

Born in Scotland in the 2020s NewsLetter



Winter 2023

Welcome...

... to the Winter 2023 issue of the Born in Scotland in the 2020s Newsletter!



Born in Scotland started recruiting in NHS Lothian in autumn 2022. Special thanks to East Lothian, Midlothian and Willow community teams for their help in spreading the word to anyone booking a pregnancy in those regions.

We are delighted to have been given approvals to extend to all other NHS Lothian community teams in January 2023 and hope to extend recruitment to other areas in Scotland in 2023.

By the end of 2022 we had over 250 participants, and had already reached over 300 by the middle of January!

Thanks for joining us, and for your interest in Born in Scotland. Wishing you all a wonderful 2023!



Born in Scotland - 2022 highlights

- Opened in NHS Lothian in September 2022.
- 3 Community teams provided bookers with information about Born in Scotland
- We also recruited through social media and a letter sent out through Centralised Booking.
- Over 250 participants signed up by the end of 2022
- We are hoping to get approvals to start recruiting in other areas in Scotland in 2023

- Follow us!

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Born in Scotland

What is Born in Scotland in the 2020s all about?

Born in Scotland in the 2020s is a cohort study in the pilot phase.

In research there are lots of different types of studies. A cohort study is a 'longitudinal study' - which means it is over a long period of time - sometimes a few years. A cohort study also looks at a large group of people who are all similar in some way. In Born in Scotland our participants are all pregnant when they sign up!

A pilot study is a smaller scale study which tries to find out any potential problems and work out how best to conduct a study before it is made large scale.

So for Born in Scotland, we are currently a pilot study working out how best to 'scale up'. In this pilot phase of the study we aim to recruit 1,000 participants. Ultimately we are aiming to recruit 100,000 participants!



It can be a bit difficult to understand what exactly we are hoping to find out through Born in Scotland. Part of the reason for that is because we don't know what we will find out! We know that a lot of things have changed across society and that includes in the pregnant population - women and people who can get pregnant are having children when they are older, we have higher rates of assisted fertility (IVF for example). What we would like to find out is how the time in the womb affects the health of babies and children as they grow up. This might mean we find out information which helps to answer why some babies are born early, or ill. We might also find out how our environment or pollution affects babies before and after they are born.

Born in Scotland will link the information we normally collect from women and pregnant people during pregnancy, with the information we normally collect about babies and children.

Even though it's a bit difficult to explain and to understand, it's very exciting to think what we might find out! Thank you for taking part!



Looking Back at Cohort Studies

Cohort Studies have had interesting discoveries that have led to improved maternity care

Why are Cohort Studies Important?

A cohort study is a 'longitudinal study' - which means it is over a long period of time - sometimes a few years. It also looks at a large group of people who are all similar in some way. In Born in Scotland our participants are all pregnant when they sign up.

Things you **know** that you **know**

Things you **know** that you **don't know**

Things you **don't know** that you **know**

Things you **don't know** that you **don't know**

Adapted from 'Knowledge Matrix'

Cohort studies let us see trends in groups of people. Sometimes they confirm things we suspected or already knew. Sometimes we find out things we didn't expect. Some UK birth cohort studies include:

- National Survey of Health and Development (1946)
- National Child Development Study (1958)
- 1970 British Cohort Study
- Millenium Cohort Study
- The Birthplace Cohort study
- Born In Bradford

National Survey of Health and Development (1946)

The National Survey of Health and Development recruited babies across Scotland, England and Wales in one week in March 1946. It was conducted because the birth rate was dropping and they wanted to understand why, and look into the cost of childbirth.

One finding was that stillbirths were significantly more likely in women from lower socioeconomic areas. This helped to influence the establishment of the NHS. The study saw how the introduction of the NHS improved the cohort participants' lives. Some of the individuals recruited in the National Survey of Health and Development are still participating in studies now, over 70 years later, and they meet up for birthday celebrations!

The National Survey of Health and Development has a website with a lot more information if you're interested in finding out more!

<https://nshd.mrc.ac.uk>



Image from Unsplash - unsplash.com/s/photos/kids-history

Family Winter Fun

It can feel like winter is never going to end, but spring is just round the corner!

Things to do indoors

- If you're pregnant (even if you're not...!), then top of the list has to be nap! It's important to keep healthy and active, but it's also important to get rest.
- When you're making food, cook larger batches of food and then freezing meals for after the baby is born.
- Look online for some safe baby sensory things to do with your baby at home - putting different things from around the home (rice, uncooked and cooked pasta, shaving foam etc) into plastic sandwich bag (make sure you seal it with tape too, so your baby doesn't accidentally open it and make a mess) is simple, quick and easy.



Things to do outdoors

- Go for a walk with your child/ren and see if you can see any signs of spring. Snowdrops are one of the earliest flowers to bloom, and are associated with midwifery!
- See if there are any tree planting events organised in your local area.
- Make the most of the darker evenings to go stargazing before bed. Mars is visible at the moment! It looks like a bright, slightly yellow star.

Keep in touch!

Follow us on Social Media, keep up to date on our website, contact us with any questions

Born in Scotland is a University of Edinburgh and NHS study. The Edinburgh Pregnancy Research Team is a team of midwives, doctors, researchers, laboratory assistants and research practitioners. You can follow our Born in Scotland social media pages, or contact us directly.

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