

The Fabric of Protest

January 2024

Create a mini banner to mark 40 years since the
Miners' Strike of 1984 to 1985

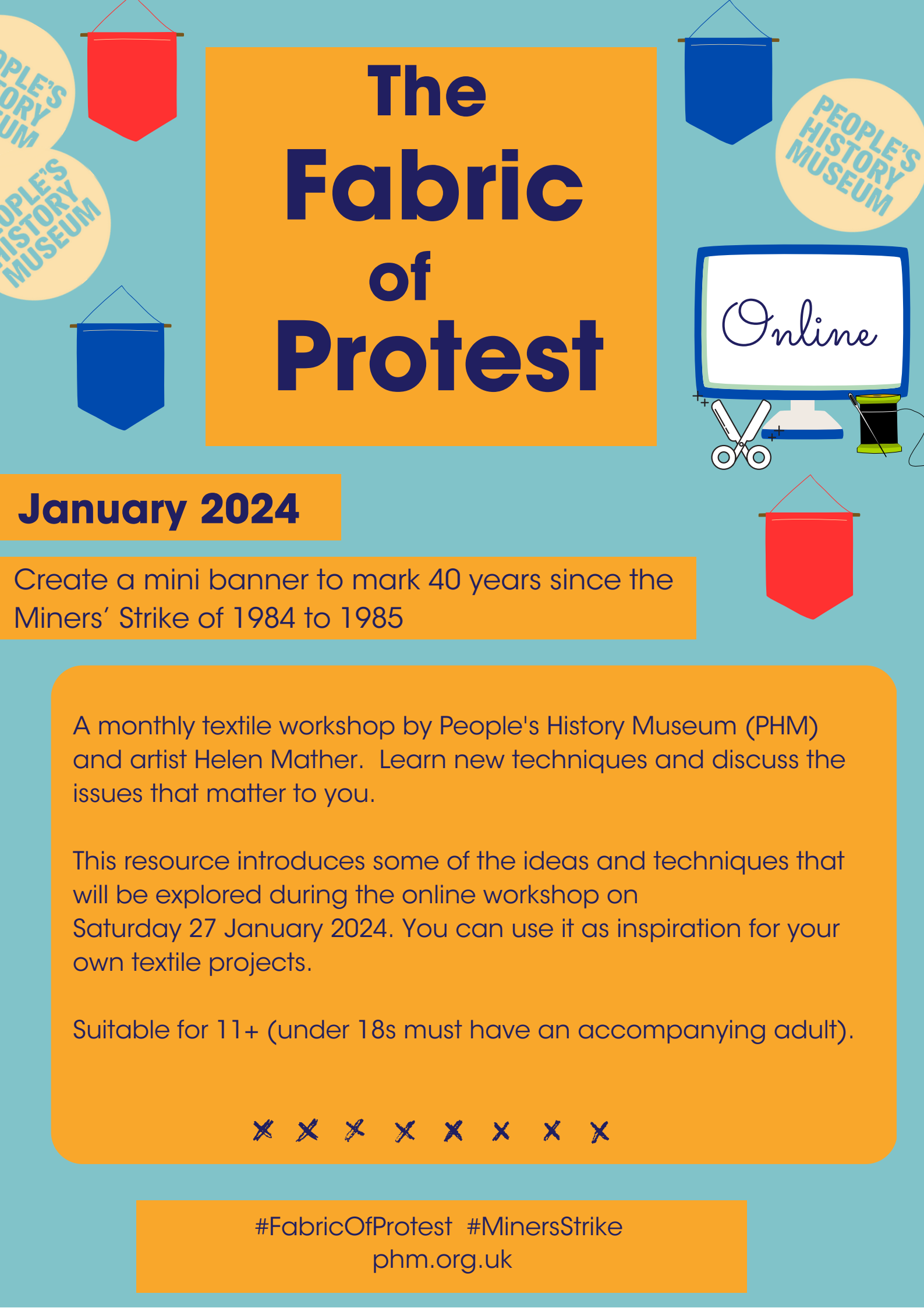
A monthly textile workshop by People's History Museum (PHM) and artist Helen Mather. Learn new techniques and discuss the issues that matter to you.

This resource introduces some of the ideas and techniques that will be explored during the online workshop on Saturday 27 January 2024. You can use it as inspiration for your own textile projects.

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



#FabricOfProtest #MinersStrike
phm.org.uk



What will we be making?

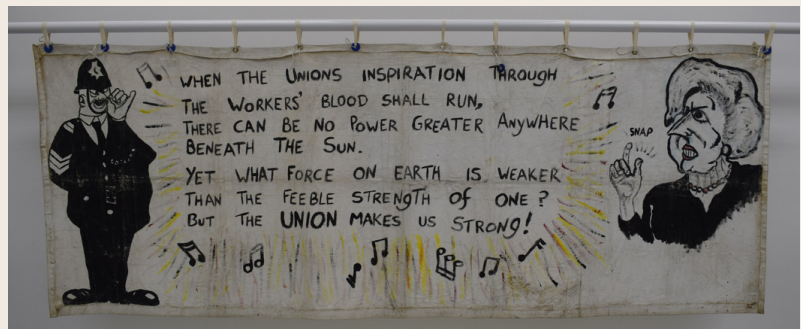
This year, 2024, marks 40 years since the Miners' Strike which took place from 1984 to 1985. In the workshop we will link the events of the Miners' Strike to events today; looking at ideas of solidarity and modern day strike action. From this discussion, we will make mini textile banners which explore your personal responses to the discussion in the workshop.



Inspiration



Front of banner



Back of banner

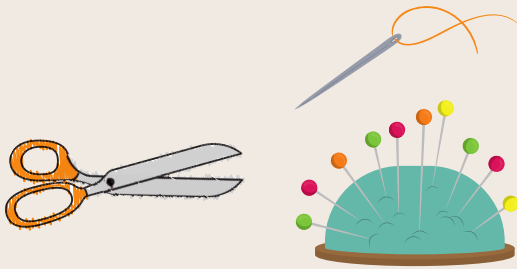
Lesbians & Gays Support The Miners banner, made by Mark Ashton, around 1984.
Image courtesy of People's History Museum.

Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners was an alliance of lesbians and gay men who supported the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) during the year long strike of 1984 to 1985. This banner was made by Mark Ashton, co-founder of the Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners support group, for the Gay Pride March in London, 1985.

Banner description: Landscape double sided painted cotton canvas banner measuring 975 x 2670mm. Front of banner reads 'Lesbians & Gays Support the Miners' with red, black, and yellow borders. The 'O' in 'Support' is a Nuclear Free sign. Back of banner features a

hand drawn caricature of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher opposite a policeman, next to which are the words:
'When the Unions inspiration through the workers' blood shall run,
There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun.
Yet what force on Earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one?
But the union makes us strong!'

Materials

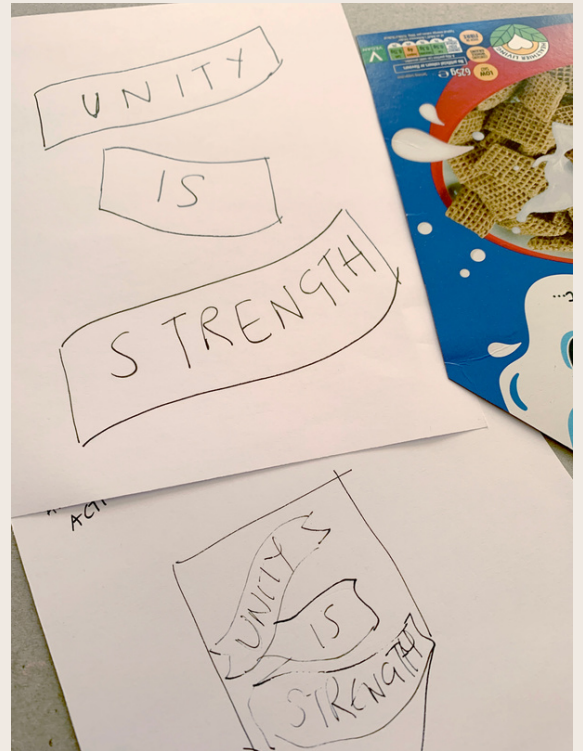


You will need:

- Pen and paper – for drawing out ideas before making in fabric
- Card template – cereal packaging is perfect for this; draw out your banner shape about 20cm x 25cm or whatever size you want
- Piece of fabric – larger than your template, at least 5cm bigger (25cm x 30cm)
- Scraps of fabric to appliqué
- Fringing or yarn tassels (optional)
- Marking pen / pencil / chalk
- Embroidery threads / needle / pins
- Fabric scissors
- Wooden dowel / stick / cardboard to make a solid header
- Double sided sticky tape (optional)

Respond to the discussion

1 In the workshop, you will be asked to respond to the discussion around strike action past and present; use your pen and paper to draw out some ideas for the design of your banner following this discussion.



2 Draw around your banner template onto fabric using chalk or marking pens.



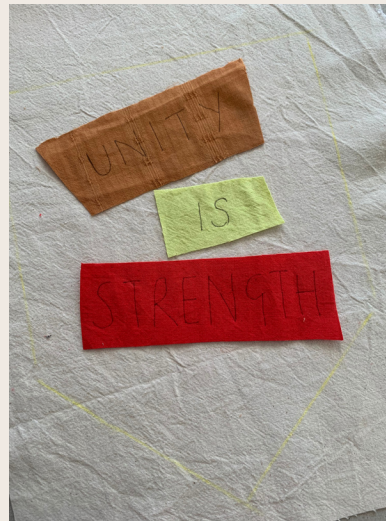
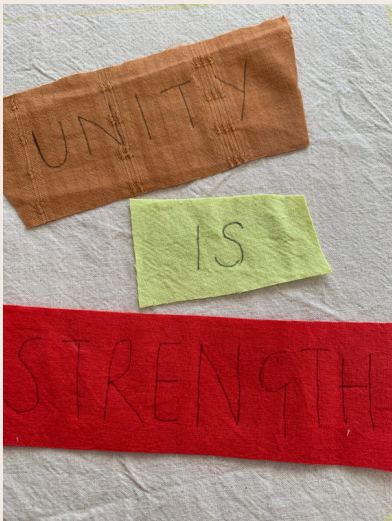
Decide your stitches

3

Decide what stitches or techniques you would like to use in your mini banner. In this example, chain stitch is used for the lettering and patches of fabric are appliqued onto the banner using the needle turn technique (see guides on pages 9-11).

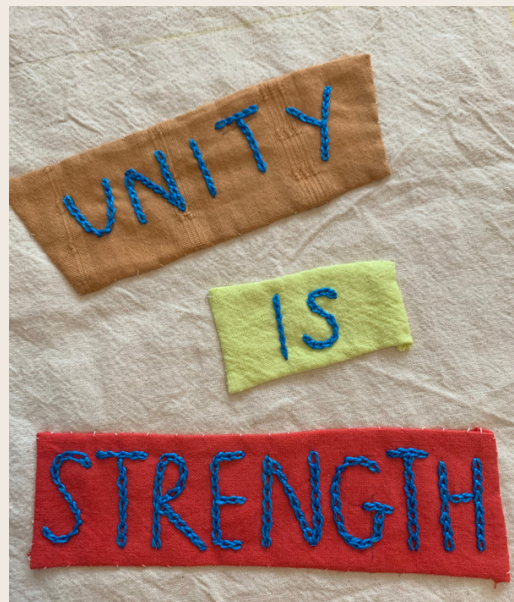
4

To mark your design on fabric, draw directly on to the fabric using a temporary marking pen (water/air or steam erasable pens are good – see this [online guide to marking pens](#)). If using a normal pen or pencil, try not to smudge the mark with your hands and cover the permanent marks with your stitches/appliqué.



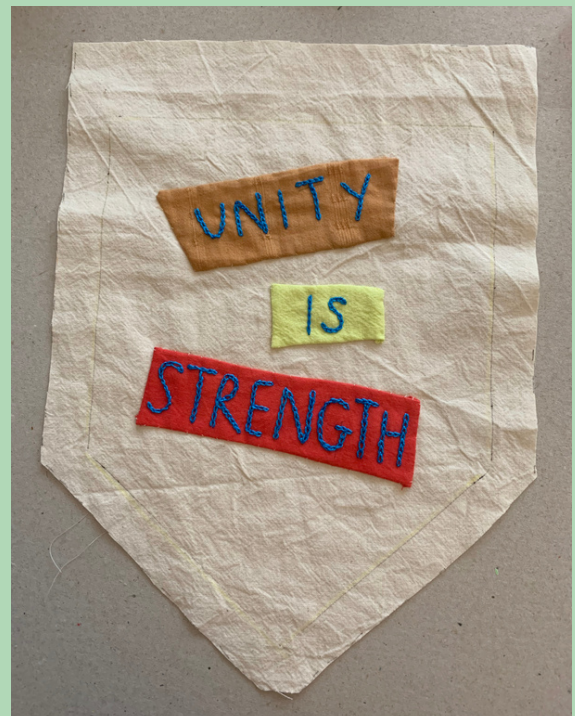
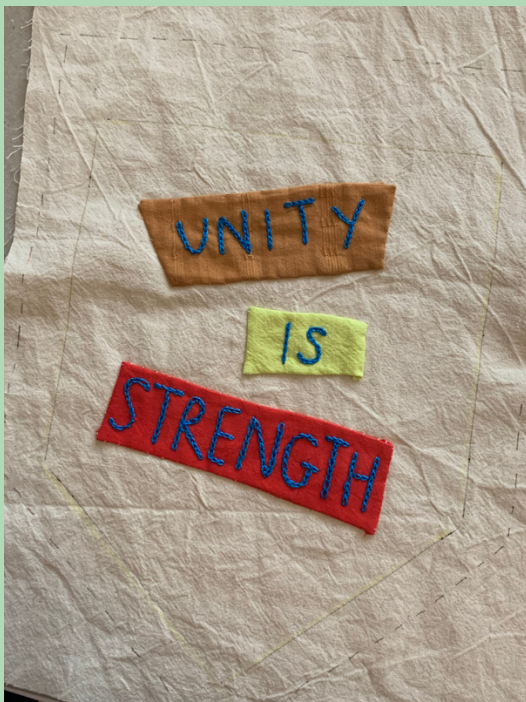
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Continue to stitch your designs, either using the guides on pages 9-11 or different techniques that you would prefer to use.



Draw and cut a seam for your banner

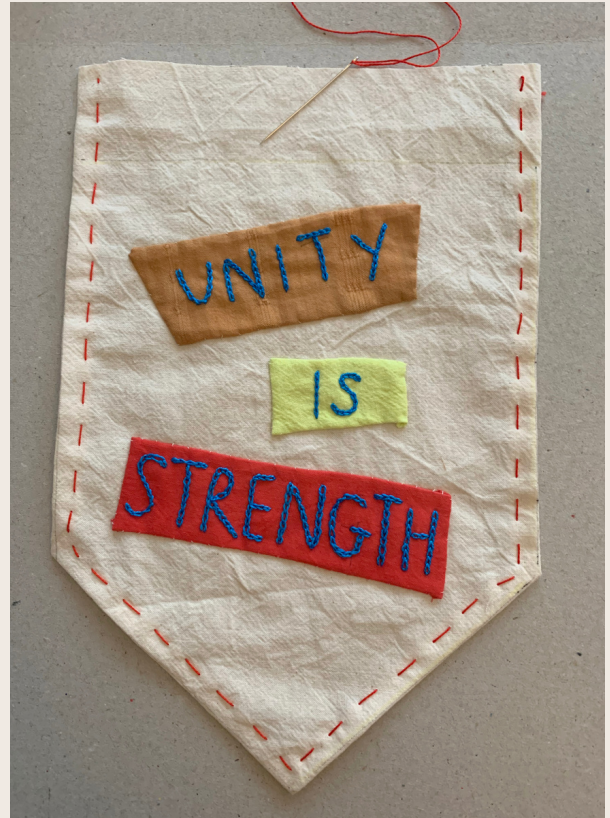
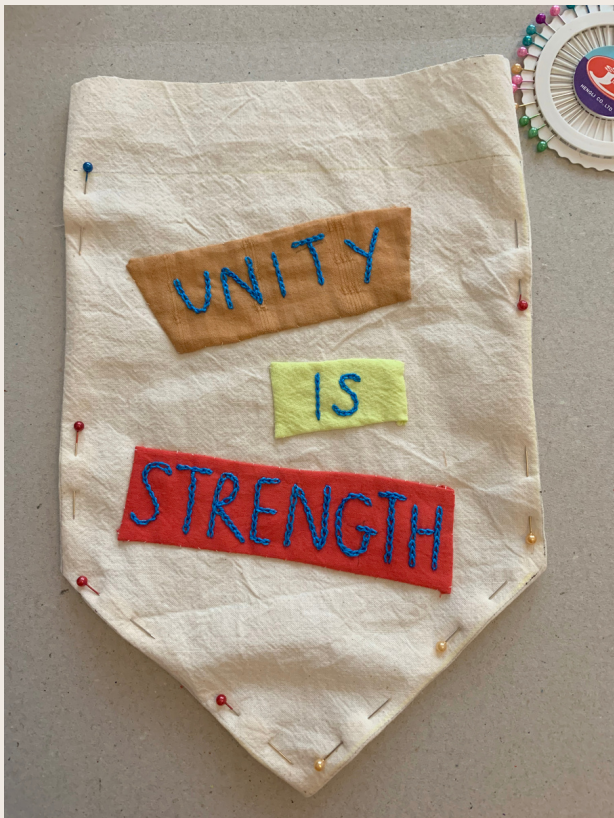
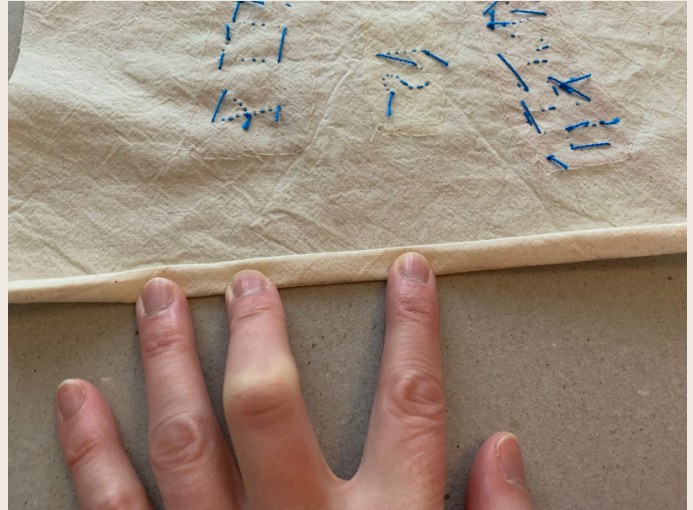
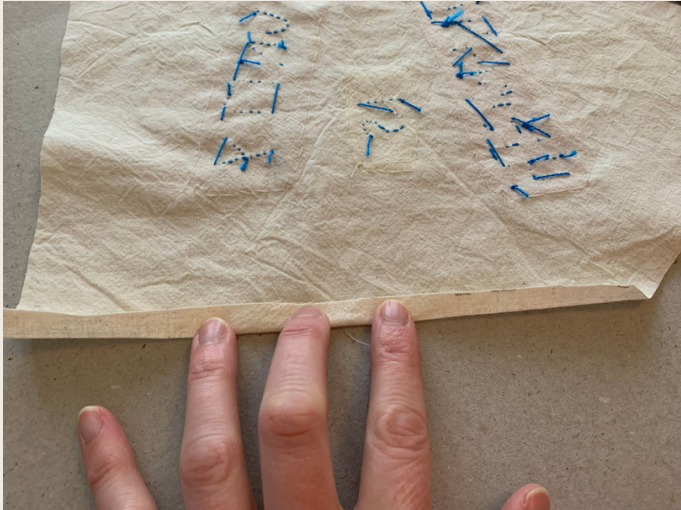
- 6 When you have finished stitching your design, cut 2cm around the marked border of your banner and approx. 4cm at the top (you can measure this by folding the fabric over your stick and including a little extra for stitching in place). This will be your seam allowance.



Fold and stitch the edges of the seam

7

Fold 1cm on the side and bottom edges and then fold again to enclose the raw edges. Pin and stitch a running stitch to secure (see running stitch guide on page 10).



Add a header for your banner

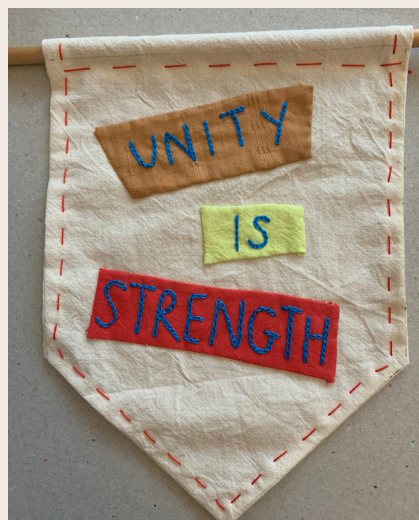
8

At the header, fold over your seam allowance and either stitch or stick down (using double sided sticky tape), leaving enough room for a stick or cardboard strip to stiffen the header.

Double sided sticky tape:



Stitching:



Finished piece

You can embellish the banner with tassels and fringing if you wish!



Find out more



Explore the [Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners](#) website

Read an [opinion piece](#) in the [Guardian newspaper](#) about how the effects of the Miners' Strike are still felt today.

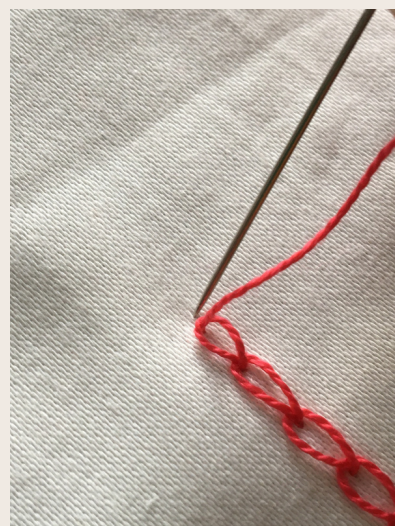
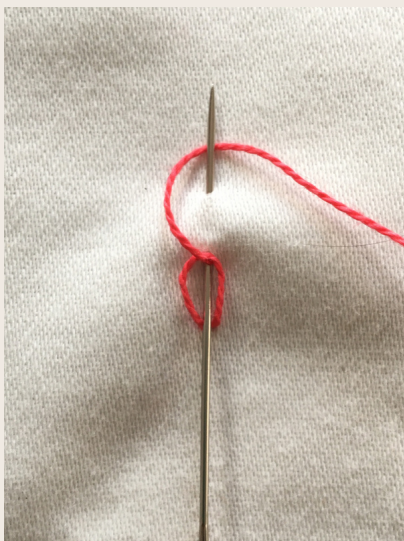
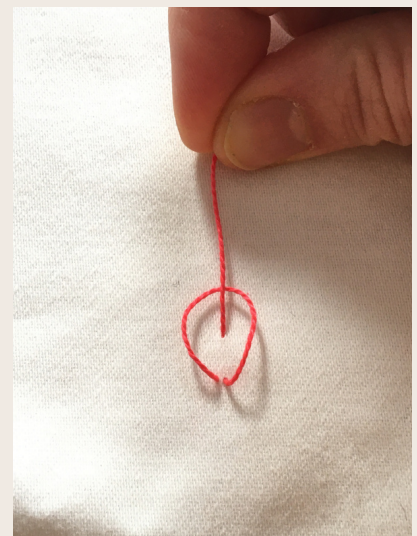
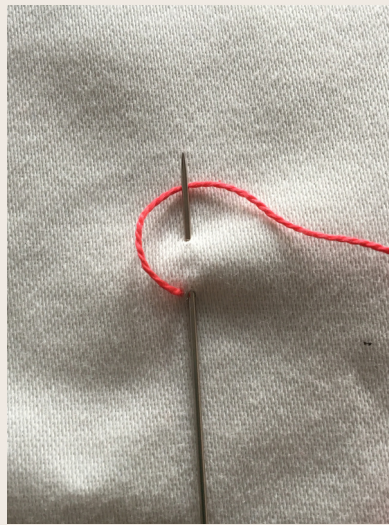
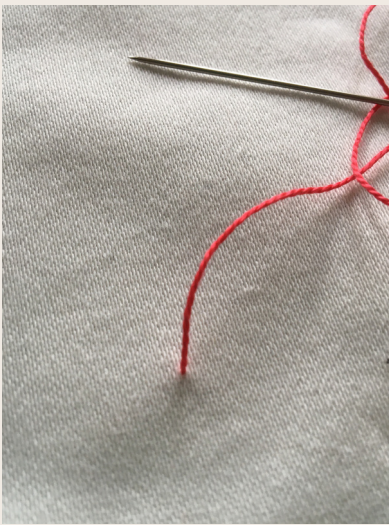
Listen to and read [local testimony from Bickershaw Colliery](#) near Wigan and Leigh about miners' experiences, both of working in the mines and during the 1984 to 1985 strikes.

Read this online article ['Striking Solidarity: Friendship and the 1984-5 Miners' Strike'](#) featured on the History Workshop website.

Read a [blog post](#) by PHM Researcher Dr Shirin Hirsch, which takes us back to the earlier and lesser known strikes, including what took place during the 1974 Miners' Strike and the legacy this created for the years that followed. This is part of this series where we'll hear about the events of the 1984 to 1985 Miners' Strike and about the women's movement against pit closures during this year long strike.

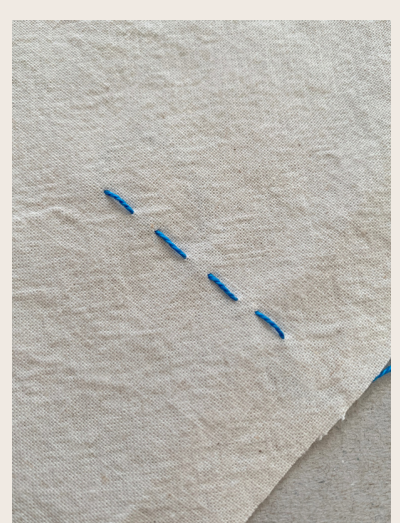
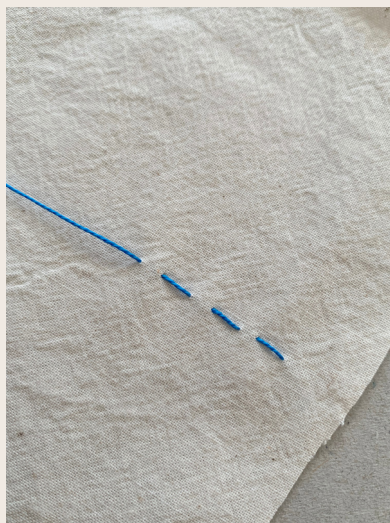
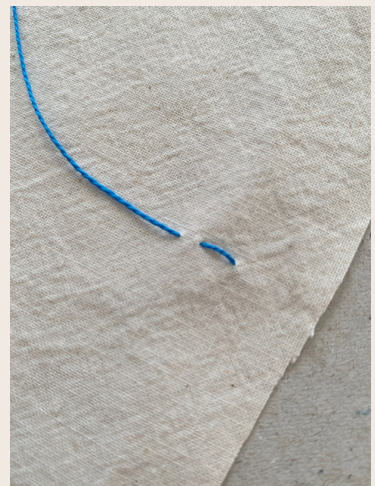
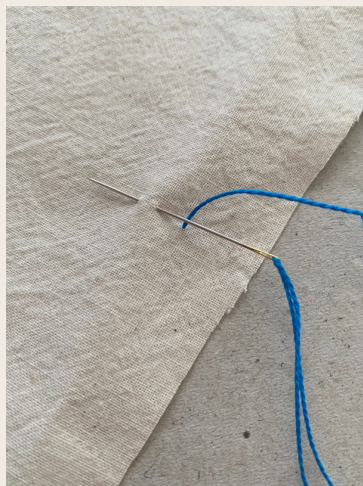
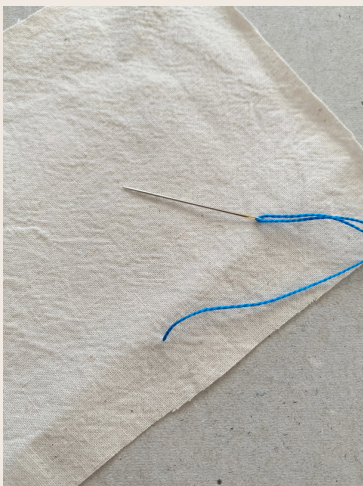
Stitch guide: chain stitch

- Bring needle up to the front of the fabric.
- Make a loop and place needle back, next to where it first came up. Go in and out of the fabric a stitch length away, with the loop behind the needle.
- Pull the thread away from you to secure the loop.
- Repeat again, bringing the needle back next to last needle position, in and out with the loop of thread behind the needle. Pull the thread forward, away from you to secure the loop.
- To finish, secure the last loop by placing needle over the loop to the back of the fabric and knot.



Stitch guide: running stitch

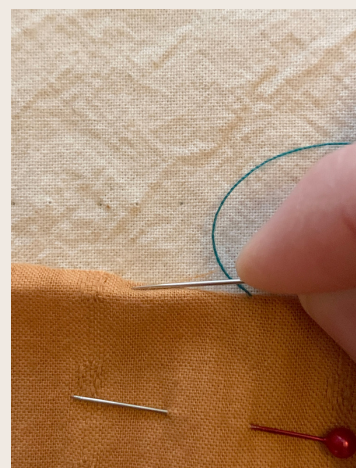
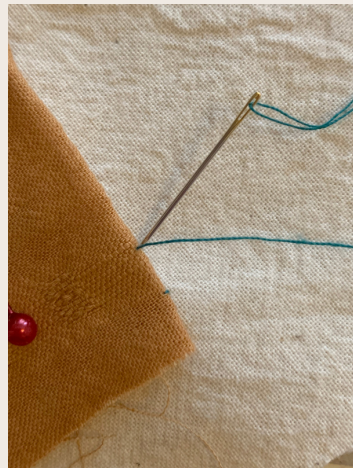
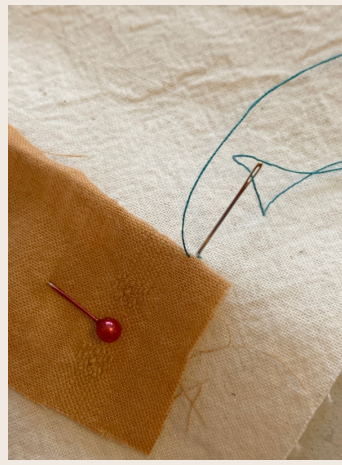
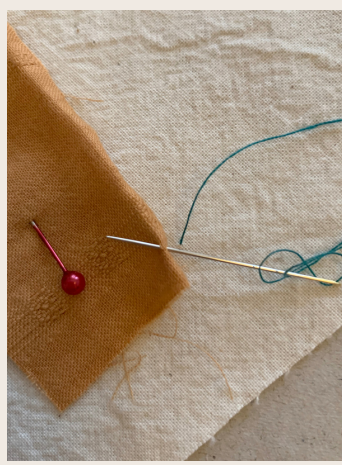
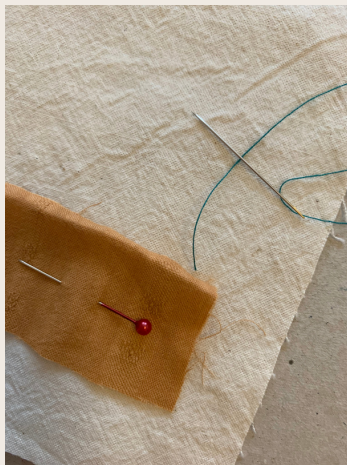
- Bring needle to the top of the fabric.
- Insert needle into fabric a stitch length away and then back out of the fabric by the same amount.
- Pull needle through.
- Repeat this, running the needle through the fabric to make more stitches and then pull through again.
- To finish, bring needle through to the back and knot to secure.



Stitch guide: needle turn appliqué technique

Use a sewing thread the same colour as your background fabric (in this guide the thread is contrasting to help show the stitch).

- Bring your needle up to the front of the fabric in line with the fabric to appliqué.
- Fold over the edge of the fabric patch. Insert the needle into the folded edge of the patch and back into the backing fabric.
- Keeping the edge folded, bring the needle back to the front and through the folded edge of the patch a stitch length away. Complete the stitch by bringing the needle back into the backing fabric.
- Continue stitching, using the edge of the needle to turn the edge of the patch over to stitch into.
- Secure stitches by bringing the needle back through to the back and knot.



Join us on Zoom to get creative

If you would like to join artist Helen Mather and others to stitch, chat, and share ideas inspired by this resource, [book onto the online Zoom workshop](#).

Don't forget to bring a cuppa!

This month we will be online on:
Saturday 27 January 2024
1.00pm - 2.30pm



Scan the QR for upcoming workshop dates.

Share what you have created

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.



@phmmcr



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