

BLF Bulletin

The latest news from the British Lung Foundation

spring 2017



Breathe Easy Week 2017

From 12 to 16 June, join our call for clean air!

Each year, Breathe Easy Week raises awareness of lung conditions and helps to fund life-changing research. This year, we're also encouraging you to raise awareness of the dangers of air pollution – and the steps needed to tackle it.

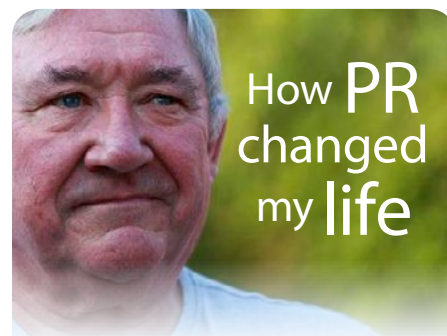
Air pollution is a public health crisis. In the UK it contributes to the equivalent of 40,000 early deaths a year – and people with lung conditions are often hit the hardest. With your support this Breathe Easy

Week, we can urge the government to agree to a new Clean Air Act.

There are loads of ways to get involved. Have a stand at your local supermarket, put up posters in your GP surgery, get in touch with your new MP. If you're feeling adventurous, you could organise a sponsored walk or an impromptu singing event!

If your BE group is holding an event, don't forget to send your photographs in and let your group support officer know.

To find out more about our clean air campaign go to blf.org.uk/clean-air



How PR changed my life

Bob is amazed at how quickly pulmonary rehabilitation helped his COPD symptoms.

I worked as a glassblower for 18 years, using my lungs daily. Around the age of 64 I started to get really breathless and was diagnosed with COPD.

Within months, breathlessness forced me into early retirement. But then I wasn't getting any exercise and the breathlessness started to show even more. I couldn't take care of my allotment any more. That helped me make up my mind to do something about it.

That's when I discovered pulmonary rehabilitation. I got referred, and had a six week course. I felt so much better straight away! I realised how easy it was to get back into shape. And once I started, it just got easier and easier!

I go to the gym three times a week now, and spend ten minutes on a bike, on a rowing machine and on a stepper. In between, I lift weights. I started out pushing 25kg. Now I'm doing double that, in under a year!

Starting PR isn't easy – the initial push is really hard. But I'm so glad I took the plunge. Read more at blf.org.uk/blog

Volunteer for Breathe Easy

Get involved with this fantastic opportunity to support the BLF and people affected by lung disease in your local community.

We're looking for self-motivated individuals who are willing to become ambassadors for BLF and Breathe Easy. You'll help us deliver an excellent service by providing support, advice and guidance for people living with a long term lung condition. Through your role you'll help us educate and inspire people to manage their lung condition and to improve their quality of life both mentally and physically. If you're interested, contact blfgroupvolunteer@blf.org.uk





BE Kirkcaldy visiting Coronation Street during a three day trip

Focus on...

BE Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline

Agnes is chair of the Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline Breathe Easy groups.

66 I became involved in Breathe Easy in 2004 after spending 18 months in and out of hospital. I became friendly with two nurses who asked if I wanted to start a group. At first I said no – I was only 42 and thought support groups were for older people.

But after discovering the lack of support for people like myself, I decided to get involved.

At first we only had six members. Today the two groups hold monthly meetings with 35-45 people attending. A typical meeting is packed with activities: a sing song, exercise class, guest speakers – and a chance to socialise

over a cup of tea! It's important to offer a range of activities to appeal to as many people as possible. We also take day trips and holidays together.

Going to a Breathe Easy group makes so much difference. It builds self-confidence by encouraging members to take small steps and helps reduce isolation. Many people have lost their self-worth so we give everyone a role. This could include making the tea or looking after new

members. All group members are valued.

I feel like I need to speak to every person with a lung condition to offer them knowledge, stop the isolation and fear they feel and show that there's hope."



Mesothelioma patron scheme

We've brought together companies who have direct experience of the effects of mesothelioma or asbestos. They're working together to improve the lives of those with mesothelioma and help to prevent future cases. All of our patrons have made generous donations to our mesothelioma research fund. Thank you to our legal patrons: our gold patron, Hodge Jones and Allen, and our silver patrons, Birchall Blackburn, Hugh James and Simpson Millar. Thanks also to our asbestos experts ACMS UK and Shield Environmental Services. Find out more at blf.org.uk/meso-patrons



Meet your group support officers

Jo supports groups in the Midlands and London.

I've worked at the BLF for 12 years. I'm passionate about making sure people with a lung condition and their carers are supported and receive the best possible help. If you have a question, a query or just want a chat, give me a call!



Helen supports groups in the south east and the north of England.

I've worked at the BLF since 2011 and can honestly say that every day is different and interesting! I look forward to meeting members in my new region, northern England, as well as deepening my BE connections in the south east.



Adele supports groups in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and south west England.

I started working for the BLF in March. I'm looking forward to working with the groups in my regions to offer the best support possible. I've worked in a number of different support roles. If you have any questions don't hesitate to give me a call.



Becky supports groups in the north west and east of England.

I started working for the BLF in March. I look forward to getting to know the BE groups and am eager to give them the support they need. If you have a problem, query or would like a general chat I'm happy to help any way I can.

