice now’,

‘End hate crime now’,

‘Nothing about us without us’, and

‘Don’t generate the hate’.

**Inside back cover**

**Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People**

* Do you feel that you experience barriers in everyday life?
* Do you feel that there is still discrimination and prejudice towards disabled people?
* Do you want to do something to change this?

**Or...**

* Do you need information?
* Would you like assistance with getting the support you need?
* Do you want to find out about campaigning for rights?

GMCDP is an organisation of disabled people which is here to support disabled people. We may not have all the answers – but we should know someone who has! So please**, do get in contact with us.**

**What is GMCDP?**

Often known as ‘The Coalition’, or GMCDP, Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People is an organisation run and controlled by disabled people. Only disabled people can be on the Management Committee and vote at meetings, and GMCDP employs only disabled workers. GMCDP does, however, welcome the involvement of non-disabled supporters, who appreciate that control of our own organisations is an essential part of disabled people achieving control over our own lives.

**GMCDP aims to**

* Promote the independence and inclusion of disabled people in society.
* Identify and challenge the discrimination faced by disabled people in society today.
* Encourage and support the self-organisation of disabled people.

**GMCDP recognises that disabled people are discriminated against and actively opposes the segregation of disabled people.**

All current GMCDP publications are available in standard print, large print, audio, Braille, electronically and easier to read.

**Our contact details are:**

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**Website**: www.gmcdp.com

**Facebook**: https://www.facebook.com/gmcdp/

**Twitter:** @gmcdp

**Back cover….**

**How to report a hate incident or crime**

Kat is holding up a sign that reads “In an emergency ring 999”, and she is saying “If you do not use voice calls, register with Emergency SMS to send text instead of ringing 999. Register on the website: www.emergencysms.org.uk”

Qaasim is saying “If not an emergency, call 101 or your local police force. The phone number for Greater Manchester Police is 0161 872 5050. If you use a text phone, contact 18001 101.

Across the middle of the back page is the following:

Report the incident through the True Vision website at:

www.report-it.org.uk/your\_police\_force

Underneath this Jimmy is saying “You can report the incident to Crimestoppers by calling 0800 555111, or by their website www.crimestoppers-uk.org

At the bottom of the back cover it reads:

Some places called ‘third party reporting centres’ will take a report of a hate incident or crime from you. There are a lot of these centres.

Find a list of centres in Greater Manchester on the web at www.gmpcc.org.uk/tools-and-resources/hate-crime.

End of comic.