

# Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry

## Spring 2023 newsletter



## Introduction



Welcome to the spring 2023 edition of the **Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry** newsletter.

The **Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry** is a team of people who are finding out what happened during the COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland.



An **inquiry** is a review into what went well and what could have been done better.

Since the winter newsletter the Inquiry team has been busy:

- continuing **investigations**

An **investigation** is when a person or organisation looks for facts, figures and information to find out exactly what happened.



- starting the Let's Be Heard listening project

- telling **core participants** how well work is going





A person or organisation must apply to the Chair of the Inquiry to become a **core participant**.

A **core participant** has a special interest in something the Inquiry is investigating.



Stuart Gale **KC**, one of our Senior **Counsel**, has met:

- people whose loved ones have died from COVID-19
- people who had relatives in care homes in the pandemic

A **counsel** is a lawyer.

**KC** means **King's Counsel** – a very senior, experienced lawyer.



He talked with them about:

- the start of our listening project called Let's Be Heard
- plans for our first health and social care impact **hearings**, which will be in the autumn

A **hearing** is an important meeting.





The first phase of Let's Be Heard ends on 31 October 2023.



A team of Inquiry **researchers** will look at the responses we get and use them to help our investigations and reports.

**Researchers** are people who look closely at facts, figures and information.



If you have already shared your experiences of COVID-19 in Scotland, between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2022, thank you for being part of the Inquiry's work.

## Hearings



The Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry has 3 investigation areas:

- health and social care
- education and young people
- finance, business and **welfare**





The Inquiry will then separate each of these areas into 3 parts, which cover:

- the effect of the pandemic
- how things were put in place to keep us safe
- how important decisions were made



The things the Inquiry is looking at are called the [Terms of Reference](#).

More information about what will be covered under each area will be available as investigations continue.



We want to make sure that the experiences of people across Scotland are an important part of our investigations.

We want to find out what effect the pandemic had on people before people start to forget.



Before the hearings happen, the Inquiry will have a presentation in the summer about COVID-19 to give background information to support future investigations and hearings.



# Core participant applications



In March 2023, the Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry opened its applications to be a core participant again.

The Inquiry was interested in getting applications from people and organisations interested in the health and social care area.



Lord Brailsford, Chair to the Inquiry looked at all the applications.

People and organisations that were successful were invited to take part in an online planning meeting with:



- other core participants in the health and social care investigation area
- the Chair and senior legal team

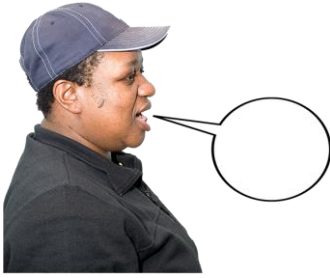


The core participant and funding application process will open again later this year.

We would like applications from people and organisations based in Scotland, that are interested in the Inquiry's work about:



- education and young people
- business and welfare



People and organisations that are core participants have some extra rights including:



- making statements when the Inquiry holds public hearings, unless the Chair says this cannot happen
- suggesting questions for Counsel to the Inquiry to ask witnesses
- asking questions of witnesses at a public hearing, if the Chair says this can happen
- getting early copies of the Inquiry's reports

## Let's Be Heard



Let's Be Heard is a way for everyone in Scotland to:

- share their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland
- tell us how it affected them



- take part in the Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry



- tell us what should have been done differently so that Scotland is better prepared in future



The 3 questions that are being asked are:

1. What were your experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic?



2. What impact did these experiences have on you or people you know?



3. What lessons do you think should be learned from your experiences?





A team of Inquiry researchers and **analysts** will look at the responses we get through Let's Be Heard and use them to help our investigations and reports.

**Analysts** check information very carefully to understand it better.



The team will find out if COVID-19 affected any groups or communities more than others.

People can share their experiences with the Inquiry by going online to <https://lbh.covid19inquiry.scot/> and:



- completing the online form
- or
- attaching an audio file to the online form
- or
- printing off a form and returning it to the Inquiry at Freepost SCOTTISH COVID-19 INQUIRY



People can also share their experiences by getting a paper form, filling it in and returning it to our **Freepost** address.

**Freepost** means you do not have to put a stamp on the envelope.





Paper forms are in public places across Scotland including:

- GP practices
- care homes
- community pharmacies
- public libraries
- community centres



You can also ask for a paper form by emailing:

[LetsBeHeard@covid19inquiry.scot](mailto:LetsBeHeard@covid19inquiry.scot).

The Let's Be Heard team will work with organisations across Scotland to encourage people to take part.



There is more information online at:

<https://lbh.covid19inquiry.scot/>

## Sign up for news updates



You can now get emails with Inquiry news and Let's Be Heard updates.

Sign up at:

[covid19inquiry.scot/newsletter-signup](https://covid19inquiry.scot/newsletter-signup)