



Newsletter

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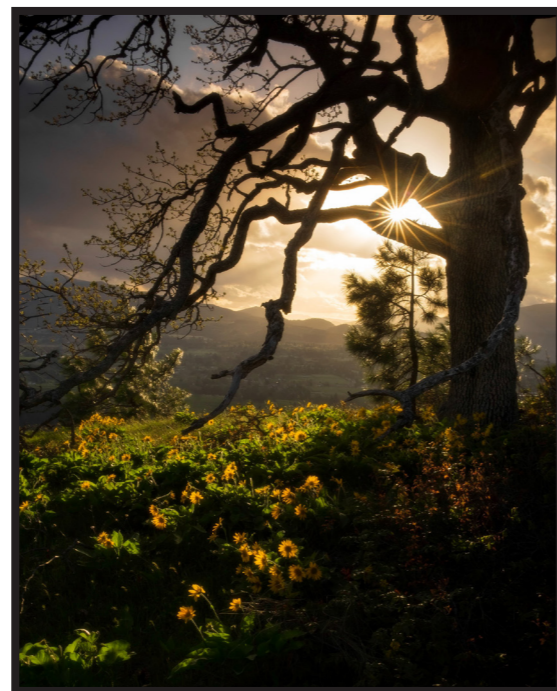
Message from Catherine Nalty, Deputy Secretary to the Inquiry

Many of you have told me about the emotional impact of watching the hearings, and that while you appreciate the work of Sir Brian, Jenni Richards and the team, following the Inquiry is taking its toll. As we take a break from the hearings until mid-May, this is a good time to emphasise the importance of looking after your own wellbeing. That's why we've asked the Inquiry's British Red Cross team to produce this newsletter. They have been with us from the preliminary hearings and will continue until the end of the Inquiry, so please do keep them in mind for a confidential chat.



The power of kindness

Kindness, compassion and understanding - something we all need but perhaps even more so during these current times. Though there seems to be light at the end of the tunnel regarding the pandemic, for many people that light still seems to be hidden around a bend or perhaps it's only flickering rather than bright and hopeful. The pandemic has made everyday life difficult for most people, but when your everyday life is hard work to start with, the last year has added pressures and complications that none of us could have foreseen.



A small team of British Red Cross volunteers has been providing emotional support to all those connected with the Inquiry since the first hearings in September 2018. Some pictures of our team are shown here though we all look much better in the flesh! Many of you may recognise us from the hearings or you may have spoken to us on the phone at some point.



From left to right top: Linda, Adam, Helen and Zandrea
From to left to right bottom: Judi, Andrea, Donatella and Liz

Our volunteers have grown in their knowledge and understanding of your situations over the past two years - a short time in terms of what you have all been dealing with, but we have learnt a lot over that time. We all have practical experience of providing emotional and practical support for people coping with personal crises or after major disasters, both at home and abroad. Many of us are mental health practitioners with multiple years of NHS and private practice experience between us.

We understand how difficult it can be to talk about what is happening or has happened, but sometimes it's easier to talk to a qualified and caring stranger than to family and friends. All calls are confidential, and no records are kept of those conversations.

Once we can attend the hearings again in person, you will see our volunteers there, ready to support you. In the meantime, our phone line continues to provide that support. Although we have specific times when the line is open, the voicemail facility is available 24/7, and we aim to call you back as soon as possible on the same day.



From left to right top: Marilyn, Briony and Ailsa
From to left to right bottom: Clare, Gill and Alan

Each person and situation is unique and we respect that no-one else can understand as well as you, but we hope to appreciate and use the experience we have gained to provide a kind, compassionate and understanding presence to support you when you need us.



From left to right top: Jenny, Hannah, Jane and Adi
From to left to right bottom: Mary, Barbara, Jan and Nancy

To contact us - call **0800 458 9473** or **0203 417 0280** at these times:
Monday between 11am and 1pm; Wednesday between 7pm and 9pm;
Friday between 2pm and 4pm **OR** leave a message on our voicemail and we shall call you back.

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