

*‘A right to family life – Care  
Home Relatives Scotland, Our  
Story’*

Presented by Alison Leitch and Natasha Hamilton

# Who we are – core group

Five daughters and a mother

- Alison Leitch, daughter of Kathleen Leitch
- Cathie Russell, daughter of the late Rose Hamilton
- Nancy Gillespie, daughter of B Gillespie
- Natasha Hamilton, daughter of the late Anne Duke
- Sheila Hall, daughter of Alice Hall
- Verona Gibson, mum of Hollie Sutherland



# Why CHRS was formed

- Brought together by social media out of desperation from being cut off from our loved ones.
- There was no voice for residents. As the world opened up for society in late summer 2020, very little had improved for care homes residents and their families.
- At the start of the pandemic, there were over 35,000 Scottish citizens living in full time care.
- It is estimated that over 80% of care home residents have dementia or a cognitive impairment.
- There continues to be no support group for families or residents of care homes.

# Our aims and objectives

## Aims

- To enhance the quality of life of our loved ones in care homes, by resuming essential family contact.

## Objectives

- Introduce the concept of “Essential Care Giver Status” within the Scottish visiting guidelines for care homes.
- To encourage a person-centred approach, enhancing and supporting emotional well-being and avoiding further social isolation.
- To develop lines of communication with policy makers and represent the views of relatives with loved ones in care homes.

# What we have achieved



- Over 2,200 members of our Facebook group.
- Conducted 11 surveys of families and presented findings to Scottish Government
- Been involved in a number of research projects on the impact and harm of isolating residents from their families
- Attended 12 meetings with Government Ministers and over 100 meetings with Government officials
- Met with representatives from each political party
- Held two demonstrations at the Parliament
- Have representation on over 10 committees/advisory groups/sub groups
- Submitted a petition with nearly 100,000 signatures calling for Anne's Law
- Influenced Government visiting policies
- Nominated for two awards
- Ensured that the voices of care home residents has been heard
- Consulted on the Terms of Reference for the Scottish COVID 19 Public Inquiry. Met with the Judge of the Inquiry and applied for Core Participant Status.

# My experience – Alison Leitch

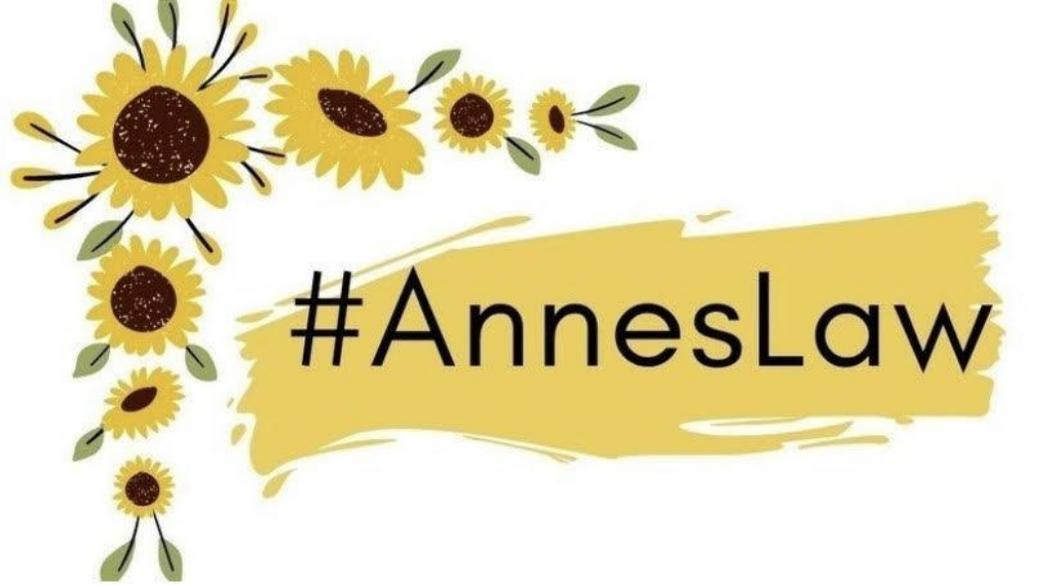


# My experience – Natasha Hamilton

Care Home Relatives  
SCOTLAND 



# Anne's Law



**Allow a nominated family member to enter care homes during a lockdown the same as staff do**

96,698 have signed. Let's get to 150,000!

- Petition started on change.org in July 2020 now at 96,698 signatures
- Was started at a time when families in the community could see each other again yet families with a loved one in a care home were still being separated.
- The objective was to allow a nominated family member to enter care homes safely the same as staff do.
- Family and staff should be seen as partners in care and the restrictions put on families did not recognise this.
- Petitioned Scottish Parliament - PE01841
- 15.04.21 Anne's Law is mentioned in SNP manifesto - "This will include delivering 'Anne's Law' - giving nominated relatives or friends the same access rights to care homes as staff while following stringent infection control procedures.

# Our member's experiences



- Oct/Nov 20 survey -The aim of the survey was to gauge how well the government guidance of 12<sup>th</sup> October had been implemented (where touch was allowed for the first time). We received 347 responses.
- 10% reported an improvement in visiting arrangements. 33% reported that visiting had worsened.
- 43% stated Public Health were responsible for visits being refused.
- 18% said that the decision to refuse visits was down to the care home manager.

<https://vimeo.com/751825125>

On behalf of the Care Home Relatives Scotland core team, thank you giving us the opportunity to share our story, it must never be forgotten.

