



UK Covid-19 Inquiry Newsletter

January 2024

UK Covid-19 Public Inquiry

The independent Public Inquiry to examine the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK

Message from Laura Pellington-Woodrow, Information and Programme Director



Hello and welcome to our new-look newsletter and our first update of 2024. This year promises to be another very busy one for the Inquiry. The start of the new year sees the Inquiry focus its investigations on the response to the pandemic in the devolved nations. We will begin our [Module 2A](#) hearings at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre on Tuesday 16 January. This is our investigation into core decision making and political governance in Scotland and follows our investigation into [core UK decision making and governance \(Module 2\)](#), [public hearings for which ran from October to December last year](#).

Given the Scotland-specific focus of Module 2A, the Inquiry will hold its hearings for this investigation in Scotland. In her [statement on the Terms of Reference](#), the Chair, Baroness Hallett, explained that this is a UK-wide Inquiry. We will be heading to Cardiff in February and Belfast in April for the hearings in Modules 2B and 2C respectively.

Our [Every Story Matters events](#) are resuming in February. The Inquiry will visit locations across the UK so that people can tell us about their experiences in person. We share more information about these later in the newsletter.

You might be wondering where my role fits into all of this. As you might expect for such a wide-ranging public inquiry, it is critical that we have challenging and comprehensive plans in place. We are also collecting a huge amount of information: to date, 364,996 documents, comprising 3,061,454 pages of evidence, a massive volume of material by any inquiry's standards. We have systems and processes in place, which I oversee, to ensure this is handled safely and appropriately as it is reviewed and then used in our proceedings. You can read more about key Inquiry statistics later in the newsletter. I also maintain the relationship with The National Archives. This is important as we will be creating a publicly available archive at the end of the Inquiry.

The pace at which the Inquiry is gathering and processing evidence makes it all the more

important that we keep the public informed of Inquiry news and progress via our communication channels, such as this newsletter. Thank you for taking the time to read it. I and the rest of the Inquiry team look forward to seeing some of you in Edinburgh and I am sure that many more of you will be [watching our hearings from home](#).

How to follow our hearings in Edinburgh

[Our hearings](#) will take place at the [Edinburgh International Conference Centre](#) from Tuesday 16 January to Thursday 1 February. There are a number of ways in which you can follow our hearings:

Watching in person

Hearings in Edinburgh will be open to the public to attend. A booking system will be in place. More information about this and the reservation form can be found on the [public hearings page](#).

Watching online

Hearings will be livestreamed on our [YouTube channel](#), where recordings of past hearings will continue to be uploaded.

You may wish to set up a watching room for your group - [we have provided advice on how to do this](#).

What's coming up?

The hearing timetable will be published on our website the week before each week of hearings begins. If you haven't yet done so then you can also subscribe to our weekly hearing updates, which will provide a summary of witnesses and key issues discussed that week as well as a look-ahead to the following week of hearings. You can subscribe via our [newsletter page](#).

Every Story Matters in Scotland

Ahead of hearings beginning in Edinburgh, Ben Connah, the Secretary to the Inquiry, has been speaking to media in Scotland over the last week about how people can share their experiences of the pandemic via Every Story Matters. You might have seen or heard Ben on [BBC Radio Scotland](#), [STV](#) and Global Radio.

You can watch the videos of Ben in Edinburgh on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Our public information campaign to raise awareness of Every Story Matters has now launched in Scotland. If you are in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee or Aberdeen you might have seen our adverts online and on social media, on your local high street or in newspapers. You can read more about how the Inquiry has been highlighting Every Story Matters in Edinburgh [in our news story](#).

Inquiry appoints new partner to investigate impact of the pandemic on children and young people

Independent research specialists, Verian (previously known as Kantar Public) have been appointed to deliver bespoke and targeted research to collect first-hand experiences from children and young people as part of a large-scale research project to support the Inquiry's investigation into the impact of the pandemic on children and young people. [You can read more in our news story](#).

Update on Module 4 (vaccines and therapeutics)

The Chair of the Inquiry, Baroness Hallett, has set out an updated timetable for hearings in 2024. Public hearings for the Inquiry's [fourth investigation into vaccines and therapeutics](#) will be rescheduled and will no longer take place in the summer of 2024. This is to enable organisations to prioritise providing evidence for [Module 3, the Inquiry's investigation into the impact of the pandemic on healthcare](#). [You can read the full notice of this change on our website](#).

Inquiry in numbers

Over the course of our [Module 2 \(UK core decision making and political governance\) hearings](#), we processed large volumes of documentation. Here are a few headline statistics:

- [1537 documents were published on our website](#), including 8746 pages of witness statements.
- 1160 emails and letters were received by the Inquiry, most of which were from members of the public. The Inquiry answered 99% of these within our target deadline of 15 working days.
- There were a total of 1.1m views of the Module 2 hearings via the Inquiry's [official YouTube channel](#).

In relation to [Module 2A \(core decision making and political governance in Scotland\)](#):

- 9 Core Participants are involved in this investigation. These are individuals or organisations that have access to evidence, can make statements at hearings and suggest lines of questioning to Counsel.
- 18,900 documents have been shared with Core Participants in preparation for this investigation.

Commemorating the human impact of the pandemic at our Edinburgh hearings

We will be displaying a number of memorial artwork panels in each of our hearing venues this year, which showcase Covid memorials that are locally significant.

For Module 2A (Core UK decision-making and political governance – Scotland), we will be displaying the following commemorative items:

- A photographic print of the [Broken Hearts tapestry panel](#) - Created by Andrew Crummy, following conversations with members of Scottish Covid Bereaved
- A photographic print of [I remember: Scotland's Covid Memorial, Glasgow](#)
- A photographic print of the [Memorial Bench in Glasgow's Pollok Country Park](#)
- Prints of four panels from the [Covid Chronicle](#), two of which originated in Scotland and two from Wales
- A poem, For Those We Lost To Covid, And For Those They Left Behind, written by Alan Wightman from Scottish Covid Bereaved



More information about our Every Story Matters events

In our December newsletter we announced that we would be visiting the following locations this February:

- Glasgow/Paisley
- Derry/Londonderry
- Enniskillen
- Bradford
- Stockton-on-Tees or another Teesside location

You can find out dates, timings and venue details on the [Every Story Matters events page](#).

We are holding public events in each location and prior registration is not necessary - you can just come along on the day. We will also be holding a limited number of smaller events for specific groups of people most impacted by the pandemic. If you are holding an event or meeting and would like us to come along to discuss Every Story Matters then we want to hear from you. Please get in touch by emailing engagement@covid19.public-inquiry.uk.

Bereaved forum

The Inquiry has set up a bereaved forum, open to anyone who lost a loved one during the pandemic between 2020-22.

Forum participants provide valuable insight based on their personal experiences to inform the Inquiry's approach to Every Story Matters and commemoration.

Those on the bereaved forum will receive a regular email detailing opportunities to provide the Inquiry with advice on our Every Story Matters and commemoration work.

If you are interested in joining the forum mailing list, please email engagement@covid19.public-inquiry.uk.

How to follow our hearings

Our hearings will be live-streamed on our [YouTube channel](#), where recordings of past hearings can also be accessed. Transcripts will also be placed on the [documents page](#) of the Inquiry website at the end of each day.

With the exception of Modules 2A, 2B and 2C, hearings are held at Dorland House, Paddington, London, W2 6BU ([map](#)). They are open to the public to attend. [We have recently introduced a new process for reserving seats, more information about this can be found on our website](#). The reservation form opens every Monday at 12pm to reserve seats for the following week.

Emotional support services will be available to those attending the hearings, with staff from Hestia, our emotional support partner, available daily. [Find out more about Hestia on their website](#).

Further information

We understand updates from the Inquiry may have an emotional impact. We have provided a list of external organisations that can offer [support](#) if needed.

We have published a series of [FAQs](#) on our website to help explain the Inquiry's work.

If you do not wish to continue receiving this newsletter, you can opt out by clicking the unsubscribe button below.



Instagram



LinkedIn



Facebook



X



YouTube

[Contact Us](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Support](#)



This email was sent by: UK Covid-19 Public Inquiry.
FREEPOST UK Covid-19 Public Inquiry