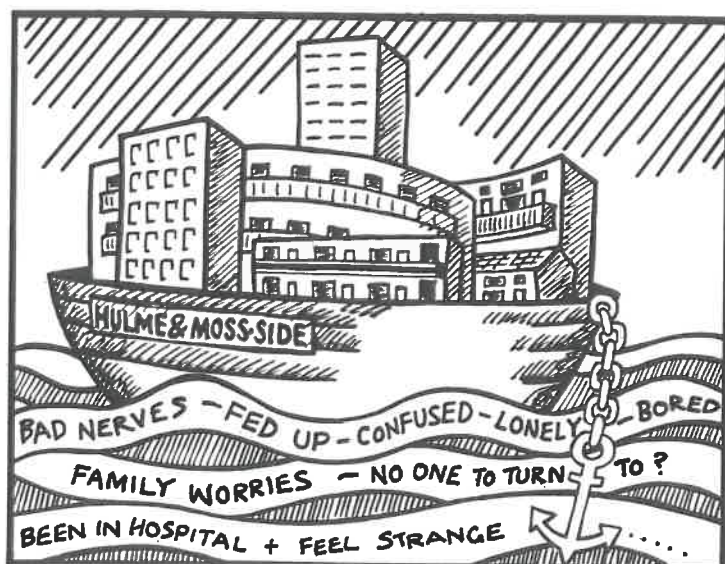




ZION

COMMUNITY HEALTH
& RESOURCE CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT 1991-92



Zion Community Health and Resource Centre (ZCHRC)

Many of the most vulnerable people in Hulme slip through the net of statutory 'health' and 'social' services. Hulme has one of the worst health records, highest levels of unemployment, and highest benefit take up of all areas in Manchester. Its housing is some of the worst and security is very poor. It has a large number of elderly people, often isolated, lonely and housebound (40% live alone). A high concentration of ethnic minorities and a large percentage of young people (16-24 year olds). The housing redevelopment, recently started by the City Council, Housing Associations and Government will not solve the problems of the area alone.

Many of the groups based in the ZCHRC developed from local community and tenant activity and continue to rely on the support and involvement of local volunteers.

The ZCHRC is home to seven voluntary projects;

Drug Advice and Support in Hulme

Afro Caribbean Mental Health Project

Hulme Action Resource Project (mental health)

Central Manchester Homestart (supporting parents with children under five)

Manchester Action on Street Health (information and advice for prostitutes in City Centre)

Black HIV and Aids Forum

Womens' Health Drop In

The groups provide a wide range of 'health' services including:

- * support for parents with young children, befriending and support in their homes; time off with the parent and toddler group; relaxation through parties and other social events.
- * information and health advice to men and women prostitutes working in the City Centre.
- * supported housing for people with mental health needs; lifeskills training and practical support.
- * an art drop in for users of all the groups.
- * research counselling and support for black people with mental health needs.
- * information and advice on housing issues for vulnerable people with mental health needs.
- * support and advice for drug users.
- * information and advice on HIV and Aids.
- * information on health services available to women.

Groups also provide services outside of the Centre including a syringe exchange schemes and drop ins.

We share a common vision of working together and linking in with existing statutory agencies to develop a centre with a range of high quality services which are responsive to and controlled by service users themselves.

Achievements So Far

Over the past two years we have been working to turn the ZCHRC from an office base for two voluntary projects into a community centre with a wide range of 'health' services. We now have succeeded in increasing to seven voluntary projects.

Groups and users meet regularly at Management and User group meetings to make decisions about the running and future of the Centre. Over the past year we have secured funding for and employed three members of staff - Co-ordinator, Receptionist and Cleaner. The Management Committee has had to develop to meet the challenges of becoming employers. We have also agreed a constitution which will be formally adopted at our first AGM on 28th February 1992.

One of the advantages of the ZCHRC is that if someone comes along with one specific need - but is then found to have other entirely different needs, these can be tackled at the same time. Our experience so far has shown that this approach works for users whose needs often don't fit into neat categories. Here are two examples of how this has worked:

Case One: *A young woman is brought to DASH by local church workers. She is said to be a heroin user and be threatening to take her own life. DASH workers found that she had many problems with her unsuitable housing and on her agreement, HARP workers began to work with her. She is nominated for a supported housing tenancy.*

Case two: *A young black mother was referred to Homestart by a local Health Visitor. She had a history of contact with Social services concerning care of her young child. In the process of doing work with her the Homestart Co-ordinator found that she had been held in police cells and separated from her young child after a minor disagreement between her and a police officer. She was being charged for damage to police property. Homestart referred her to Moss Side Initiative for help with her case.*

Groups work together to develop specific initiatives such as the Hulme Cafe, the Supported Housing Forum, and the Womens Health Drop in. Joint activities have also been developed - the most successful being Zion Art Paintbox which meets weekly and in the past two years has involved many users of the Zion.

A constant pressure has been the need to secure funding for all the projects. This has consumed much time which could be better spent on providing services. We are sad that funding problems have led to the closure of the Moss Side Initiative (Black people and Criminal Justice) and hope that future funding can be secured by their management Committee to restart this much needed project. Funding for the ZCHRC has now been secured through Urban Programme - and it is hoped that funding applications included in City Challenge will lead to building improvements and guarantee our occupation of the Centre for at least four years.

We have met regularly with the City Council and have established a consultative group (Zion Advisory Group) to discuss issues relating to the building as a whole. We have raised the need to secure a permanent base for ZCHRC in the Zion Building post City Challenge and will continue to work with the City council to achieve this. The Zion Advisory Group has also succeeded in opening up the Main Hall for community use for a nominal charge to community groups. The ZAG has proved a useful forum for discussing future letting of other space in the Zion - in particular the basement, which may soon be developed as a music and arts centre for school children.

We have been involved in discussions with the City Council about the proposed redevelopment of the area through the Hulme Community Workers Group and the Hulme Health Forum. We shall continue to participate in these groups expressing our concern

at the speed of demolition ahead of building new homes. We have worked with City Council officers to develop a number of projects which feature in the City Challenge Bid - in particular the 'Supporting Tenants Around Redevelopment' Project which aims to give practical and emotional support to people with special needs who are having to move as part of the redevelopment.

The ZCHRC helped organise a one day conference on 'Supported Housing' along with the Housing Consortium and Housing Corporation. The conference established a forum which meets regularly to help ensure a range of supported housing, *based on a clear input from potential tenants*, is developed.

This year we have concentrated on publicising the groups and activities based in the Zion. ZAP have produced a new door sign. An information day, advertised in local papers and on the poster board on Chichester Rd., is planned for February 28th. Articles in local papers, leaflets and this annual report has been produced.

In the past two years the ZCHRC had done much of the ground work and will continue to ensure that we develop into a Centre which really contributes to the improvement of quality of life for Hulme people.

DASH workers talking to local school children ►

The Future

In autumn of 1991 we were visited by the NHS Advisory Service and the DHSS Inspectorate. In their report to the Secretary of State on Health Services in Central Manchester the ZCHRC is mentioned. The Advisory Service comments that City Challenge may provide ZCHRC with extra revenue funding and may fund improvements to access. But it will also create the 'need for additional support activities with the local community which faces disruption and uncertainty.' (p14, 106) This indicates some of the increasing difficulties users of the Centre will be facing and summarizes the possibilities for development in the forthcoming year.

Improving the entrance to the Centre will be a major priority. Making it look and feel more friendly, as well as making it accessible to people with mobility difficulties and with small children and trolleys. The extra staffing for reception will help contribute to consistently providing a friendly and welcoming atmosphere which will encourage visitors to call again.

Development of Centre based activities and groups will also be important to help turn us into a centre which offers a range of services to people with a variety of needs. Three specific groups are already in early stages;

Zion Art Paintbox which presently provides an art drop in for one day a week. It is hoped that this may be extended to another day and more equipment/resources obtained. A picture framing project is hoped to be developed.

Parent and Toddler Group has met irregularly throughout the last year. We hope that improvements to the building will allow us to re-open a permanent creche room and that additional funding will help us to provide for a creche worker.

Womens Health Drop In is soon to be opened. We hope that demand for this service will demonstrate the need for the development of 'Well Women' facilities which are presently unavailable in Central Manchester.

Groups in the Centre with local people have been trying to develop services which will help people meet the increased stresses and strains of living in Hulme during redevelopment. In particular the 'Supporting Tenants Around Redevelopment' project has applied for funding for the coming year. This group will provide intensive support (both practical and emotional) to people affected by redevelopment. They will also help people get appropriate services from the voluntary and statutory services if they require more long term support.

We will continue to develop close liaison with other statutory and voluntary agencies in the area. Firm foundations have already been set for this in our work with the Rovers and Continuing Support Services who will be continuing and increasing their involvement in the Centre.

Developing a close working relationship between the groups using the Centre will continue to be necessary in order to develop high quality comprehensive services. This will require not just a knowledge of the work and services provided by each other, but the development of good communication, referral procedures, agreed ground rules and high quality standards. Building a team out the separate groups will be one of the challenges for the coming year. It will be considerably helped by the continued and increasing involvement of Centre users in the management and development of the Centre. Establishing a users forum and setting up good recruitment and training programmes for volunteers will contribute to this.

The tasks for the year ahead are fairly major, but the last years have provided us with firm foundations on which to build. Only two years ago a couple of local voluntary projects found office space in a corridor deserted by Probation. Now we have seven voluntary projects providing a whole range of 'health' services. We have a shared vision

of developing a Centre which provides high quality services to people who are most disadvantaged and discriminated against; a service which is controlled by the people who use it and therefore responsive to their needs. If in the year ahead we do half of what we have done in the last two years, we will be well on our way to achieving our vision.

ZAP painting new entrance sign ►





Aims

- **Develop activities in the Zion for members of the community in order to promote the notions of self-help, empowerment and well-being.**
- **Develop activities for people in the community with health needs.**
- **Provide a contact point and meeting space for carers.**
- **Provide an easy access to health services to local people.**
- **Provide training, education and skill sharing in the area of mental health and health care issues.**
- **Provide a community resource centre for individuals and carers in the community.**
- **Develop and co-ordinate voluntary initiatives around health in the community.**
- **Provide office and meeting space to voluntary projects involved in health issues.**
- **Develop a partnership approach with the statutory health services to increase the range of service options available to the community.**

Thanks

A special thanks to all paid workers, volunteers and management committee members:

DASH Genni Flynn and Denise Williams

ACMHP Preeya Lal, Pat Gray, Ian Mello, and Dawn Bryan

HARP John Butler, Tony Cashin, Rose Wilson, and Paul Goddard

HOMESTART Margaret Fielding, Shirlene Hall, and Janet Wyatt

MASH Sarah Crosby

ZION Sandra Stapleton, Veronica Stapleton, and Fay Selvan

ZAP Alison Kershaw, and Maureen Moonsamy

VOLUNTEERS Paul Butler, Elizabeth Holland, John Mosscrop

CITY COUNCIL Libby Graham, and Cllr. Peter Dungey

CENTRAL MANCHESTER TRUST Peter Spencer, and Tom Butler

And also to HULME COMMUNITY ARTS and HULME DEVELOPERS for their help with compiling this Annual Report.

February 1992