



Independent Panel Offices in
Equality House

Truth Recovery Independent Panel Newsletter

Seeking the Truth

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The Independent Panel's Communications & Engagement Working Group are pleased to issue, on behalf of the Panel, the Jul / Aug 2024 edition of the Truth Recovery Independent Panel Newsletter.

This edition will focus on the process of sharing testimony with our testimony team, how to get in touch with us, the steps involved and the support we guarantee throughout the process and afterwards.

This edition also outlines some of the Panel's key milestones for the next few months.

Paul McClarey, Beverley Clarke, Maria Cogley, Steven Smyrl and Sean O'Connell
(Communications and Engagement Working Group)

Key Milestones

Below are upcoming key milestones for your diary. We will share more details on these milestones with you soon.

September 2024

Panel to publish its response to TEO public consultation



September 2024

Info packs distributed at showing of 'The Marian Hotel'



October 2024

Wider appeal for people to come forward to provide testimony



October 2024

Engagement events across Northern Ireland



October 2024

Launch of Access To Records Guidance on website



November 2024

Fifth edition of the Panel's newsletter



November 2024

Engagement event with London Irish Centre



Giving Your Testimony - What to Expect

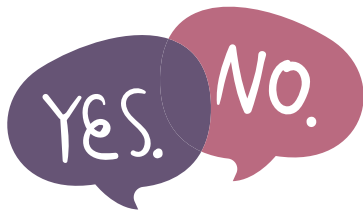
What will your experience look like?

Talk To Us

Contact our Testimony Facilitators who will talk you through the options for giving testimony, and how we protect your confidentiality.



Pre-Testimony



You choose how, when and where you will give your testimony. This can be face-to-face, online or in written form.

You choose how your testimony will be used, for example, would you like it to be included in the Panel's report.

Your Testimony Session

Our Testimony Facilitators will do all they can to ensure a safe and supportive space for you.

You will be listened to with empathy and acceptance, without challenge. We will record what you tell us truthfully.



Post-Testimony



We will send you a typed copy of your testimony and follow-up with you to ensure you receive the support you need.

Feedback On The Testimony Process

Some people who have trusted us with their lived experiences have given permission for us to share their feedback on the testimony process. We hope you find it reassuring if you are considering sharing your experience with us.

Participant 1: “I just want to say again that you were wonderful and made a potentially difficult situation not so difficult. So, thank you....I guess being listened to meant so much.”

Participant 2: “You both made it easy to give my testimony. I wish you well with this important work. I will be reporting back to my Adoptee Group on the positive experience it was.”

Participant 3: “Thank you for giving me my voice and that of all the girls and women who have had to endure the regime and cold place. Yes, I was tired but a bit relieved that our story is being told.... and that there were specially trained people to listen.”

Participant 4: “Can I take this opportunity to thank you on a personal note for your professionalism from first contact to present, your warm felt welcome and your comforting nature [and] making me feel so at ease...in this monumental moment to me.”

A Look Inside Our Dedicated Testimony Rooms

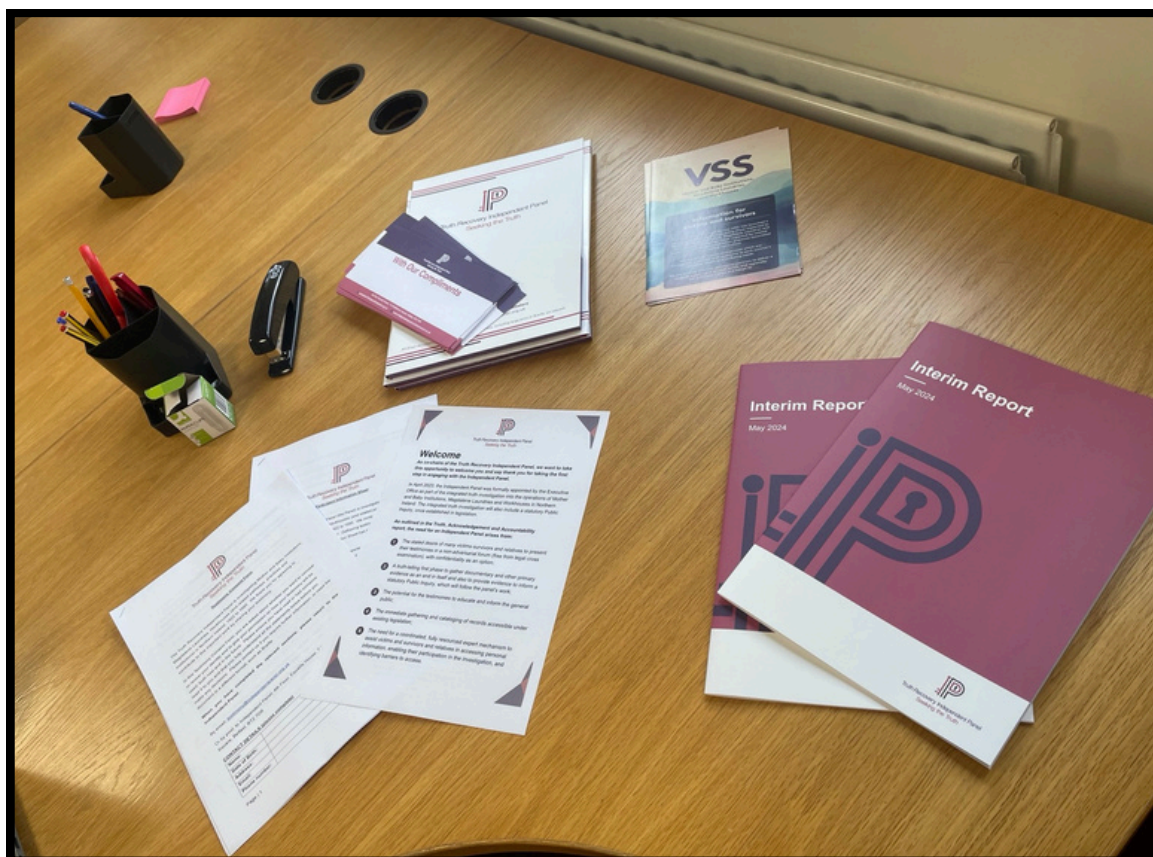
If you chose to share your testimony with us in-person you can do this at home, at a local WAVE centre or in one of our dedicated testimony rooms in Equality House.

We hope the images below provide you with an insight into our dedicated testimony rooms and the office space where the Panel's Testimony Team Administrator works.

Dedicated Testimony Rooms



Dedicated Office



Meet The New Testimony Facilitators



Dr Olivia (Livi) Dee

Dr Livi Dee is an Oral Historian and Research Fellow at Queen's University Belfast. She specialises in women's experiences of pregnancy and birth, and the development of reproductive rights in the UK.

She has published on many aspects of women's history including abortion reform, contraception and mother and baby institutions, and her monograph, *The Anti-Abortion Campaign 1966-1989* was published in 2019. Livi was the oral historian attached to the 2021 research report "Mother and Baby Homes and Magdalene Laundries in Northern Ireland" and conducted the majority of the interviews for this publication.

As a result of this, and several other research grants, she is experienced in conducting trauma-informed oral history interviews on difficult and emotional subject matter.



Dr Ruth Duffy

Dr Ruth Duffy is an Oral Historian and Research Fellow within the School of Arts, English, and Languages at Queen's University Belfast. Her research centres on the use of oral history as a method for uncovering and examining hidden or sensitive histories.

Currently, she is engaged in an innovative project that delves into the lived experiences of mixed marriage couples in Ireland. Ruth earned her PhD from Ulster University in 2021, and her groundbreaking doctoral research has since culminated in her first monograph, which provides the first in-depth exploration of the Northern Ireland health service's experiences during the Troubles.

Before assuming her current role, Ruth contributed to the NHS: Voices of Covid-19 project at the University of Manchester. During the height of the pandemic, this project was instrumental in collecting personal testimonies of the Covid-19 crisis, with the aim of preserving them as an enduring public resource and using them to inform future policy and practice.

Additionally, in 2021–22, Ruth collaborated on a Covid-19-focused initiative with Belfast City Council: The Freedom of the City Music Project. This project honoured Belfast's frontline workers and communities as well as capturing their personal stories and experiences.



Dr Lucy Newby

Dr Lucy Newby is an experienced oral historian and community history trainer, with an established background in testimony facilitation for a wide variety of academic and community research projects.

She specialises in researching emotionally sensitive topics and experiences subject to erasure in the historical record. Based in Manchester, Lucy currently leads a community oral history training programme and frequently conducts workshops on creating safe and supportive environments for interviews.

Lucy received her doctorate at the University of Brighton in 2020 for an oral history project exploring youth experiences of the Northern Ireland conflict. She has published widely on this research, along with the theory and practice of oral history.

Meet The Testimony Team Administrator



Yvonne Worthington

Yvonne is an experienced administrator, having worked in the Courts and Tribunals Service and Civil Service for over 30 years. She has worked in various courts during her career, has built up a vast experience of the legal system, dealt with a wide range of court users and formed excellent working relationships with the Judiciary.

More recently Yvonne was involved in the establishment of the Historical Institutional Abuse Redress Board and worked there for 3 years before obtaining a promotion. She is experienced in dealing with applicants and their families who may have experienced trauma and is skilled in her ability to empathise with people, make them feel comfortable and above all else, to listen to them.

Due to working previously within the Coroners Service for NI for a number of years, Yvonne also assists them now at weekends as a Coroner's Liaison Officer which involves passing on difficult information to grieving families.

**KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE
TO RECEIVE UPDATES?**

If you are aware of anyone who would like to receive updates on our progress and receive further newsletters, please ask them to register their interest and be added to our mailing list by emailing:

secretariat@independentpanel.org.uk

You can also get in touch with us by:



Writing to:

Truth Recovery Independent Panel,
4th Floor, Equality House
7 - 9 Shaftesbury Square,
Belfast, BT2 7DB



Phone: 028 9052 0263 (Open Monday – Friday 11am - 12pm and 3pm - 4pm or leave a voicemail on our secure answering service any time outside of these hours.)

Find us also on:

