

**** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, 31/01/2023 ****

Major Sheffield exhibition to showcase Stories From The Pandemic.

Hosted at Millennium Gallery, 'Stories From The Pandemic: A Lasting Testimony From Sheffield' will celebrate small acts of kindness and remember those we have lost through exhibits and experiences housed in a 'lockdown home'.

Stories From The Pandemic - A Lasting Testimony From Sheffield

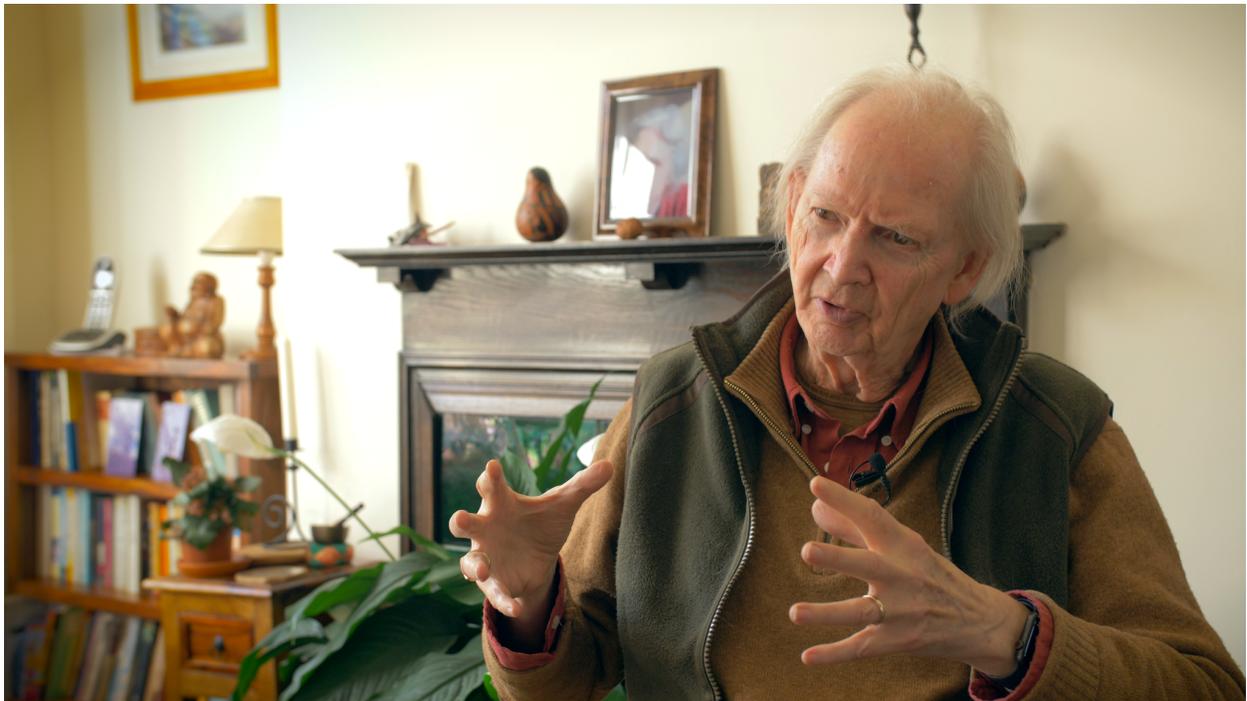
25th Feb - 5th Mar, 2023

10am–5pm (Sun. 11am–4pm)

Millennium Gallery, Sheffield, S1 2PP

Exhibition Trailer (Home Page)

<https://www.sheffieldstoriesfromthepandemic.com/>



Mike - Broomhall, Sheffield. Credit: Opus

A major exhibition hosted at Sheffield's Millennium Gallery will showcase written and recorded testimonies gathered from across the city about residents' experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Part of the city's memorial activities, the Stories From The Pandemic exhibition will take the form of rooms in a 'lockdown house', with visitors invited to interact with exhibits via TV, radio, coffee tables, pictures on walls and other household objects. Drawn from the extensive range of stories that have been gathered during the project.

Running alongside the exhibition, there will be a free programme of creative workshops and 'compassionate conversations' to offer people a chance to reflect, share their own stories and build confidence to support others through hard times.

The exhibition and accompanying activities aim to celebrate small acts of kindness experienced during the pandemic, remember those we have lost, and support positive change in communities across the city.

Delivered by [Opus](#), [Compassionate Sheffield](#) and Sheffield City Council, the Stories From the Pandemic project will ensure all of the experiences gathered through this work will be stored in the City's Archive in order to form a lasting testimony.

For anyone who is unable to attend the exhibition, a collection of stories from across Sheffield will be published on the [Stories From The Pandemic website](#), including video recordings and written testimony.

Tim Feben from Sheffield-based social enterprise Opus, who has been leading on gathering testimonies from Sheffields and designing the exhibition, said: *"You can't help but be moved by some of the stories of hardship and loss, and this exhibition won't shy away from these sometimes hard-to-hear stories. But equally it's a tribute to the city's resolve to also be able to share the experiences of people who, against all adversity, rolled up their sleeves and made a difference.*

"I hope this exhibition might help us see the people around us in a new light and with a renewed sense of empathy and connection."

Nick Deayton from Compassionate Sheffield, who has been helping to coordinate the city's Covid memorial response, said: *"As we've gathered these stories, the overriding feeling I have is that everyone's experience is unique and each community has a different story. I feel so grateful that people have welcomed us in and shared their stories so openly.*

Everyone has been affected by the pandemic, but as we learn about each other's lives, we can relate on a really human level. By leading with empathy and a desire to connect with people in our day to day activity, we can lay the foundations of a compassionate city.'

Terry Fox, Leader of Sheffield City Council said *"it is so important that the losses and challenges which faced everyone in Sheffield's communities in the face of the pandemic, and the resilience*

and togetherness that everyone demonstrated during that time is highlighted by this exhibition. Sheffield City Council is proud to be a member of the partnership that sought out stories from the pandemic and I encourage as many people as possible to go along to the Millennium Gallery to hear and see what their fellow citizens have to say.”

The programme will culminate in a weekend-long free creative session, featuring a host of demonstrations, hands-on activities and mini workshops that support participants to express their reflections and leave notes and tributes that will be incorporated into the recently-announced city centre [permanent Covid Memorial](#). Designed by architect and sculptor George King, the sculpture will be unveiled at Balm Green Gardens near the City Hall on or around the National Day of Reflection on 23rd March 2023.

Ruth Nutter of Compassionate Sheffield said about the programme of workshops and conversations: *“Owing to the isolating nature of the pandemic, many people haven’t had the chance to share and learn about each other’s experiences.*

“Whether you lost someone during the pandemic, or even had a baby born in lockdown, these are massive things to go through and we thought it right to create a safe space where people can visit the exhibition and then gather to discuss their own reflections and experiences with other people who have also experienced similar things.”

Notes to Editors

- The free *Lasting Testimony From Sheffield* exhibition will be hosted at Millennium Gallery from Saturday 25th February to Sunday 5th March (open 10am–5pm, 11am–4pm on Sundays).
- Stories and exhibits will be published online after the exhibition has closed, in line with the National Day of Remembrance (23rd March). Sheffield City Archives will also make the full collection available for future generations.
- The exhibition is part of the [Stories From The Pandemic](#) project, which aims to capture, reflect and document the impact of Covid-19 on the people and communities of Sheffield.
- Sheffield’s wider Covid memorial activity, led by Compassionate Sheffield in partnership with Sheffield City Council, has also included: more than 10 community exhibitions, film screenings and community food events across the city; and 53 small grants of up to £2,000 made to community groups and organisations in Sheffield under the Covid-19 Community Memorial Fund.
- Compassionate Sheffield was formed in 2021, in partnership with St Luke’s Hospice, Sheffield City Council and the local NHS strategic body. Compassionate Sheffield is part of the city’s Health and WellBeing Strategy. It is focused on harnessing the power of compassion in order to create a healthier and happier Sheffield. Whilst lots of its existing activity is focused around the context of end of life, death and bereavement; Compassionate Sheffield is working to encourage individuals, communities and organisations to do small things that make a big difference to our collective wellbeing.

- Opus is a not-for-profit social enterprise founded in Sheffield in 2008. Opus believes we can live in a place where everyone works to make things better for each other. 'Better' to us means fair, diverse, accessible, independent and heard.
- We have gathered testimony from hundreds of local people for Stories From The Pandemic. If you would like to explore how you could report on the project with exclusive access to video content, extended transcripts and your own interviews with participants, please get in touch.
- For pictures from the project see [here](#). Credit: Opus
- For more information about the City Centre Memorial Statue and Gardens see the council [press release](#).