



<inset date>

Dear <insert name of CANDIDATE>

I am writing to ask you to support the Care Home Relatives Scotland (CHRS) campaign, named 'Anne's Law', (<https://www.change.org/Allow-Designated-Visits-By-Family-Carers-Into-Care-Homes>) during your election campaign and to make this a priority for the Scottish Government in the next Parliament, should you be elected.

My **Mum/Husband/Gran Joe Bloggs <personalise>** is a resident in a care home in your constituency and **<insert brief summary of impact or length of separation>**.

While updated guidance is now in place to allow for more meaningful visits and outings, many people are still struggling to see their loved ones. A large majority of care homes are still not allowing people out for a trip in the car or a simple walk out of the home grounds. As relatives we can be locked out again at any moment. Separating husbands and wives, and parents and their children for more than a year has caused unimaginable harm. Over 16,000 residents have died over the last 12 months in Scottish care homes, many without seeing their loved ones until in the final hours of their life.

CHRS's original petition was launched in July 2020 when lockdown restrictions began to ease for those living in the community yet care home residents were left wondering when they could see family again, despite PPE shortages being addressed and transmission rates were extremely low. The petition called for one family member to become a "designated visitor", who would care for them, advocate for them and provide a link to the rest of the family whilst following the same infection prevention and control (IPC) guidance as staff members as by this stage any PPE shortages had been addressed.

Last month, after the petition was discussed for the third time, CHRS were advised by the Parliament Petitions Committee to ensure that Anne's Law and the plight of care home residents be included on the agenda as an election issue. This has placed the onus back on families to fight for this basic human right to family life for our loved ones in care homes (Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998. The committee cited that updated guidance is now in place to allow for more meaningful visits, however the issue has now become so much more than a short term Covid related matter and evidence has shown that the current guidance is still not being implemented as intended. After almost 14 months, many care home residents are still only getting 30 minute, socially distanced visits; many have still not left their home in over a year.

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We cannot continue to use public money to fund guidance for private companies to in turn disregard these. We need Anne's Law to be a legacy of our experience over the past 14 months and to ensure that care home residents will never again be completely isolated from a loved one.

Care Homes Relatives Scotland has worked with leading IPC experts to produce a website that demonstrates how safe visiting can happen - <https://enablesafecare.org> We have asked that Scottish Government endorse the documents to ensure these can be shared widely and quickly, we are currently awaiting a decision on this.

Residents in care homes should have the same rights as those living in society. We have a long way to go, but we believe Anne's Law is the starting point for helping many residents now, and in the future. Anne's Law is asking for:

- Every care home resident should be entitled to have meaningful contact with one nominated person, despite any type of lockdown the care home experiences.
- The nominated person must be recognised as a partner in care and trusted to access the care home in the same way as staff do.
- Recognition that the nominated person is there to provide emotional and well-being care – something that a member of staff cannot offer in the same way a family member can, as much as we know they do try.
- To recognise that many people residing in care homes have complex needs and that by allowing one nominated person to have meaningful contact, can and will help ease distress for both them and the families. We believe this should include visiting to continue as regular as it was before any lockdown.
- To recognise that a nominated carer would also help to support the work of the care staff.

People living in residential and nursing homes, for whatever reason, have been treated differently to the rest of society. They have had no agency. Those they have trusted to speak for them have not been properly listened to. Their well-being has been compromised in the name of care.

This is not the society we wish to pass on to the next generation or grow old in ourselves. The test of a democracy is how it gives respect and choice to all of its members, young or old, in health or in sickness. Love is the bedrock of a good society, but for hundreds of thousands of people those bonds of love have been cruelly disregarded. As members of our individual nations and as fellow human beings, we call upon our governments and everyone with influence to assert what is inalienably right – for all our sakes.

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This situation is the biggest human rights catastrophe that this country has ever seen and I ask you to support Anne's Law during your election campaign. I also ask you to share the attached image on your social media platforms to raise awareness. If you require more information please email chrscotland@gmail.com with any queries, the group are available to meet virtually to discuss the matter further and evidence the inequalities many care home residents have experienced, and continue to experience.

Your faithfully,

<Insert name>

*Anne's Law is named after Anne Duke (63) who has late stage Dementia, she was hospitalised with COVID and spent her time in hospital alone with no contact allowed with family.