

# Asbestos News 2019



## Asbestos has left a devastating legacy – it is the greatest single cause of work-related deaths in the UK.

Despite being banned almost 20 years ago in the UK, asbestos materials are responsible for thousands of serious illnesses and deaths every year. Astonishingly, the number of people killed due to asbestos exposure still hasn't reached its peak, with the latest evidence suggesting that the figure will continue to rise until 2020.

While asbestos is no longer used in the UK, it is still present in many of our public buildings and industrial sites. The use of asbestos may be a thing of the past, but its consequences are being felt by those directly affected by diseases like mesothelioma, and those who have lost loved ones prematurely as a result of past asbestos exposure.

In this edition of Asbestos News, we tell the story of Bob Tucker, who was exposed to asbestos dust during his work as an electrician, as well as the support for Mesothelioma UK from Thompsons Solicitors and J.M. Parsons and Co., and Thompsons Solicitors' new campaign #PastbutPresent, aimed at giving those suffering from asbestos-related diseases a voice.

“ On my own I would have given up long ago, but Thompsons went the extra mile for me to ensure those responsible were forced to own up to their failings.”

**Pat Jolliffe**

Thompsons Solicitors' asbestos client

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## Bob's story

Unite member Bob Tucker turned to his union and our asbestos specialists to secure £425,000 after he was diagnosed with the asbestos-related disease, mesothelioma.

The 63-year-old, who had planned to move to Spain before his diagnosis, said: "One minute I was planning to live abroad, the next I was being told that I had a fatal and irreversible disease. I had no idea how to deal with it and my situation seemed hopeless."

Bob had been exposed to asbestos dust between 1969 and 1978, where he worked with a number of asbestos-lagged machines in his role as an electrician.

He would work in poorly ventilated rooms, so breathing in the dust was unavoidable.

**"Unite Legal Services and Thompsons Solicitors, thankfully, were excellent,"** he continued **"They immediately offered me support in starting my compensation claim. I was worried that the legal process would take a long time, but they did everything very quickly. They kept me updated along the way, securing the money that will allow me to pay for treatments to make life much more comfortable as I cope with my disease."**





## Important funds raised for Mesothelioma UK

Thompsons Solicitors, alongside Llanelli-based law firm, J.M. Parsons & Co., raised £1,500 for Mesothelioma UK at a fundraising evening held at the town's Parc y Scarlets stadium.

The local law firm hosted the fundraising evening two years after the death of its founder.

Following the passing of the respected asbestos solicitor Jeffrey Parsons in April 2016, J.M. Parsons & Co partnered with national law firm Thompsons Solicitors to support victims of asbestos-related diseases in South Wales.

Nia Griffiths MP opened the event in Llanelli, while Thompsons offices across England and Wales showed their support by holding their own fundraising events in honour of Jeffrey Parsons' legacy.

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services for the Welsh Government, Vaughan Gething, was the event's keynote speaker, and talked about the challenges facing the NHS and the steps taken to improve cancer care in Wales.

The evening saw a presentation from Sarah Morgan, the All Wales Mesothelioma UK Clinical Nurse Specialist, who explained her work in Wales and discussed the introduction of a new clinical trial for mesothelioma patients at the Hywel Dda NHS Trust.

Liz Darlison, Head of Services at Mesothelioma UK, gave an interesting presentation on the work of Mesothelioma UK and discussed the charity's ambition to raise one million pounds per year to carry out essential research into finding improved treatment options for the asbestos-related disease.

They were joined by Dr Phil Kloer, Director of Clinical Strategy at Hywel Dda University Health Board and Dr Robin Ghosal, Hospital Director at Prince Philip Hospital Llanelli. Both spoke highly of Mr Parsons and his extensive work and knowledge of asbestos claims.

Amanda Jones, specialist asbestos solicitor at Thompsons Solicitors, who was mentored by Jeffrey Parsons himself, said: **"Jeffrey would have been proud of everyone who gave their support for victims of asbestos disease. I'd like to thank everyone who attended our event and all those who contributed to raise money for Mesothelioma UK.**

**"J.M. Parsons & Co will continue to offer specialist support from its offices in Llanelli and blend local knowledge with the vast national expertise of Thompsons to deliver the best outcomes for our asbestos clients."**

## #PastButPresent

As part of our continued dedication to supporting patients suffering from asbestos-related diseases, we launched our #PastbutPresent campaign which aims to highlight the issues surrounding asbestos exposure. We are giving a voice to those with asbestos-related illnesses and their families. We want to tell their stories - past and present.

Our specialists have supported tens of thousands of workers with compensation claims. In some cases, we've supported clients who have developed asbestos diseases as a result of childhood exposure, living and playing near factories where asbestos was being manufactured into numerous products, or as a result of exposure from the clothes of loved ones who worked with asbestos dust.

Thompsons Solicitors takes an active role in supporting the Asbestos Victims Support Groups Forum in the UK, which provides places for people to meet, discuss and take action on behalf of those with an asbestos-related disease. We have links to asbestos support groups across the country, from South Yorkshire (SARAG) to Derbyshire (DAST) and Merseyside (MAVSG), through to the

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group (GMAVSG), the Cheshire Asbestos Victims Support Group (CAVSG) and Asbestos Support Central England (ASCE) to help those suffering from asbestos-related diseases find the support they need.

Thompsons Solicitors has been working closely with trade unions for almost 100 years to improve working standards and make vital changes to UK law. We are one of the UK's leading asbestos litigation solicitors and the firm that brought the first-ever successful case for asbestos-related disease in the UK to the House of Lords in 1972. We have decades of experience in running and winning compensation for clients who have developed an asbestos-related disease as a result of their working conditions.

We continue to stand with trade union members and their families who have experienced the devastating effects of past asbestos exposure to ensure that those responsible are held to account.

Find out more about how you can support the campaign at [thompsons.law/news/campaigns/asbestos-past-but-present](http://thompsons.law/news/campaigns/asbestos-past-but-present)



**Our asbestos specialists have supported thousands of people in compensation claims.**

**If you or a loved one have an asbestos disease, we can help. Get in touch with our experts today on 0800 0 224 224 or visit [www.thompsons.law/asbestos](http://www.thompsons.law/asbestos).**