

# Asbestos News 2018



**Thompsons Solicitors has supported tens of thousands of people to bring compensation claims against those responsible for exposing them, or their loved ones, to asbestos.**

Our expert lawyers have been defending the rights of asbestos victims since 1972, when Thompsons brought the UK's first ever successful asbestos disease litigation case to the House of Lords.

We're committed to helping people affected by asbestos diseases, such as mesothelioma, asbestosis, pleural thickening and asbestos-related lung cancer, to pursue compensation claims that help to bring employers and insurance companies to account, alongside offering families a greater sense of financial stability.

In this edition of Asbestos News, which coincides with the centenary of some women winning the right to vote in 1918, our experts look at the female story of asbestos, as well as Thompsons Solicitors' charity support for Mesothelioma UK and how our experts can help you to recover costs for potential new drugs currently not available on the NHS, such as immunotherapy treatment.

“*Thompsons Solicitors worked tirelessly on my claim for compensation, which helped give me strength to carry on in the face of this illness.*”

**Vivienne**  
Thompsons Solicitors' mesothelioma client

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In 2017, Thompsons Solicitors secured £28m in compensation for people affected by asbestos diseases, supporting thousands of people and families in the process.



Exposure to asbestos is responsible for up to nine out of 10 mesothelioma diagnoses.



Mesothelioma is frequently listed on the death certificates of former carpenters, plumbers and electricians. People who worked in construction when asbestos was widely-used, or on industrial sites such as shipyards, are among those most at risk of contracting mesothelioma.

## Vivienne's story

Vivienne was exposed to asbestos while washing the work clothes of her late husband, Peter, who worked as a joiner in Lancashire. After suffering difficulty walking she visited her GP and was later diagnosed with mesothelioma.

Thompsons Solicitors helped Vivienne to secure £250,000 in compensation. She has also been supported by the Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group.

Vivienne said: "Thompsons Solicitors worked tirelessly on my claim for compensation, which helped give me strength to carry on in the face of this illness. It often felt like every time we turned a corner in the search for the insurer, a door would shut in our face, but Thompsons kept on fighting. I really don't think many law firms would have gone to the same lengths."



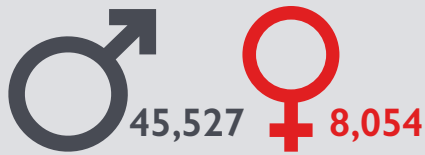
## Leonard's story



Leonard's late wife, Annette, died in 2015 after she was diagnosed with mesothelioma.

After Annette fell ill and it was discovered she had fluid on her lung, Leonard feared asbestos may be the cause, as she used to wash his clothes when he worked at the London Docks in the 1950s and 1960s. Leonard was exposed to asbestos during this time, and the dust would settle on the clothes Annette washed.

He said: "After Annette's diagnosis we spoke to Thompsons Solicitors, who were so supportive and pursued our claim ferociously. It was a relief to have a solicitor who we could turn to locally, who is a real specialist, and also knows the area and its industrial history inside out. She did not stop fighting for us."



Women are also affected by the disease, although their exposure is much less widely reported. A report in 2017 by the Health and Safety Executive analysed 45,527 male and 8,054 female mesothelioma deaths from 1981 to 2015, finding that the Barking and Dagenham area of Essex is the UK's top hot-spot for women's deaths from mesothelioma.



Many women have been exposed to asbestos through washing their husband's overalls, which were contaminated with asbestos dust from their workplace. After 1965, employers should have taken steps to prevent dust from being carried home, but many failed to do so.



Women are also exposed to asbestos from working in schools, offices, mills or factories where asbestos is being disturbed due to maintenance work.

## Thompsons Solicitors supports charity fundraising day

Staff at Thompsons' offices across England and Wales took part in a variety of fundraising activities to support Mesothelioma UK, a charity that provides specialist advice, information and support to people suffering with mesothelioma, and their families.

Donations from the fundraising events, which saw many members of staff baking muffins or dressing down for the occasion, went towards the costs of the charity's resource centre and helpline, which provides details of support groups and advice on medical treatment and benefits for those with asbestos diseases. Mesothelioma UK also funds specialist NHS nurses to ensure patients can access the most up-to-date advice and support in their local area.

Mesothelioma is a devastating disease which sadly affects thousands of individuals every year in the UK and we are motivated to continue raising awareness.

A vital area of our work involves working closely with asbestos victim support groups and charities.

Mesothelioma UK is an outstanding charity dedicated to improving the life and experience of those affected by mesothelioma. Thompsons is proud to support the incredible work of this charity, to ensure that they can continue providing invaluable support and resources.



## Recovering costs for immunotherapy and non-NHS funded treatment



Mesothelioma is a complex disease and, after chemotherapy, options are limited for medical practitioners trying to manage it. However, where it may prove beneficial for a patient's health, the specialist asbestos team at Thompsons can fight to recover additional compensation to cover, or contribute to, the cost of new experimental drugs not yet available on the NHS outside of clinical trials.

While most people with mesothelioma will receive chemotherapy, the treatment often comes with significant side effects.

However, with a growing list of clinical trials in the field, those with mesothelioma have more potential options than ever before. This moves beyond palliative care to immunotherapy treatment such as Pembrolizumab – marketed as Keytruda. The number of alternative therapies that are available privately is growing, as research into the treatment of mesothelioma gathers pace.

Our asbestos experts can signpost you to recognised asbestos support groups or charities, such as Mesothelioma UK, who have specialist nurse practitioners who can discuss particular trials and treatments which may be available. This expert opinion can help us build a case against the insurer of an employer to fund the treatment, as well as compensation for the emotional, physical and financial impact of a mesothelioma diagnosis.

Insurers should pay, and are paying, for prior negligence through the hard work of our asbestos team. We are committed to fighting for those who have had their lives turned upside down by asbestos, by securing compensation packages that allow people with mesothelioma to potentially access experimental treatments, meaning that they, or the NHS, aren't left to foot the bill.

**Our asbestos specialists have supported thousands of people in compensation claims since bringing the first ever successful case for asbestos-related disease to the House of Lords in 1972.**

**If you have been given an asbestos-related disease diagnosis and would like free, no obligation advice about the legal process surrounding making a claim, talk to our specialists on 0800 0 224 224 or visit [www.thompsons.law/asbestos](http://www.thompsons.law/asbestos).**