Working with spontaneous memorials: Reflecting on practice and co-designing guidance

International collaborative workshop
Manchester Art Gallery, 21-22 November 2024

Day 1

Welcome and Introductions

Aims and Outline

- **Discuss** conceptual, practical, and ethical issues of the collection, documentation and curation of spontaneous memorials
- **Share** challenges, experiences, decisions and outcomes

DAY 1 Journeys

- Start **co-developing** a suite of resources and kit to inform policies and practices
- Consider the scope, structure, activity and practicalities of a **Support Network**

DAY 2 Kit

Day 1

- Outline and discuss:
  - Removal and collecting
  - Documentation, digitisation and public access and
  - Engagement with people affected/public and Staff Wellbeing
- Ask questions such as
  - What were the main challenges?
  - What went well? What didn't go well?
  - What resources/support did you have?
  - What resources/support did you need but did not have?
- Brainstorm ways to address particular challenges
- Visit the Manchester Together Archive

Day 2

- Work collaboratively on designing resources and guidance:
  - Why is guidance needed?
  - Who and when is it for?
  - What questions and topics should the guidance cover?
  - What should the format/medium of the guidance be (e.g. in-person/online training; videos and/or podcasts; case studies; templates, flowcharts and checklists; emergency preparedness procedures)?
- Draft a flowchart, checklist and plan for action around specific scenarios
- Outline the scope, aims and structure of a Peer Support Network
  - Why is a network needed?
  - What would the network offer and do?
  - Who would be part of the network?
  - How would the network run?
  - How would it be funded (if necessary)?
- Outline Next Steps

Journeys

For this workshop, the term **journey** can be understood as reflections on your own experiences of working with spontaneous memorial collections. It considers the highs and lows; the things that have worked well; and the challenges you have encountered;

We invite you to reflect on:

- The level and extent of your involvement with a spontaneous memorial collection
- At what point you first became involved with your collection/in what capacity
- What the long-term plans were/are
- And to what extent you were/are involved in these long-term plans

Kit

Kit is defined as the **essential tools**, **understanding/knowledge**, **resources**, **and support** needed to carry out your intended work. Tomorrow, you will be asked to reflect on what you had on your kit list at the start of your work; what you acquired through necessity; and, looking back, what you wished you'd had.

Here you will be invited to reflect on:

- What resources/expertise you already had at your disposal
- What resources/expertise you didn't have
- What resources/expertise you wish you'd had
- What resources/expertise you had but didn't use
- How prepared did you felt (individually and as an organisations)
- The lessons learned and the advice you would pass on

Journey Mapping – visuals

Prior to arrival, you were asked to complete a short **questionnaire** about working with spontaneous memorial collections

You were asked to score:

- How challenged you felt at different stages

- How much support you had at different stages

- How confident you felt at different stages

In a moment, you will have the chance to see your results visualized as graph that (hopefully) captures your journey
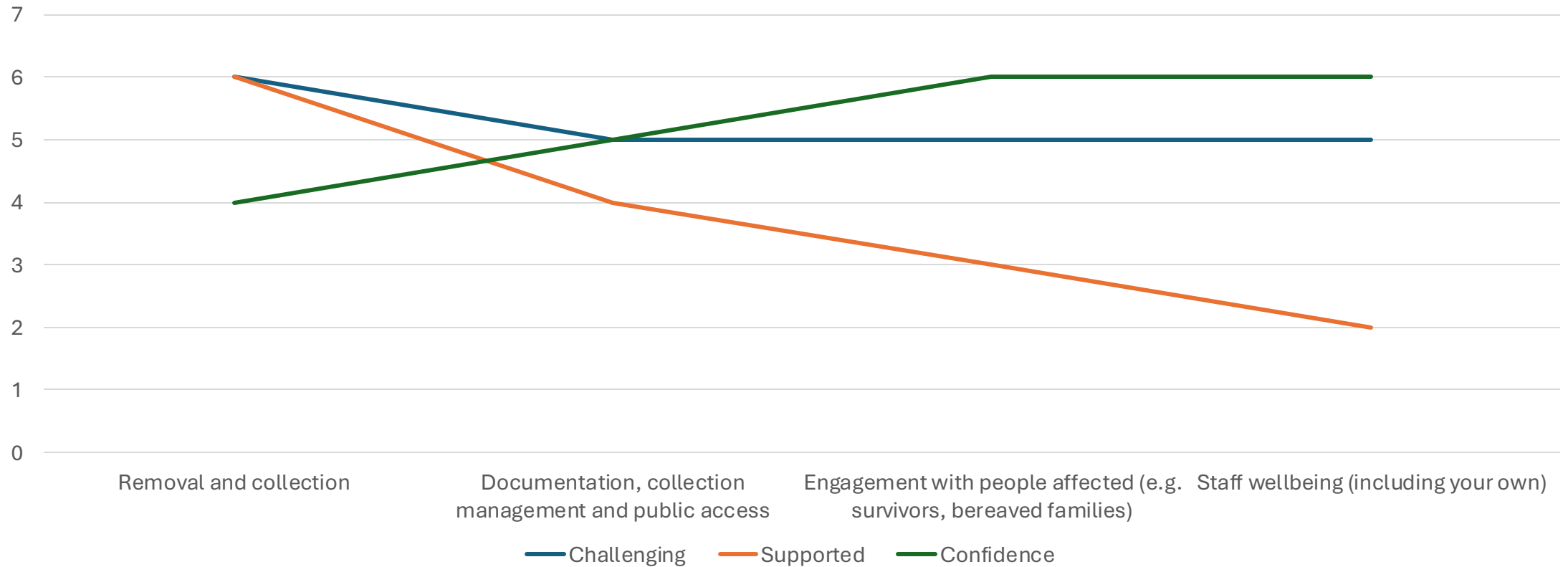
Journey Mapping – visuals

When reflecting on your own journey

• Consider the key milestones/stages– you will have unique insight into your own

• Same here too – what are the challenges at each stage? What is the context?

• What does each stage look/feel like?

• What tools/resources/support/expertise/knowledge were/are needed to work through these stages/challenges?

• Be **descriptive** and **reflective**
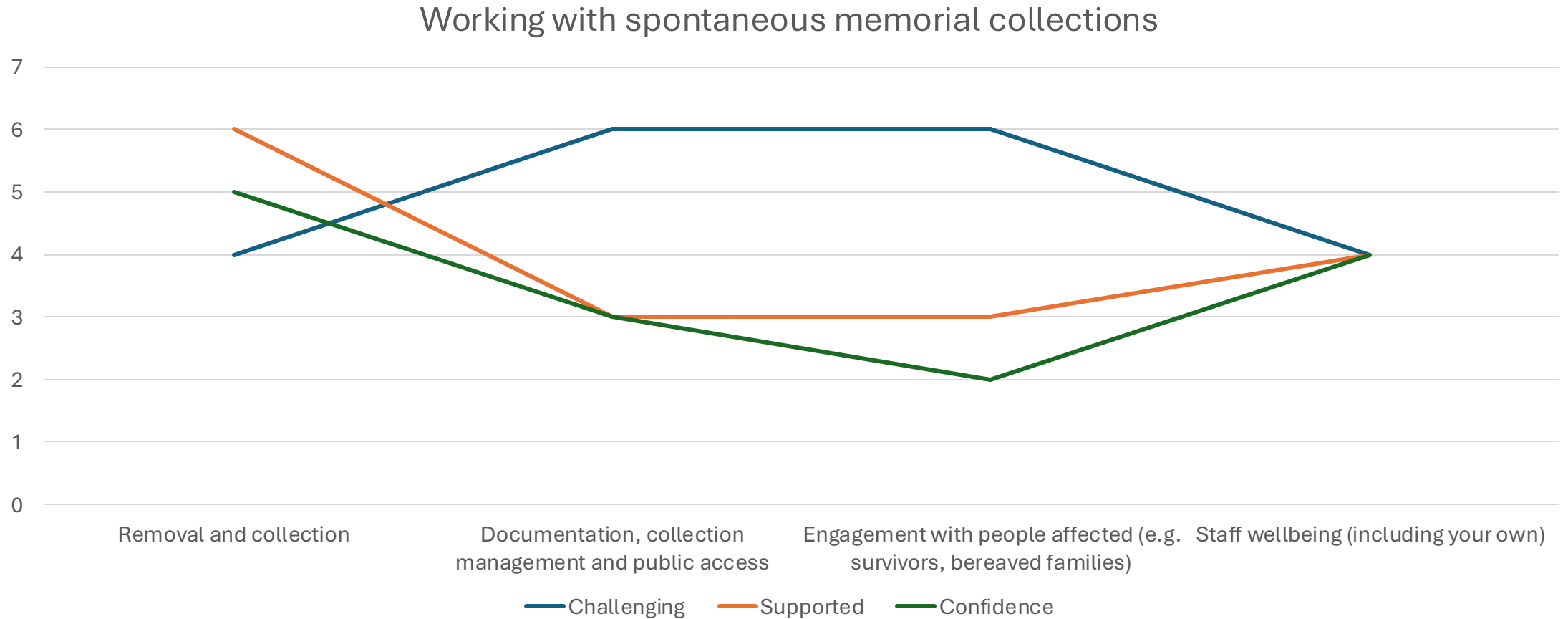
Journey Mapping examples

6	Extremely
5	Somewhat
4	Neither
3	Somewhat not
2	Not at all
1	Not applicable

Working with spontaneous memorial collections

Line chart with x-axis categories: Removal and collection; Documentation, collection management and public access; Engagement with people affected (e.g. survivors, bereaved families); Staff wellbeing (including your own). Y-axis from 0 to 7.

Legend: Challenging, Supported, Confidence

Journey Mapping – observations?

6	Extremely
5	Somewhat
4	Neither
3	Somewhat not
2	Not at all
1	Not applicable

Working with spontaneous memorial collections

Legend: Challenging — Supported — Confidence

X-axis categories: Removal and collection; Documentation, collection management and public access; Engagement with people affected (e.g. survivors, bereaved families); Staff wellbeing (including your own)

Journey Mapping Exercise (Part 1): Removal and Collecting

Key Questions:

- What were the main challenges?
- What went well? What didn't go well?
- What resources/support did you have?
- What resources/support did you need but did not have?

Journey Mapping exercise (Part 2): Documentation, Digitisation and Public Access

Key Questions:

- What were the main challenges?
- What went well? What didn't go well?
- What resources/support did you have?
- What resources/support did you need but did not have?

Journey Mapping exercise (Part 3): Engagement with people affected/public and Staff Wellbeing

Key Questions:

- What were the main challenges?
- What went well? What didn't go well?
- What resources/support did you have?
- What resources/support did you need but did not have?

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Day 2

Welcome back…Recap and reflections on previous day – journeys

- Understanding the "why", the "how" and the "what for".
- Strong sense of personal, professional and institutional responsibility
- Practical considerations are very important in decision-making
- Managing expectations (by institution, public, media, affected people)
- Engaging with people affected and other stakeholders
- The challenge of the "two worlds" and how you navigate yourself in them and look after yourself (the world of the affected people and the world of professionals, Council etc)
- Not one size fits all – good practice and best practice might not be necessarily applicable or desirable. Context of event is paramount.
- Emphasis on institutional support (including psychological support) peer support and networks

Day 2

- Work collaboratively on designing resources and guidance:
  - Why is guidance needed?
  - Who and when is it for?
  - What questions and topics should the guidance cover?
  - What should the format/medium of the guidance be (e.g. in-person/online training; videos and/or podcasts; case studies; templates, flowcharts and checklists; emergency preparedness procedures)?
- Draft a flowchart, checklist and plan for action around specific scenarios
- Outline the scope, aims and structure of a Peer Support Network
  - Why is a network needed?
  - What would the network offer and do?
  - Who would be part of the network?
  - How would the network run?
  - How would it be funded (if necessary)?
- Outline Next Steps

Learning Resources Overview

Professional

9/11 Memorial and Museum
American Alliance of Museums
Archives and Records Association
Australian Red Cross
Clark County Museum
Digital Preservation Coalition
Domestic Preparedness
Foundation for Advancement in Conservation
IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial
  Support
London Transport Museum
Manchester Art Gallery
Museum Development North West
New England Museum Association
Pan American Health Organization
Society of American Archivists
UK Trauma Council

Government

State Recovery Office,
  Australia
Digital Repository of
  Ireland
US Congress
US National Archives and
  Records Administration

Charity / Independent

Art Museum Teaching
Culture Declares
  Emergency
Project STAND
Thinking Museum

Academic

Archival Education and
  Research Initiative
University of Manchester
University of Southern
  California

Learning Resources Overview

34
Resources

7
Spontaneous memorials

13
Other contemporary, disaster or crisis collecting

11
Psychological support

6
Trauma-informed practice

Learning Resources Overview

34
Resources

7
Spontaneous memorials

13
Other contemporary, disaster or crisis collecting

- Organisational mission
- Emergency response
- Working with trauma of other nature

Learning Resources Overview

34

Resources

- By stage – preparation, immediate, long-term
- By role – volunteers, staff, managers
- Caring for self and others

11

Psychological support

6

Trauma-informed practice

Learning Resources Highlights

- Immediate Response

- Collection Management

- Digital Content

- Oral Histories

- Administrative Policies and Agreements

- Manuals and Resources

- Emotional Support

(Society of American Archivists, 2023)

Learning Resources Highlights

Toolkit Matrix

Topic	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Choose / Create your content *Use this to decide what you will collect and identify where it will come from*	Selecting your content	What to collect	What to keep
Organise your content *Use this to make your collections easily accessible*	Naming conventions	File Structure	Using a system
Who does what *Use this to make sure everyone knows their roles and responsibilities*	Roles and Responsibilities - on a page	More detailed roles and responsibilities	Annual review of roles and responsibilities

(Digital Preservation Coalition, 2024)

Learning Resources Highlights

Hazards Approach

(Wills, 2024)

Supportive Supervision

(IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support, 2024)

Resource Design and Development

- Why is guidance needed?

- Who is it for?

- When is it for?

- What questions and topics should the guidance cover (for removal and collection, documentation and collection management), engagement with people affected/public and staff wellbeing, other)?

- What should the format/medium of the guidance be (e.g. in-person/online training; videos and/or podcasts; case studies; templates, flowcharts and checklists; emergency preparedness procedures)?

Scenario 1

You are the head curator of a local authority museum. A spontaneous memorial has formed in a busy, centrally-located square in your city, in aftermath of a terrorist attack, which killed several people and injured more. You have been asked by the local authority to take charge of the memorial's removal and collection. You have no previous experience of rapid-response collecting. Design a flowchart of considerations and actions to guide you and your colleagues. Questions to consider:

- What steps do you take to prepare for this task?

- How do you prepare yourself for this undertaking?

- Who else is involved in this process?

- What challenges do you anticipate you will encounter?

- What resources/expertise/support do you need to do this effectively?

Scenario 2

You are an archivist in your city's archival service. Following a mass violence event in your city, you are considering of drawing on your organisation's pool of volunteers to to help catalogue the spontaneous memorial collection that your Archive has collected. Create a checklist of measures and support to cater for their safety and emotional wellbeing during this project. Questions to consider:

- What steps do you take to put this support in place?

- How is this support communicated to your volunteer team?

- Who else is involved in offering this support?

- What challenges do you anticipate you will encounter?

- What resources/expertise/support do you need to carry this out effectively?

Scenario 3

You are a curator in a local authority museum. Seven years have passed since a human-made disaster that shook the city and the country. During those seven years, your museum has undertaken collecting and documentation of spontaneous memorials that sprung in the city. You led on that. You are now asked by the museum's director to explore the possibility of developing a public exhibition on the 10th year anniversary of the event. Create a 10-point plan of action. Questions to consider:

- Would you undertake consultation and who with?

- What challenges do you anticipate you will encounter?

- How do you prepare yourself for this undertaking?

- What resources/expertise/support do you need to do this effectively?

Support Network

- Why is a network needed?
- What would the network offer and do?
- Who would be part of the network?
- How would the network run?
- How would it be funded (if necessary)?

Next Steps

- **December 2024 – January 2025:** Send everyone slides and notes. We'll draft the structure, content and formats of the Guide.

- **January 2025:** We'll share the draft Guide with you and ask whether and how you'd like to contribute to it (e.g. submit a case study; review content, etc). We'll also ask other colleagues in the UK abroad for their feedback.

- **February – April 2025**: We'll develop the Guide and a Feasibility Plan for a Support Network

- **May 2025:** Evaluation of Guide and Feedback on Support Network Feasibility Plan

- **June 2025:** Finalisation of Guide

- **July 2025:** Launch of Guide

Spontaneous Memorials Conference

- University of Manchester, 12-13 June 2025

- Manchester and Online

- Call for Papers Deadline: **25 November 2024**

- https://www.spontaneousmemorials.org/conference2025/