



Message from Ben Connah, Secretary to the UK Covid-19 Inquiry



Welcome to the December newsletter. Following the publication of the [Chair's findings and recommendations on core decision making and political governance \(Module 2ABC of the Inquiry\)](#) last month, we have been holding public hearings for our [investigation into the economic response to the pandemic \(Module 9\)](#). These hearings are ongoing and we share some information about witnesses who have appeared to date, as well as the [Every Story Matters record that is supporting Module 9](#) in this newsletter.

During 2025 we have held public hearings for six Inquiry investigations covering [vaccines](#), [procurement](#), [the care sector](#), [test trace and isolate](#), [children and young people](#) and [economic response](#). This brings us towards the end of the Inquiry's hearings. Public hearings for our [investigation into the impact of the pandemic on society \(Module 10\)](#) are due to take place in early 2026. When these hearings conclude, the focus of our Chair, Baroness Hallett, will be on reporting her remaining findings and recommendations as quickly as possible. You can expect to see regular publication of reports from spring 2026 with the majority published before the end of that year.

Although the pandemic may feel like a distant memory for some, my team and I are acutely aware that many of you continue to live with its effects. It is essential that lessons are learned and also that we remember those who lost their lives, those who made sacrifices during the pandemic and also those who demonstrated great resilience during this challenging time. The [Inquiry's recommendation monitoring process](#) will play a role in overseeing the implementation of recommendations, based on the lessons learned, set out by Baroness Hallett - read more about it below.

The [UK government has now provided information about its approach](#) to commemorating the Covid-19 pandemic. Although this is separate from the Inquiry's work, we share more information about this and a reminder about our commemoration activity in the newsletter.

Thank you for your interest in the Inquiry, whether you have been attending hearings at Dorland House or following proceedings from home.

What's next for the Inquiry's recommendations?

Following the publication of recommendations the Inquiry will follow a monitoring process set out on the website. This includes:

- Asking the institutions named in the recommendations to publish a response within six months of the report publication
- The Inquiry will follow up with institutions if they have not published a response six months after the report publication



- If a response has not been published nine months after report publication, the Inquiry will publicly state that it has written to the institution, noting its disappointment
- If there is still no response from the institution 12 months after report publication the Inquiry will request that the institution sets out their reasons for not having done so. The Inquiry will publicly state that it has requested this information and the response received will be published on the Inquiry's website.

The process is outlined in full on the [recommendations page of the website](#), where you can also see responses from institutions to the Inquiry's first report on [pre-pandemic resilience and preparedness \(Module 1\)](#). The Inquiry expects to receive a full response to the Chair's Module 2 recommendations from the governments of the UK, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2026.

Update on ongoing public hearings for economic response (Module 9)

Public hearings for our [investigation into the economic response to the pandemic](#) began on Monday 24 November and are continuing until Thursday 18 December. [The timetable for these hearings is published on the website](#) each week on Thursdays, as is the [scope of this investigation](#).

On the first day of hearings the [Every Story Matters: Economic Response record](#) was entered into evidence. This summarises the experiences of Every Story Matters contributors in relation to the economic response to the pandemic. The record has been used to support questioning of witnesses during the hearings.

Hearings also began with a film featuring people speaking about how the economic response to the pandemic affected them. These films set the context and tone of public hearings, ensuring proceedings are grounded in people's experiences. [The Module 9 impact film can be watched on our YouTube channel](#).





Above: Module 9 Impact film participants. Clockwise from top left are David, Hussein, Shireenah and Maddy

UK government shares information about approach to commemorating the Covid-19 pandemic

The UK government has responded to a [report published by the UK Commission on Covid Commemoration](#). The [full response has been published on the government's website](#). This activity is separate from the Inquiry, which is independent of government. The response provides information about the future national approach to commemorating the pandemic, including memorials, the National Day of Reflection and the approach to recording the stories of individuals during the pandemic.

The response notes the Inquiry's commemoration activities, including [commemorative artwork and photography](#) as well as [‘These Days’, a series of four tapestries co-created by various artists and people or groups](#) who were impacted by the pandemic.

Chair of the Inquiry, Baroness Hallett, recognised with Lifetime Achievement award

The Chair of the Inquiry [has been recognised with a Lifetime Achievement Award](#) at the Inspirational Women in Law Awards.

Baroness Hallett was the first woman to chair the Bar Council in 1998. She became a High Court Judge in 1999 and was promoted to the Court of Appeal in 2005. She became Vice President of the Court of Appeal Criminal Division in 2013. Baroness Hallett acted as coroner at the inquests into the deaths of the 52 victims of the London bombings of July 2005 and was appointed to chair the Inquiry in December 2021.