

Chairman's report - READLEY AGM 13/09/2024

This is our second AGM since becoming a registered charity. It has once again been a very busy but also very rewarding year with READLEY continuing to grow and develop.

The READLEY support groups continue to grow and provide exceptional support for patients and families affected by asbestos related health problems. We have seen a further increase in the general awareness around mesothelioma and other asbestos related conditions with campaigns from Mesothelioma UK (Don't let the dust settle) and the Asbestos Forum (Cape must pay) which in turn has led to an increased demand for support and advice. In addition, we are going through an exciting period in terms of newer treatment options and increased research activities for Mesothelioma. READLEY has developed further, adapted to this and by recognising the different needs of our patient population, been able to support them and their families on their journey.

The awareness of asbestos exposure and asbestos related conditions has once again been a central part of the charity's work. READLEY has been active in contacting local MPs and linking up with local council leaders to raise awareness. Ian Lavery (MP for Wansbeck) and Julie Elliott (MP for Sunderland Central) were guest speakers at our annual Action Mesothelioma Day on 7th July at The Grand Hotel in Seaburn, Sunderland. Ian Lavery has been actively involved in the Westminster debate on the dangers of asbestos in the workplace, including increased awareness around asbestos in public buildings such as hospitals and schools, and will hopefully continue to keep the issue active within higher government circles.

The Action mesothelioma Day event on 7th July 2023 was once again a great success and was also attended by local mayors and a deputy mayor. As always, it was a day for remembrance with a focus on hope and positivity for the future. The Mayor of Sunderland arranged for the Penshaw monument and other local landmarks to be lit up blue and we also saw the Millenium bridge and Middlesborough town hall illuminated blue to mark this special day.

As the work of the charity has become busier, we have seen additional members of the team and trustees come on board. Adele Fasa has joined the team and has been actively working closely with MPs and we have seen a change on the board of trustees with David Black joining in the role of treasurer and Ray Glasper as trustee. I would like to formally welcome David and Ray and express our gratitude for joining us.

Of course, the work and support provided by READLEY would not be possible without the financial support received from our various fundraisers, partners and legal panel. We were chosen as one of the Mayor of Gateshead's charities of the year for this year and received a kind donation. In addition, JDR cables were once again very active in the fundraising side and hosted our annual ball with the funds subsequently divided between READLEY and Mesothelioma UK. JDR cables have been extremely supportive towards READLEY over the last 3 years and have provided crucial funding. As this has now come to an end, I would like to put on record how very grateful we are to them for their support over the last 3 years. READLEY also continues to receive donations from amazing individual fundraisers via platforms such as JustGiving and PayPal Giving for events such as the Great North Run - for which we are

enormously grateful. Looking forward to new fundraising activities over the next 12 months we were pleased to be chosen as joint beneficiaries for a Masquerade Ball to be hosted at Whinstone View in November and I am looking forward to planning future events.

On a sad note, everyone at READLEY was enormously saddened by the passing of Sheila Morton. Sheila was our secretary at our last AGM and subsequently took on the role of treasurer. We are extremely grateful to have had Sheila as part of the team and I would like to extend our thoughts and sympathies to Sheila's family and friends.

Finally, I would once again like to thank the whole READLEY team and board of trustees for all their hard work and determination over the past 12 months. The work done by Sam, Jo, Sharon and the rest of the team is truly amazing. The commitment shown towards patients and families affected by asbestos related conditions and their ongoing crusade in raising awareness is inspirational. Myself and the rest of the board of trustees will continue to support the charity as best we can, and I look forward to seeing what more we can achieve in the next 12 months.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Dr David Cooper', with a stylized 'D' and 'C'.

Dr David Cooper

Chairman, Board of Trustees, READLEY