

London Asbestos Support Awareness Group Newsletter

For anyone affected by Mesothelioma or other Asbestos related diseases in London and the South East, including Essex, Kent and Hertfordshire

Spring 2022

London and the South East

Registered Charity No.1174543



We are here with you, every step of the way...

News & events

New Support Groups

New for 2022, we have some new support groups in Kent and London to give patients more options to be able to attend.

Medway NHS Foundation Trust, Lung Cancer and Mesothelioma support group in Rainham, Kent, starting 5th April 2022 at 15:00pm

We are working together with the fantastic lung nurses at Medway to facilitate the support group. The nurses will be able to answer any medical questions or concerns you may have. Our Kent support worker and registered nurse Denise Hodges along with support worker Jade Hannan will be available to answer your questions on benefits claims as well as government and legal compensation schemes. If you would like to attend please contact us at support@lasag.org.uk



Maggie's Barts, Lung Disease and Mesothelioma Support Group in London, starting 13th April 2022 at 14:30pm

London support workers Louise Chaffe and Jenny Tompkins are working together with a cancer support specialist from Maggie's Barts along with Barts Health NHS Trust, Professor Peter Szlosarek and Lung Clinical Nurse Specialists to support patients with Lung Diseases including Lung Cancer and Mesothelioma. If you would like to attend please contact support@lasag.org.uk to register your interest or contact or Maggies Barts direct on barts@maggies.org

Go Blue for Meso

Go Blue for Meso is a national campaign to raise awareness of Mesothelioma, and the dangers of asbestos. This year, for Action Mesothelioma Day on 1st July 2022, people are being asked to get involved by lighting up their home or contacting a prominent landmark in their local area to light up blue on this day. Lighting buildings blue is a way to remember those affected by Mesothelioma, and raise awareness of the disease.

The campaign is part of the UK Mesothelioma Alliance's Action Meso campaign, which brings together the diverse Mesothelioma community with a single voice. All of the information about how to get involved, including letter template for local landmarks, is available at www.actionmeso.org/gobblue



Light a Blue Candle in Memory of Mesothelioma Sufferers

We, the staff at London Asbestos Support Awareness Group will be lighting a blue candle in the evening of 1st July 2022 @ 8pm to remember those who have lost their lives due to Mesothelioma. Please join us by lighting your own candle and

sending us a picture for us to share. We have candles available to purchase if you would like. Please contact your support worker. You are also welcome to send us a story in memory of a loved one if you would like. Please send your pictures to support@lasag.org.uk



Monthly Zoom Support Groups

We have decided to continue with a monthly zoom support group for those patients who are unable to attend face to face meetings. We have the privilege to be supported by The Royal Marsden consultant Michael Davidson. We have limited availability for Ipad use if you would like to attend but do not have access to technology.

If you would like to join the zoom support group, please contact louise@lasag.org.uk



Canterbury Golf Club and The Choughs Gold Society Supports London Asbestos Support Awareness Group

Colin Danton was sadly diagnosed with epithelioid mesothelioma in August 2021. Colin had worked with asbestos between the ages of 17 and 21 but it wasn't until he was 74 that he was diagnosed with this devastating disease. Obviously the diagnosis came as a great shock to Colin and his family, particularly because Colin had always been a keen sportsman. He currently plays golf and bowls, and up until a couple of years ago he played 5 a side football, indoor hockey and volleyball. Colin's GP has referred him to a gym and he is currently attending once or twice a week. Colin does this to improve his lung function and his general health, and is noticing the benefits from this.

Colin spent twenty one years raising funds for various charities through the Canterbury Lions Club and when he was given his diagnosis he was determined to turn a negative situation into a positive one. Colin is a member of the Canterbury Golf Club and a personal friend of Scott Lindsay,



their Captain. When Scott asked Colin to choose a charity that he would like the golf club to support during Scott's year in office, Colin immediately thought of the London Asbestos Support Awareness Group. The Choughs Golf Society in Canterbury have also chosen the London Asbestos Support Awareness Group to sponsor for the coming year.

We would like to thank Colin, The Canterbury Golf Club and the Choughs Golf Society in Canterbury for supporting us.

A new service

We are happy to announce we have added to the services we are able to offer. We have dedicated staff members who have vast experience in the social care sector and are able to provide information to sufferers when applying for funding for those who require care and would like to continue to live at home. We can liaise with the local authority, continuing healthcare teams, palliative care support as well as advise on how district nursing, occupational therapists and dieticians can support you to continue to live at home.



St Clare Hospice Bereavement Service

We are delighted to announce we are working together with St Clare Hospice to support those who have been bereaved. St Clare Hospice offer a range of services which includes community hubs for sufferers who are struggling with a devastating diagnosis, a bereavement helpline for emotional support and practical advice and a number of bereavement cafes in the community. Our staff have recently had the opportunity to attend training provided by St Clare Hospice to be able to support with bereavement. Please contact your support worker if you feel you would like further information on these services.

Are you struggling with your grief?

Talking it through could help. We're here to listen.

Call our Bereavement Support Helpline to speak to someone about your loss, and access free, emotional support and practical advice.

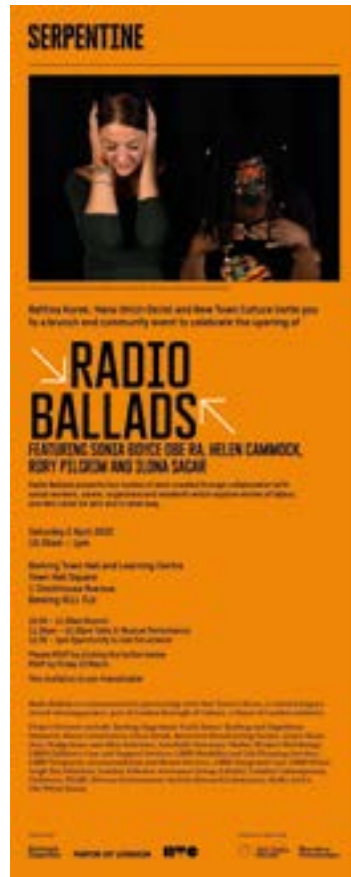
Bereavement HELPLINE

Lines are open Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm. It's free to call, though charges may apply in line with your standard network rate.

stclarehospice.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1044274

01279 967670

News & events



Radio Ballads exhibition at Serpentine Galleries and Barking Town Hall in Spring 2022

We, along with our patients, support worker Jenny Tompkins and the supportive ex-employee Yvonne Miah, have had the pleasure of working with the amazing artist Ilona Sagar on The Body Blow project. This project has involved Ilona researching the industrial history of work in Barking and Dagenham. This research led Ilona to discover the untold legacy of asbestos that is central to the history of work in the area. This project connects individuals who have been affected by asbestos exposure such as sufferers and their families as well as social services who work to support those affected, health services and employment support. We are delighted to invite you to the Special Private View of Radio Ballads at The Serpentine Gallery and at Barking Town Hall.

Please join us on Wednesday 30 March, 7-9pm at Serpentine North and/or Radio Ballads Community Opening & Brunch on Saturday 2 April, 10:30am-1pm at Barking Town Hall. Further details are included on the invitation and we very much hope that you are able to join us. Please RSVP us at jodie@lasag.org.uk

Please note: For the safety and comfort of all our guests, we advise that you take a lateral flow test the day of the event and please do not attend if you receive a positive result or feel at all unwell.



SERPENTINE

Earls Colne Primary School goes Blue for Mesothelioma Awareness

The pupils at Earls Colne Primary School have decided to support Action Mesothelioma Day 2022 by wearing blue to school for the day to raise awareness of mesothelioma and the dangers of asbestos. The children will also be donating £1.00 to support raising funds for the school and for London Asbestos Support Awareness Group.



Leigh Day Staff Member Louise Anderson is running the Royal Parks Half Marathon

Leigh Day asbestos team's secretary, Louise Anderson is running the Royal Parks Half Marathon which is a 13 mile hike through several parks including Hyde Park, Green Park, St James's Park and Kensington Gardens on Sunday 9th October 2022. She understands the devastating effect which asbestos disease has on individuals and their families, having worked on legal cases for several years. In the past, she has run several half marathons for other charities. This year we are lucky she has chosen to run for us, and hopes not only to beat her personal best but hopes to raise funds. Accordingly, should you wish to sponsor Louise, you will find her Just Giving page

www.justgiving.com/louiseanderson1646757625360



Lung Cancer Nursing Annual Conference 12th - 13th May 2022

This year's annual conference is taking place at Radisson Blu Hotel, Heathrow.

The 2 days conference is packed with presentations including the route back to improving lung cancer survival, symptom management and mesothelioma update and much more!



Action Meso Day Events 1st July 2022

A day to remember and celebrate in Canterbury, Kent

This year we will be holding a face to face event on Action Meso Day to remember sufferers of Mesothelioma, to celebrate the life of those suffering as well as raising awareness of such a life changing disease. This will take place at ARCA Hall in Canterbury where we will be joined by the amazing Michelle Roszak. Michelle suffers from Mesothelioma and was diagnosed in March 2020. She is a talented music teacher and a fantastic pianist and will be entertaining us all along with some of her older pupils with popular music and songs.

We will be observing a 2 minute silence to remember loved ones and past patients at 2.30pm. A cream tea will be served and a raffle will take place. We welcome friends and family to join us in this celebration. For catering purposes, if you would like to join us please contact support@lasag.org.uk

Sponsored Silence

Esmae Bull from Colchester, Essex will once again be completing a sponsored silence. Last year Esmae stayed silent for 1 hour and raised £700.00. She has decided to challenge herself even more this year by staying silent for 2 hours! We wish Esmae lots of luck with this very difficult task. A go fund me page has been set up for her. If you would like to support her and show your support for London Asbestos Support Awareness Group please visit gofund.me/c0386852



International Workers' Memorial Day 28th April 2022 @11am - An unveiling of the Memorial to those who have died due to asbestos exposure

International Workers' Memorial Day is an annual day of remembrance dedicated to workers who have died because of their work, whether through accident or disease.

The memorial project was initiated by Barking, Dagenham and Havering Trades Union Council, and is being brought to fruition in partnership with The London Borough of Barking & Dagenham.

The generosity of trade unionists, their unions, and members of the community, has allowed the opportunity to place a beautiful piece of blue pearl granite, engraved with a message of remembrance. To complement the memorial, there will also be an interpretation board to shine a light on the harm done

by asbestos, a scourge that continues to threaten us today in our workplaces, schools, public buildings and homes.

We have had the honour of being asked to speak alongside local MP Jon Cruddas and Sam Gurney, Secretary, of the London, East and South East Regional TUC. A Book of Remembrance will also be opened and maintained to receive inscriptions throughout the coming years, so we will be able forever to remember the names of those who have died.

A buffet lunch will be provided in the Barking Learning Centre, adjacent to the Square, and we look forward to welcoming you on the day. If you would like to attend please contact jodie@lasag.org.uk.



Legal news

Settlement package agreed after claim against Fords Motor Company

Lorna Webster, a Partner within Hodge Jones & Allen's specialist Asbestos Disease Team, has provided information about a case she has settled for a regular attendee of the London Asbestos Support Awareness Group's support meetings. Stephen Goodwright has mesothelioma, which was caused by his previous employment with the Ford Motor Company at their plant in Dagenham, Essex. Stephen worked there between 1975 and 1985 and was exposed to large quantities of asbestos dust during his work. Stephen wasn't supplied with any suitable mask or other protective equipment to stop him from breathing in the dangerous asbestos dust.

Due to the nature of asbestos exposure, it was not until years later that the consequences of his former employers' neglect became clear. Over 30 years after Stephen left the Ford Motor Company, he started to suffer from a shortness of breath and after consulting his GP and undergoing medical investigations, he received the diagnosis of mesothelioma. The long period between exposure to asbestos dust and the onset of the condition can leave victims worrying for decades about their health and for those victims where the disease does develop, it is life changing. However, after making contact with the London Asbestos Support Awareness Group, Stephen was able to access support and pursue justice for his condition. He decided to use the legal team at Hodge Jones & Allen Solicitors.

Lorna Webster has pursued many claims against the Ford Motor Company for asbestos disease victims. The evidence from Stephen about his work and Lorna's knowledge about the working practices at the plant ensured success of the legal claim and Lorna secured an excellent compensation package for Stephen. Stephen received the compensation he is entitled to because the Ford Motor Company allowed him to be exposed to asbestos dust at work. In addition, Lorna ensured the settlement package included an agreement from Ford's insurers that should Stephen's doctors recommend private treatment in the future, they would also meet those costs. This agreement was subsequently activated and Stephen has been receiving life-changing immunotherapy treatment as a result.

He has received numerous cycles of this treatment, with medical costs amounting to over £200,000 as at early 2022. Thanks to the settlement, Stephen has complete peace of mind that he can access the medical treatment he deserves without being out of pocket financially. Stephen knows he will never be completely free from his illness. However, he has managed to achieve some semblance of normality because of access to privately funded treatment made possible by the legal settlement secured for him. The help and support offered to Stephen by the London Asbestos Support Awareness Group and by Hodge Jones & Allen Solicitors has made a genuine difference to Stephen after the mesothelioma diagnosis.

HODGE JONES & ALLEN



Dr Who set builder exposed to asbestos while working at the BBC

The family of a man who built film and television sets for the BBC took legal action against the BBC following his death from mesothelioma.

Richard Evans (Pictured below) was exposed to asbestos while working for the BBC as a set builder including for shows such as Dr Who, The Lotus Eaters and Hard Times between 1965 and 1988.

As part of his work, he used Artex, a plaster which is now known to contain asbestos but which has been widely used in set building for years.

Mr Evans worked mainly at the BBC's headquarters, Television Centre, in White City, London but was sent on location all over the UK to build and maintain sets. He used the Artex to layer onto the wooden scenery outlines, then painted it to make the backdrops to the shows. He used to mix the artex with water to make a paste, but this would cause dust to rise up into the air, which he then inhaled.



Mr Evans began his legal case before his death and had told his lawyer, Harminder Bains, a partner at Leigh Day solicitors that he was not given any protective equipment by the BBC, nor told of the dangers of working with asbestos. He told her that the Artex would break off the scenery causing dust which would be swept up by labourers and dust would be released when the sets were broken up then reassembled on location.

The BBC admitted, in a High Court hearing, that Mr Evans was exposed to asbestos during his work for the corporation and the family received substantial compensation.

Mr Evans' daughter Helen McTighe said:

"Seeing my dad deteriorate at the rate he did was very upsetting. Since my dad's passing, I have a big hole left in my life. No one ever thinks that their parent won't be around one day. But it is so much harder to accept when his cancer could have been avoided if he had not worked with asbestos".



Harminder Bains said:

"Richard Evans is the latest person that we know lost his life as a result of breathing in particles of asbestos in a BBC location. Tragically, given that we now know that there was asbestos in several BBC premises, there must be other former BBC staff who lost their lives because of this. On top of that Mr Evans was not the only set builder working with Artex therefore there may be many others in the profession who have been exposed.

"It is appalling that at no time did anyone in the BBC either warn Mr Evans about the dangers of working with artex, or issue him with protective equipment, which may have reduced his risk".

Harminder Bains has also represented other families who were exposed in BBC's buildings, in those cases the exposure took place at the world famous Maida Vale Studios where the likes of Bing Crosby and the Beatles had made recordings. She believes that many others who have worked in BBC locations could have been exposed to asbestos.

Leigh Day
LAWYERS

Legal news

Asbestos Victims Support Group Forum demand £10 million donation towards mesothelioma research

Asbestos Victims Support Groups Forum UK's landmark battle for historical documents reveal that Cape knew of the dangers of Asbestos Insulation Board/Asbestolux.

Documents saved from destruction thanks to a court battle waged by the Asbestos Victims Support Groups Forum UK (the Forum) will be vital to future asbestos compensation cases.



Graham Dring and Harminder Bains at the Supreme Court after judgment was handed down.

The documents were obtained after the Forum commenced court proceedings against Cape following the 2017 case of Concept 70 Limited v Cape Intermediate Holdings Limited (Cape). They would have been destroyed but for the timely intervention of the Forum. The documents provide extraordinary evidence that Cape knew the high risk of fatal cancer caused by the use and handling of Asbestos Insulation Board (AIB), trade name Asbestolux and show the extent of its interference with the Government's regulation of asbestos in the 1960s and 70s.

The documents state that "a caution label on our products and none on [our competitors] would make our selling efforts most difficult". This demonstrates that Cape, an asbestos products manufacturer, dismissed the idea of a warning label due to concerns about profitability.

The documents were part of written material placed before the court in the legal action by Concept 70 and others who were trying to recoup compensation payments they had made to employees in asbestos compensation claims. Before judgment was given the parties agreed in a confidential agreement to destroy the significant documents, so they would never come into the public domain thus continuing to conceal the dangers.

Graham Dring the then chair of the Forum, instructed Harminder Bains partner at Leigh Day to issue an urgent application to preserve the documents. His case then proceeded to the Supreme Court and set a legal precedent allowing written material placed before a court to be seen by a non-party.

Having now studied the contents of the documents the key documents reveal the following:

- Cape encouraged its American partner Johns-Manville to suppress information on the health risks of asbestos and in the late 1950s the idea of a warning label on Marinite sheets was dismissed because of concerns that it would affect profitability.
- Cape's in-house sampling data show significantly higher dust counts than Technical Data Note 13 (TDN13) levels, even when just handling Asbestos Insulation Board (AIB) trade name Asbestolux.
- Cape compromised the Government's regulatory response to asbestos by lobbying the British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) and succeeding in downgrading the regulation from a 'no dust policy' to a 'maximum allowable concentration approach'. It then successfully lobbied to increase the proposed limits.
- All the while, Cape adopted a policy of selectively sharing its sampling data with the BOHS, providing evidence of low dust counts and withholding the more damning surveys.
- Cape lobbied the Government to water down the suggested approach to warning labels on AIB. Internal correspondence shows it campaigned to prevent other manufacturers from introducing warning labels on its own AIB/Asbestolux.
- Cape provided misleading reassurance about the dangers of asbestos in its communications with the Government and the public, contrary to its own data as to dust counts and health risks of asbestos.
- Despite the process by which the BOHS limits had been set, and the fact that they related to asbestosis, Cape engaged a public relations firm to publicly use the limits as a rebuttal against the risk of cancer/mesothelioma.
- Cape publicly stated that there was no risk from handling AIB/Asbestolux, despite knowing the high dust counts in its own sampling data.
- Cape continued to manufacture AIB/Asbestolux in 1980 contrary to defending court cases on the basis it had ceased manufacture in 1978.

Martin Stear, liability expert on behalf of Concept 70 Limited conceded that TDN13 limits only related to asbestosis and not to mesothelioma. Also that work with Asbestolux and Marinite, including simply handling these boards, carried the potential for very high exposure and that only cutting for 10 minutes probably had a higher exposure than the TDN42/EH35 figures.

Dr Smither (Cape's Group Medical Adviser) accepted that mesothelioma could be caused by "short and possibly small" exposure and that "no type of asbestos proved innocent".

Jordon Gordon Chair of the Forum said:

"The Forum is now demanding Cape make a donation of £10 million towards Mesothelioma Research. We believe victims and their families deserve this by way of an apology from Cape for their deliberate deception and shamelessly causing deaths, adding insult by vehemently defending cases."

Harminder Bains, Partner at law firm Leigh Day added:

"Having fought on the Forum's behalf for several years to secure access to these hugely important documents I felt revulsion and anger when I finally read through the documents to provide the summary of the key points. They clearly show that Cape knew of the high risk of fatal disease, yet deliberately withheld information and lobbied the Government to protect their profits. As a result of their greed many men and women including my father have lost their lives."

"In addition, Cape and Concept 70 sought to prevent these documents from coming into the public domain by agreeing to their imminent destruction. This cover up would not have come to the light had it not been for the Forum's persistence."

"Access to Justice would have continued to be denied if it were not for the fact that Counsel namely Robert Weir QC and Jonathan Butters and I were prepared to deal with the case pro-bono. There must be numerous other similar instances, where potential claimants are unable to obtain pro-bono legal representation hence corporations such as Cape escape justice"

See link to summary and documents by visiting www.asbestosforum.org.uk



Numerous support groups outside the court during the hearing.



A sufferers quest for justice

Mr DC developed respiratory symptoms in early 2021. By July, he received the news he had been dreading; a diagnosis of Mesothelioma. DC immediately contacted the team at London Asbestos Support Awareness Group. Having assisted with his benefits claim, in August 2021, DC instructed Thompsons to represent him. He was offered a home visit, but due to concern over the Covid pandemic, DC's evidence was taken over the telephone.



A picture emerged of various degrees of exposure to asbestos dust, as far back as 1957. The culprit, a former employer was swiftly identified. DC's evidence was formalised into a statement. His medical records were applied for and proof of employment obtained from HM Revenue & Customs. In September, Thompsons sent a formal letter of claim to the Defendant. This is the first notification a wrongdoer has of a proposed legal case. Within two months, the employer had not only admitted it negligently exposed DC to asbestos, but agreed to make an interim payment of damages as well.

DC was represented by Paul Webber, Thompsons' London Head of Asbestos Claims and Khelam Bulsara. Paul says: "With a Mesothelioma diagnosis, time is of the essence and it is vital to move swiftly to access a victim's rights. Mr DC can at least have some comfort that he has won his case and was successful in his quest for justice".

Give a little...

As always, we look for ways to help support the charity through fundraising

We have registered with [easyfundraising](http://easyfundraising.org.uk) to help raise money simply by shopping online. By shopping through [easyfundraising](http://easyfundraising.org.uk), your everyday online shopping turns into FREE donations for us. Download the app and shop with over 4,000 retailers such as eBay, John Lewis, Argos, ASOS and Booking.com and many more. Please register at www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/lasag

We have registered with Just Giving. If you would like to donate via our just giving page visit www.justgiving.com/lasag

We have also registered with [amazon smile](https://www.amazon.com/amazon-smile). Amazon donates a small amount each time you purchase something using amazon smile.

Ideas to support us

Regular Giving

You can choose to give a regular monthly donation In Memory, Regular Giving or Tribute Funds; collections at a funeral or memorial service, setting up a tribute page, or even making a regular gift to mark a special date.

Leaving a Gift in your Will

Clients sometimes choose to leave a legacy donation to help support more people affected by Mesothelioma and other asbestos related diseases.

Support us today

Visit www.lasag.org.uk/fundraising for more ways you can support us

Bank Payments

London Asbestos Support
SC: 30-98-90 Acc. No: 18406368

Card Payments

Secure online donations: www.lasag.org.uk/donate

Cash / Cheque

Farthings, Bridle Lane Rickmansworth, WD3 4JQ



JustGiving™ amazon smile



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Contact us

London Asbestos Support Awareness Group are on Social Media!

www.linkedin.com/company/london-asbestos-support-awareness-group

www.facebook.com/LondonAsbestosSupportAwarenessGroup

www.instagram.com/londonasbestossupportgroup

www.twitter.com/LASAG_UK

Visit our website: www.lasag.org.uk

Email us: support@lasag.org.uk

Telephone us: **0808 278 2515**



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