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# The Fabric of Protest

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**June 2023: Refugee Week**

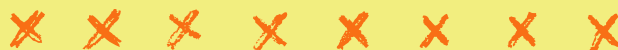
Create a collective textile artwork about what compassion means to us.



A monthly textile workshop by People's History Museum (PHM) and artist Helen Mather. Learn new techniques and discuss the issues that matter to you.

This resource introduces some of the ideas and techniques that will be explored during the workshop on Saturday 24 June 2023. Use it to prepare for the workshop or as inspiration for your own textile projects.

Suitable for 11+ (under 18s must have an accompanying adult).



#FabricOfProtest #RefugeeWeek  
#CompassionIntoAction #SimpleActs  
#MoreInCommon



# Refugee Week

In this month's workshop we are linking to Refugee Week, taking place between 19 and 25 June 2023. This year the theme is 'compassion'.

## What will we be making?

We are making a textile artwork, using patches created in The Fabric of Protest workshops that were part of PHM's 2020-2021 programme exploring migration.



We will use stitching, drawing and words to ask what compassion mean to us?

It's a chance for us to stitch and chat together, making a collective artwork that brings many different voices together.

This textile piece will reflect the celebration of people coming together in support of each other, through beautiful embellishments using ribbon, sequins, fabric patches, stitching and drawing.

# Inspiration

We are taking inspiration from a banner handmade by a group of people seeking sanctuary, who took part in a series of banner making workshops at PHM in early 2022 with artist Helen Mather. The Manchester City of Sanctuary (MCOS) banner was on display at the museum in 2022, and has been returned to MCOS to use at events, celebrations and demonstrations.

The MCOS banner features stitched and embellished hands, like the leaves on a tree growing up and out with hopes and dreams for the future. The group shared these words about their work:



'Recognising our Shared Humanity', Manchester City of Sanctuary banner, 2022. Image courtesy of People's History Museum.

'It represents the hopes and dreams of refugees and asylum seekers and through this collaboration has lifted our voices to be heard far and wide. Manchester City of Sanctuary is a family that brings people together and understands that we are all unique and helps us communicate this to the community around us.'

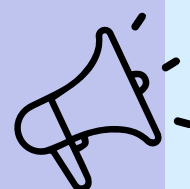
The banner measures 2,000mm wide x 1,200mm high and has a mustard backing, on the left is a tree shape created from lines of black cord. Sewn along these lines are hands in different fabrics and colours, embellished with embroidery, beads and sequins. The words 'female, freedom, empowerment, unity, peace, respect, opportunity, human rights' are printed along the tree lines. On the right the words 'Manchester City of Sanctuary' is sewn in green. Yarn tassels in different colours are attached along the bottom.



Manchester City of Sanctuary works with refugees and asylum seekers to promote positive mental health and wellbeing and develops connections and networks with the local community. They recognise people's individual humanity and provide fun and friendship as a tool of resilience and empowerment.  
Website: [manchester.cityofsanctuary.org](http://manchester.cityofsanctuary.org)

This event is part of the Great Get Together. Inspired by Jo Cox, the Great Get Together brings together communities to celebrate what unites us, to bridge divides and reject division. Each summer it brings together thousands of communities on the weekend closest to Jo's birthday (this year, 23-25 June) to celebrate that we have more in common than that which divides us.  
Website: [greatgettogether.org](http://greatgettogether.org)

- Explore what is happening for Refugee Week 2023  
Website: [refugeeweek.org.uk](http://refugeeweek.org.uk)



- Find out more about how you can support #TogetherWithRefugees and call for a better approach to supporting refugees that is fair, kind and more effective.  
Website: [togetherwithrefugees.org.uk](http://togetherwithrefugees.org.uk)

- Join the Refugee Council's campaign for a fair and humane asylum system. Scan the QR code to find out more.





# Explore the patches on the table

1

On the table at the workshop you will find three layers of material; fabric backing, wadding and a fabric top, which will provide the foundation of our quilted textile piece.



On top of the fabric are patches made by participants from previous Fabric of Protest workshops, discussing and stitching responses to the subject of migration. Ask if the person next to you can tell you more about those pieces!

## Stitch on patches to the quilt

2

We will be stitching those patches to the quilt, through all the layers to attach by quilting. There are some examples on pages 7 and 8 showing the different types of stitching you might want to try.

# Respond to 'compassion is...'

## 3

In this quilted piece, we are asking you to complete the sentence 'compassion is...'

You might have an image you would like to draw or stitch that illustrates what compassion means to you, or you might have a word or sentence that you would like to write (or both!).



We have used images of hands in some of the patches. This was made in response to the Manchester City of Sanctuary banner made in 2022, which used hands as a symbol of people coming together and helping each other. There are other symbols, such as the orange heart, which is used to show solidarity with refugees.

You could use this imagery or find new imagery that describes what compassion means to you.

You can draw round your hand and stitch around the outline.





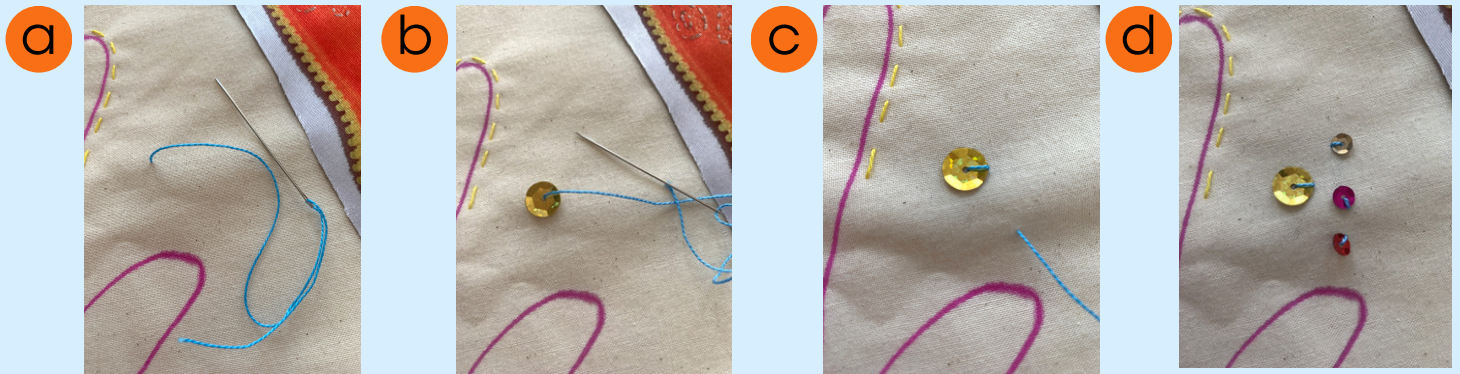
# Embellish

- 4** If you wish to, you can embellish further using ribbons and sequins. See instructions below on how to do this.

Enjoy, experiment, and make your mark!

## Attaching sequins

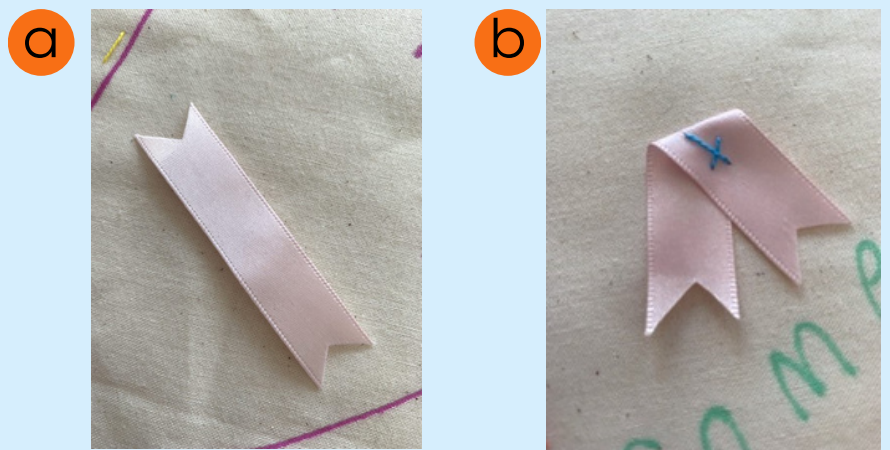
- Bring the thread up from the back to the front of the fabric.
- Thread the sequin onto the needle and down to the fabric.
- Make a stitch to the side of the sequin to secure.



## Attaching ribbon

Snip diagonally into the middle of the ribbon from each side to help stop the ribbon from fraying.

Fold in half and stitch to attach.

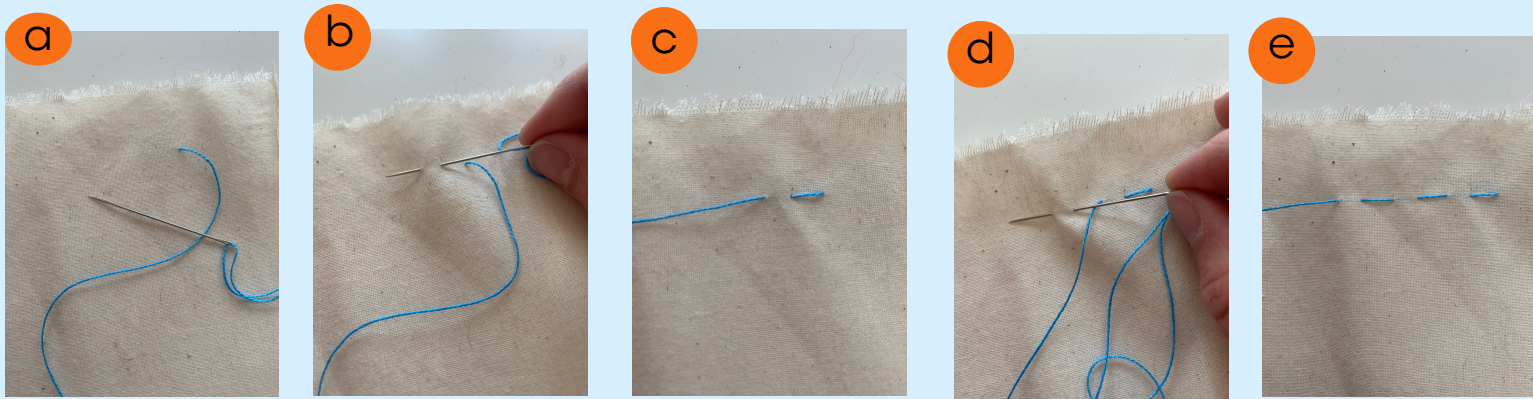




# Different types of stitches

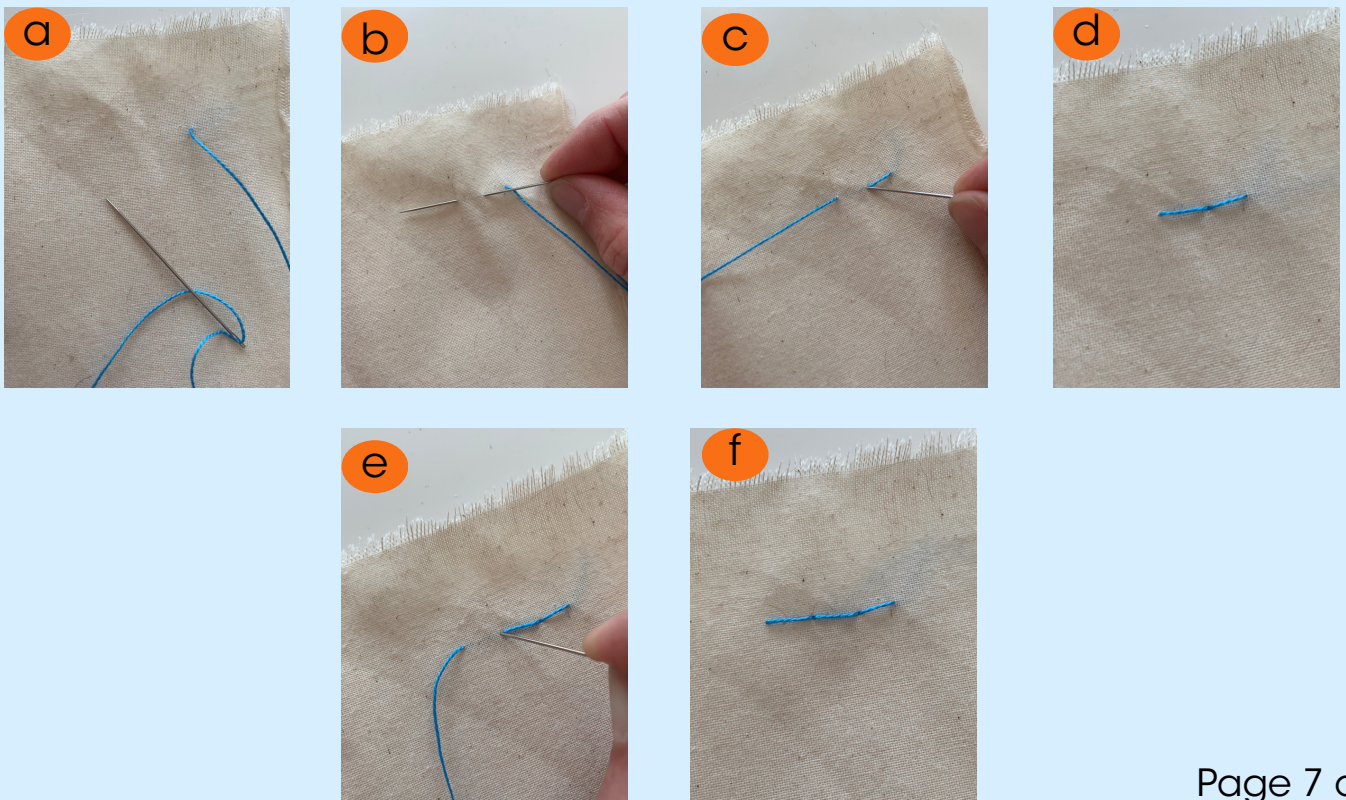
## Running stitch

- Bring your needle up to the front of the fabric.
- Put the needle in and then out of the fabric with an even stitch.
- Pull the needle and thread through.
- Continue the running stitch, in and out of the fabric.



## Back stitch

- Bring your needle up to the front of the fabric.
- Put the needle in and then out of the fabric, an even stitch.
- Bring your needle back through the last hole, filling in the gap in stitches.
- Continue to go a stitch forward and back and fill the gap with a stitch.

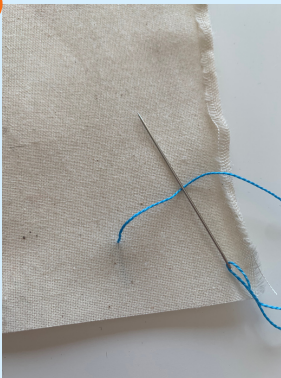




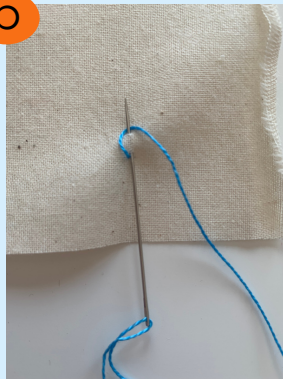
## Chain stitch

- Bring your needle up to the front of the fabric, with the needle vertical in front of you.
- Put the needle back in the fabric next to where it last came out, bringing the needle out a stitch length away.
- Place the thread behind the needle.
- Pull the needle and thread through, making a loop or chain.
- Continue by placing the needle back in the fabric next to where it last came out.
- Bring the needle back up a stitch length away and pull through thread to make the next loop or chain.

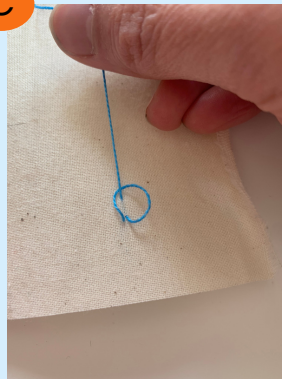
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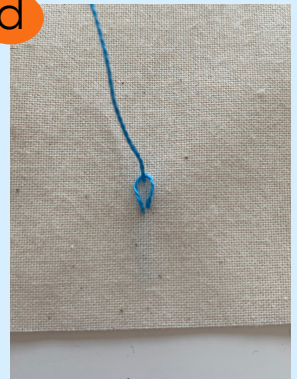
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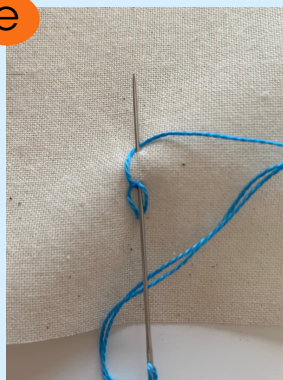
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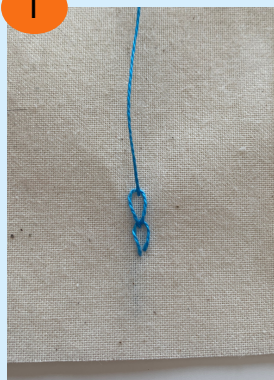
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e



f



To finish:

Put the needle in the fabric over the top of the loop, securing in place with a stitch.

g



h



# Join us again!

Join artist Helen Mather and others to continue to stitch, chat, and share ideas at upcoming workshops:

In person at PHM:  
Saturday 22 July 2023  
1.00pm - 3.00pm

Scan the QR code for details and to book.



## Share your creations

We would love to see what you have created!

If you use social media, please share photos of your creations using #FabricOfProtest



Or if you prefer you can email a photo of your creation to [learning@phm.org.uk](mailto:learning@phm.org.uk).



@PHMMcr



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