

# British Lung Foundation newsletter for the **Breathe Easy** network

October 2011

London  
& South  
edition

## BLF backs mesothelioma research projects

There has been progress in medical care for asbestos-related diseases such as asbestosis and mesothelioma, but more work is needed. To help tackle asbestos-related disease, the British Lung Foundation (BLF) is investing £3 million between 2011 and 2013. Some of this will go into raising awareness, but the majority of which will be spent on research into the prevention, treatment and cure of asbestos-related disease.

The BLF received dozens of exciting applications for the first year's funding, and six projects researching mesothelioma have been selected.

**Mr John Edwards** of the University of Sheffield will study whether the chest pain that many people with mesothelioma experience can be better treated by combining several pain-relief treatments.

Two teams will examine new types of drug: **Dr David Waugh** of Queen's University, Belfast will lead research into whether new drugs called IAP inhibitors can improve the effectiveness of chemotherapy, and **Professor Anthony Chalmers** of the University of Glasgow will investigate whether new drugs called TRAIL agonists can increase the success of radiotherapy.

**Dr Peter Campbell** of the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute will research how exposure to asbestos fibres damages genes in the lungs, while **Dr Brian Huntly** of the University of Cambridge will receive funding for a PhD student to study the role of the protein GADD34 in the mesothelioma.

Epidemiologist **Professor Julian Peto** of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine will look at the likely risks that asbestos in older buildings still poses, and will provide projections of future mesothelioma cases.

## BOFAA names UK winners

Breath of Fresh Air Awards (BOFAA) recognise outstanding achievement in Breathe Easy during July 2010 to June 2011. Regional winners in five categories were entered into the UK-wide awards. The UK winners are:

- **Outstanding contribution to awareness raising and campaigning** – Margaret Barnard, BE Neath (Wales)
- **Outstanding health care in the community** – Sarah Kearney, BE Isle of Wight (London & South)
- **Outstanding group newsletter** – BE Solihull (Midlands)
- **Outstanding new group** –

BE Canvey Island (London & South)

- **Outstanding group achievement in influencing** – BE Fenland (London & South)
- The winner of the **Outstanding contribution to lung disease shield** is BE Causeway in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the BLF and in particular this year for their funding of the Northern Ireland Development Officer post.

Special congratulations go to Breathe Easy Fenland, who won their category with a unanimous vote. Congratulations to all the regional and UK-wide winners.



## Cut your heating costs

The nights are drawing in and soon it will be time to switch the heating on. With energy prices rising, now's the time to look at ways to save:

### ■ Can you get a social tariff?

These are cheaper fuel rates offered to people in special circumstances, such as those over 60, or those with a chronic condition who are also on a low income. Contact your supplier to see if you are eligible.

### ■ Can you shop around?

Costs can vary dramatically between suppliers, so it pays to do some research on which supplier is the most affordable for your needs. Check [www.uswitch.com](http://www.uswitch.com) or call **0800 051 5493** to compare rates.

### ■ Can Warm Front help?

This government scheme helps those on certain disability or income-related benefits with insulation or other heating improvements.

To check if you are eligible visit [www.direct.gov.uk/warmfront](http://www.direct.gov.uk/warmfront) or call **0800 316 2805**.

It's worth contacting them soon to avoid the rush.

■ **For more details contact the BLF Helpline on 08458 50 50 20.**

  
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## Noemi Eiser becomes new regional chair

We are pleased to announce that Dr Noemi Eiser is the new London & South Regional Chairperson.

Noemi was a GP with a special interest in chest diseases in London for 28 years. She ran the chest clinic and the medical high dependency unit at Lewisham University Hospital. She has also served as Honorary Medical Director at the BLF, stepping down recently.

She is keen to visit BE groups across the region.

Thank you to current chairperson Diana Brittan, who has served since the committee started in 2005.

# VIPs turn out for BE group launch



**O**n 12 July, BE Winslow and Buckingham officially launched. Mayor of Winslow Llew Monger and deputy mayor David Barry joined members of the group as well as guests from other local groups.

The group enjoyed cake and nibbles before being treated to an interesting talk by Dusty Rodes on the background of various traditions in the area. Congratulations to all the committee for all their hard work in getting the group launched.



## BE's carnival show

BE Saffron Walden had a float in the local carnival on 2 July. Carol dressed as Florence Nightingale, Brian was on a scooter on the float and Tommy was on a bed. Other members walked alongside the float with collection buckets.

## Record turnout for BE information day

In August, a record 67 patients and carers came to a Breathe Easy information day, to find out more about setting up BE Sudbury.

The BLF's Claire is working with Nadine and Rachel from the West Suffolk Respiratory Team, and we think this group will be a big success.

BE Sudbury has already held its first meeting, in September, and the group would love to hear from anyone interested in being part of the committee.

We'd also like to say a big thank you to Peter Woods, chair of Breathe Easy Ipswich, who



gave an inspirational talk at the information day to all the potential new Breathe Easy members.

Pictured above are Claire, Rachel and Nadine, with Peter Woods.

## New face in the L&S team

The new Development Officer for London, Bethany, says: "I have a diverse professional background that has included setting up and working with charitable youth organisations and counselling for the mental health charity Mind, as well working within the private sector. This should stand me in good stead for all the challenges Breathe Easy can throw at me.

"I moved to London a year ago, and I'm excited about getting to see more of this amazing city over the



coming years working for the British Lung Foundation."



## BE Fenland raises funds at Skylark

BE Fenland had a stall at the Skylark Vintage Country and Air Show on 3 September. They gave out information leaflets and flyers, and were interviewed by BBC Radio Cambridge. They also held a raffle and hook-a-duck, lucky dip and 'wine or water?' stands.

## Dates for your diary

**17 October** – Ashford Forum (Kent)

**24 October** – Milton Keynes Forum (Bucks, Bedford, Luton)

Please contact Dominic for more information on 020 7688 5575.

**25 October** – Herts Forum (for all BE groups in Hertfordshire)

**28th October** (for groups in Essex)  
Please contact Claire for more information on 020 7688 5585.

## BE Mid-Sussex is five

BE Mid-Sussex celebrated its fifth birthday with a charity evening at the Thatched Inn in Hassocks. Guests enjoyed a fabulous meal and live music from Rococo, with a raffle in aid of the group. The group would like to thank the Thatched Inn for their hospitality, and Rococo.

Pictured below (left to right): committee members Liz Easton, Lillian Hammond (now sadly deceased) and Jennifer Ellingford.



## Green Token Scheme

More London & South groups have been nominated for the Waitrose scheme. BE Hertford received a cheque for over £370.

Congratulations to BE Mid-Sussex, which has been nominated by its local Waitrose for September.

## Summer donations

Thank you for the donations made to the BLF in July and August. Your group can pick the cause they would like their donations to go to by filling out an Annual Choices form.

**Bedford** – £200

**Canterbury** – £250

**Canvey Island** – £250

**Colchester** – £150

**Fenland** – £95.92

**Guildford** – £500

**Horsham & Crawley** – £100

**Ipswich** – £1,000

**Isle of Wight** – £1,000

**Kingston** – £200

**Merton & Sutton** – £490

**Middlesex** – £300

**Milton Keynes** – £500

**Newham** – £400

**North Herts** – £1,000

**Portsmouth & District** – £500

**Portsmouth South** – £7

**Saffron Walden** – £300

**Spelthorne** – £600

## BOFAA 2011 – regional winners

**Outstanding Contribution to Awareness Raising and Campaigning**

Portsmouth South

**Outstanding Healthcare in the Community**

Winner: Sarah Kearney (Isle of Wight)

Runner-up: Cassie Lee (Paddington)

**Outstanding Group Newsletter**

Winner: BE Cambridge

Runner-up: BE Harlow & Epping  
BE Paddington

**Outstanding New Group**

Winner: BE Canvey Island

Runner-up: BE Portsmouth South

**Outstanding Achievement in Influencing**

BE Fenland

Meet the team...

## BLF Helpline

The BLF Helpline deals with enquiries on a wide range of issues. The service is available to anyone affected by lung disease, including those diagnosed with a condition, their partners and carers, and their families. It is open Monday to Friday, 10am-6pm on **08458 50 50 20**. Calls are charged at a local rate, and the helpline can ring back if callers prefer. There's also a "callback" service, where people can request a call through the BLF website, or by texting their number to **07582 289 183**.



### Terrel Connor, Biddy Fairclough and Olivia Nisar Helpline officers

This team answers all calls, and deals with straightforward queries. If they don't know the answer, they know someone who does.

### Tracey Newton and Carol Sheridan Specialist Advisers

Tracey and Carol deal with in-depth issues. Their specialities are welfare benefits, claiming compensation, carers' issues, and the practical issues of lung disease.

### Sarah Agnew, Jan Batten, Suzanne Matthews and Barbara Moore Respiratory Nurse Advisers

Sarah and Barbara answer enquiries on treating and managing adult lung conditions, while Suzanne handles children's conditions.

### Helen Chinerry

#### Counsellor

Helen provides one-off or regular support in coming to terms with diagnoses, anxiety issues, and more.

### Paul, Joe and Jen Helpline volunteers

Paul, Joe and Jen provide clerical support to the team.

### Mark Pilling

#### Advice Service Manager

Mark supports the team, looks at how the helpline can develop, and answers the phones when needed.

## Current campaigns

### ■ Waking up to the danger of OSA

Our successful campaign on obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) has continued to appear in the media.

The campaign has been on BBC Radio 2's Jeremy Vine Show and BBC 5 Live Drive. Both featured lorry driver Colin Wrighton. He spoke bravely about how his undiagnosed OSA caused him to black out at the wheel, fatally injuring another driver, Toby Tweddell. Colin was joined by the Tweddell family. The *Daily Mail* also used our survey results in a story about sleep.

More than 6,200 people have taken our test at [www.lunguk.org/sleep](http://www.lunguk.org/sleep) to see if they're at risk of OSA.

### ■ COPD and asthma strategy

After seven years of campaigning by the BLF and BE groups, the Department of Health has launched a six-point strategy in England to help people living with asthma and COPD live as long as possible, with the best quality of life. Your groups have played a key role, lobbying MPs to fight for the strategy, and raising awareness. Thank you for your continued fight against lung disease!

### ■ Smoking in cars – update

We need your help. On 25 November, there will be a second reading of the Ten Minute Rule Bill in Parliament, calling for a ban on smoking in cars with children. We need you to write to your MP, asking them to ensure the bill goes through to the next stage: every letter or email counts. Check out [www.lunguk.org/childrenscharter](http://www.lunguk.org/childrenscharter) for how you can contact your MP or call **020 7688 5564**.

## And the team's top priorities are to...

- Provide the best service it can.
- Make people aware of the support the BLF can provide.
- Ensure that as many calls as possible are answered.
- Answer all emails on the same day as they come in.
- Respond to messages within an hour on working days.
- Increase awareness of the importance of getting advice about welfare benefits.
- Ensure the Web Community runs smoothly.

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