



## Message from Andrew Paterson, Chief Operating Officer



Hello, I am Andrew Paterson and have recently joined the Inquiry as its new Chief Operating Officer. I look after our people, finance, emotional support and the buildings where we do our work (including our hearing centre in [London, Dorland House](#)).

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who made our recent hearings for [Module 2C \(core decision making and political governance in Northern Ireland\)](#) a success. Both the Inquiry and Core Participant teams have ensured that the hearings held over three weeks in Belfast ran smoothly, with 27 witnesses appearing before Baroness Hallett to provide evidence. We are thankful for the warm welcome we received in Northern Ireland.

In this newsletter we share information about the launch of our [eighth investigation](#), which will investigate the impact of the pandemic on children and young people. This investigation, alongside [those that have already opened](#), will ensure that we continue to meet the commitments set out in our [Terms of Reference](#).

We are also pleased to announce that we will be visiting 16 more towns and cities across the UK with our [Every Story Matters public events programme](#). Visiting locations across the UK will provide people with the opportunity to speak to us in person in your communities to share your experience so that we can learn lessons for the future.

This month we are running a new campaign for the social care sector to encourage as many of you as possible who have experience of this sector to share your story via our [online form or the alternative formats detailed on our website](#). Whether you were a carer during the pandemic or had a loved one living in a care home or other care setting, we want to hear your story. This will help Counsel to the Inquiry in identifying what we ask witnesses ahead of the hearings and Baroness Hallett as she prepares her findings and recommendations following the [Module 6](#) (our care sector investigation) hearings in 2025.

Thank you for your interest in the Inquiry's work and we look forward to meeting some of you at our [Every Story Matters events](#) across the UK over the coming months.

### **Inquiry opens its eighth investigation into the impact of the pandemic on children and young people**

On 21 May the Inquiry opened [Module 8, which will investigate the impact of the pandemic on children and young people](#). The [key issues to be considered in Module 8 are set out in the provisional scope document](#).

The window to apply to become a Core Participant for our children and young people's investigation is open until 17 June 2024. Details of how to apply can be found in the [Core Participant protocol](#).



A Core Participant is a person, institution or organisation that has a specific interest in the work of the Inquiry, and has a formal role defined by legislation. Core Participants have special rights in the Inquiry process. These include receiving documentation, being represented and making legal submissions, suggesting questions and receiving advance notice of the Inquiry's report. You do not need to be a Core Participant to provide evidence to the Inquiry.

You can find more information in the [Module 8 news story](#).

### **Update on first and second reports to be published by the Inquiry**

We will publish our first report in the summer. This will detail the Chair's findings and recommendations following the [Inquiry's first investigation into the resilience and preparedness of the UK](#).

We have also started drafting the report for our [second investigation, core decision making and political governance](#). This second report will include findings and recommendations from each of the Module 2 investigations relating to [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#) as well as the UK-wide investigation.

### **Update on future investigations**

The hearings for our [third investigation into healthcare](#) will begin on 9 September at Dorland House and will run until 28 November, including a 2 week break from 14 to 25 October.

Alongside the launch of our investigation into the impact of the pandemic on children and young people (Module 8), the Inquiry confirmed that Module 9 will focus on the economic response to the pandemic. This investigation will open in July 2024.

The Inquiry expects to announce a further investigation later in the Autumn which will explore the impact of the pandemic in various ways, including on the mental health and wellbeing of the population. Further details will be published at that time.

Information about all of the Inquiry's existing investigations can be found on the [Structure of the Inquiry page of the website](#).

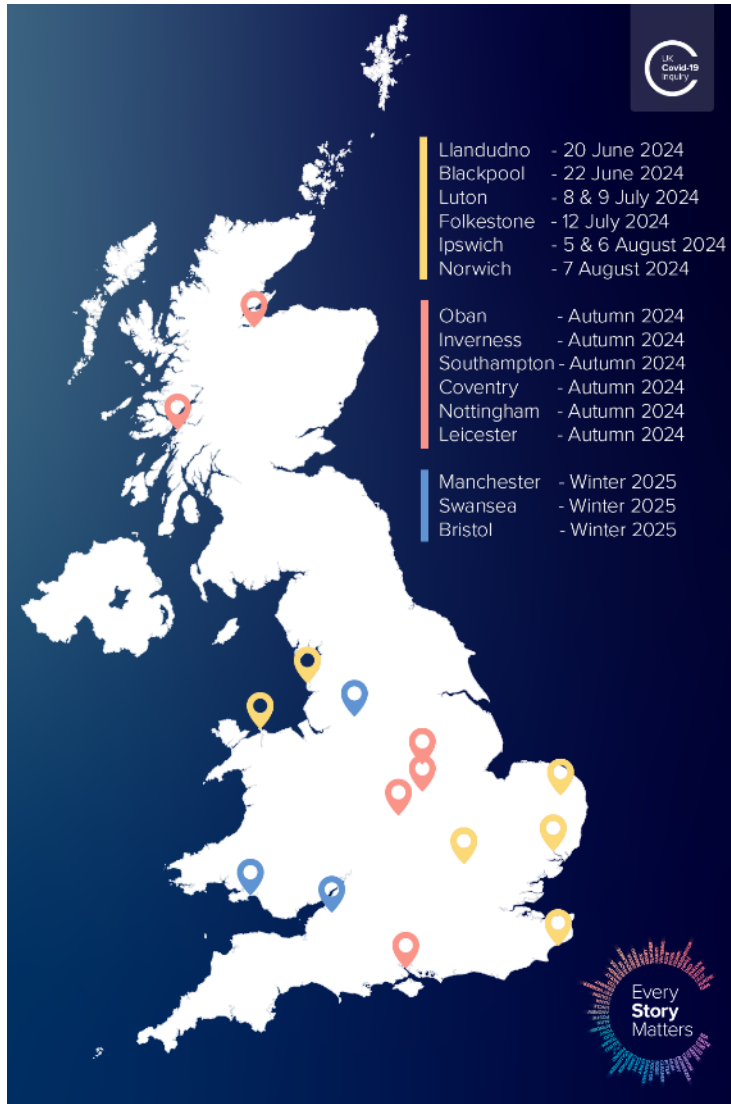
### **Every Story Matters public events taking place across the UK**

#### **Where we are going and when**

Every Story Matters events are a way of sharing your pandemic experiences with the Inquiry in person. We hold these events to reach a range of communities in towns, villages and cities across the UK to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to find out about Every Story Matters and share their experience with the Inquiry.



We are pleased to announce our latest set of event dates from Summer 2024 to Spring 2025 in the locations shown on the following map:



You can find out dates, timings and venue details for the Summer events on the [Every Story Matters events page](#). The page will be updated with exact dates and venues for the events from Autumn as soon as we have these. We will also provide an update in future newsletters.

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](mailto:engagement@covid19.public-inquiry.uk).

In May we attended the Balmoral Show, a large agricultural show in Lisburn, to speak with rural communities in Northern Ireland. We also held targeted events in Belfast, including with



students and university staff at Queen's and Ulster Universities and at 2 Royal Avenue, a community cultural centre operated by Belfast City Council.

We spoke to over 2000 people at these events - thank you to those who came and spoke to us about sharing your experience with the Inquiry to help us learn lessons for the future.







*Clockwise from top left: Inquiry team at Ulster University, Belfast; engaging with the public at the Balmoral Show, Lisburn; raising awareness of Every Story Matters at 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast; Queen's University, Belfast; Inquiry team at 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast*

## **Inquiry wants to hear from people who have experiences relating to the social care sector**

If you worked in care during the pandemic, had a loved one within a care setting or were caring for a loved one at home, then we want to hear from you. To inform [Module 6, which is our investigation into the social care sector](#), the Inquiry is encouraging people who have experiences relating to this sector to share their pandemic stories with [Every Story Matters](#). Stories shared will help Counsel to the Inquiry in identifying what we ask witnesses ahead of the hearings, so it is important that we hear from as many people with care sector experiences over the coming months as possible.

We developed this campaign by speaking to people most affected by the pandemic. All of the quotes featured in the campaign come from people most impacted by the pandemic and show their personal reason for sharing their story with the Inquiry. Many thanks to those of you that worked with us to find people to contribute and for sharing your views as we developed this campaign.

Some examples are included as follows:



We also have some videos of people sharing their stories [on our website](#) and on social media.

The campaign will be running until the middle of July, so if you see it pop up on your social media feeds, please do share it - every story really does matter.

## **Bereaved forum: did you lose a loved one during the pandemic? Do you want to get more involved in the Inquiry's work?**

The Inquiry has set up a 'bereaved forum' - which is a group of people who lost loved ones during the pandemic, who are consulted on aspects of our work. Forum participants provide



their advice based on their personal experiences to inform the Inquiry's approach to Every Story Matters and commemoration.

The bereaved forum is open to anyone who lost a loved one during the pandemic between 2020 and 2022.

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](mailto:engagement@covid19.public-inquiry.uk).