

# WELLBEING Magazine

JAN - FEB  
2026  
EDITION

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS!

2026

You are not facing this year alone.  
Wishing you gentleness, dignity, and  
warmth in 2026, one day at a time.

**East Midlands Asbestos Support Team**

helping victims of asbestos-related diseases and their families. Formerly known as DAST.



**Bi-monthly Wellbeing Magazine**

# East Midlands Asbestos Support Team

helping victims of asbestos-related diseases and their families. Formerly known as DAST.



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## Social media

If you or your family use social media please check out our sites and help us to reach more people. Please also like or share our posts to help raise awareness.



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[www.emast.org.uk](https://www.emast.org.uk)

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Welcome to the New Year edition of 'Wellbeing Magazine'.

As we step into 2026 together, we do so with a deep awareness that the turning of the year carries a unique meaning for each of our readers. For those living with an asbestos-related condition, this time can bring a mixture of reflection, hope, uncertainty and, for some, simply a desire for calm and steadier days. However you greet this new year, you are warmly welcomed,

and we are honoured to share this space with you.

While many talk about resolutions and grand new beginnings, we know that real wellbeing often grows from the quiet, everyday moments — the ones that bring comfort, clarity, or a sense of connection. In this issue, we look towards the year ahead with a spirit of gentleness and encouragement, focusing not on pressure or expectation but on what feels meaningful and manageable for you.

As 2026 unfolds, we hope this edition offers not only information but also companionship — a feeling of being held in a community that understands. We hope it brings comfort on challenging days, encouragement when you need it most, and moments of gentle brightness that help you look forward with a little more ease.

Thank you for allowing us to begin this new year by your side.

May the months ahead bring pockets of joy, reassuring support, and a sense of hope that feels steady and real. One day at a time, we are here with you.

*With the very best wishes from the EMAST Team*

# Looking Ahead: Hopes for the New Year

The start of a new year is often a time for reflection, hope, and gentle planning for the months ahead. It can be a moment to pause, consider what matters most, and focus on small steps that bring comfort, joy, and meaning.

For many, the past year may have brought challenges — health concerns, changes in daily routines, or unexpected events. As we look ahead, it can be helpful to concentrate on what is within our control: self-care, connection with loved ones, and moments of simple pleasure.

Hopes for the new year don't need to be grand. They might include:

- Spending more time with family and friends, even in small ways
- Taking gentle walks, enjoying hobbies, or exploring new interests
- Practising mindfulness, gratitude, or quiet reflection
- Prioritising health and wellbeing, both physical and mental

Every small action counts. Setting realistic, achievable intentions can help us feel grounded and optimistic, while giving space to celebrate even the little victories along the way.

Above all, the new year is a reminder that every day offers a chance for a fresh start. Whether it's trying something new, connecting with someone special, or simply taking a moment for yourself, hope can be found in the ordinary as well as the extraordinary. This year, may we all find peace, warmth, and small joys that make life richer — one day at a time.



# Winter Top Tips



## Keep Your Home Warm

Heat living areas during the day and bedrooms before bed.  
Close curtains at dusk & use draught excluders.



## Layer Up

Wear several light layers rather than one heavy jumper –  
Easy to adjust & keeps you warmer.



## Cover Your Mouth & Nose

A scarf can help warm the air you **breathe** outside,  
reducing breathlessness.



## Stay Hydrated & Nourished

Drink warm fluids & enjoy **hot meals** like soups or stews.



## Take It Slow

Short bursts of activity with regular breaks. Listen to your body.



## Ask for Help

Family, friends, or our charity can assist with shopping, heating,  
or outdoor tasks.



## Check Your Medication

Keep inhalers & prescribed medication close & follow your care plan.



## Stay Connected

Regular calls, messages, or online chats can boost mood & reduce isolation.

# Crooked Spire 2025 Christmas Tree Festival

For those who were unable to visit the Christmas Tree Festival at Chesterfield, here is the beautiful EMAST Tree. This year we have reused last years personalised baubles. Many thanks to Yvonne and Dave MacGregor and Leicester based small business 'Crafts with Becca' for donating our lovely new EMAST decorations in our signature green and red.



# Winter Warming Recipes

**Light smoked haddock fish pie** - This healthier fish pie recipe has added texture from golden sliced potatoes layered on top.

## Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 leek, sliced
- 30g/1oz flour
- 300ml/½ pint milk
- 125g/4½oz prawns, cooked and peeled
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 x 110g/4oz smoked haddock fillets
- 3 large potatoes, peeled, par-boiled and sliced



## Method:

Pre-heat oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.

Heat the oil in a pan over a medium heat. Add the leeks and fry for 2-3 minutes, until soft.

Add the flour, stir well and cook for 1-2 minutes.

Remove the pan from the heat and gradually stir in the milk.

Return to the heat and cook, stirring well, until the sauce has thickened. Simmer gently for five minutes.

Stir in the prawns and season with salt and pepper.

Place half the sauce into a pie dish. Place the haddock fillets on top, then spoon over the remaining sauce.

Top with the sliced potatoes and season with some more freshly ground black pepper.

Place the dish on a baking sheet and bake for 35-40 minutes, until the potatoes are golden and the fish is completely cooked.

**Creamy mushroom chicken** - This high protein creamy chicken and mushroom dinner for two is really satisfying, but surprisingly low in calories. It's quick and easy to cook too, making it perfect for a weekday treat.

**Ingredients:**

Spray olive oil

2 chicken breasts, skinless and trimmed (200g/7oz each)

½ onion, finely chopped

1 fat garlic clove, crushed

100g/3½oz mixed or chestnut mushrooms, sliced

250ml/9fl oz chicken stock (made with ½ a stock cube)

salt and pepper

100ml/3½fl oz half-fat crème fraîche

1 tbsp freshly chopped parsley, for garnish

300g/10½oz broccoli, steamed, to serve

**Method:**

1. Heat the spray oil in a non-stick frying pan, add the chicken breasts and fry for about 10 minutes, or until well browned on both sides. Set aside.
2. In the same pan, add a little more oil and fry the onion for 2–3 minutes, or until translucent. Add the garlic and fry for another 1–2 minutes. Add the mushrooms and fry until golden-brown. If they start to stick, stir in a little stock.
3. Return the chicken to the pan and stir in the stock. Bring to the boil. Cover with a tight fitting lid, lower the heat and simmer for 12–15 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Meanwhile, cook the broccoli in boiling salted water until tender.
5. Stir the crème fraîche and parsley into the sauce and serve immediately with the broccoli.



# WAYS TO HELP EMAST



**1** Make a one off or regular donation through our Local Giving page [www.localgiving.org/charity/east-midlands-asbestos-support-team](http://www.localgiving.org/charity/east-midlands-asbestos-support-team). You can also donate by cheque (please use the form at the back of the magazine), bank transfer or standing order.

**2** Shopping online? Buy via EasyFundraising and we'll receive a donation at no extra cost to you. They partner with 8,000+ brands, from groceries and electricals to entertainment, travel and insurance. To find out more and sign up, go to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/emast> and click 'Start raising free donations today'.

**3** Join our 200 Club lottery for just £1 per number per month, with each month's winner receiving half the proceeds and EMAST receiving the other half. To join, email [admin.assistant@emast.org.uk](mailto:admin.assistant@emast.org.uk) or call 01246 380 415

**4** Consider making a legacy in your will. EMAST has received much generous support this way. Talk to your solicitor about this and they will give you personalised advice.

**5** If you're a UK taxpayer, increase every £1 you donate by 25p by becoming a Gift Aider. There's no extra cost to you and it makes a huge difference to our fundraising. Return the form at the back of the magazine with your donation or contact us for an electronic copy.

# Raise funds for us for FREE

If you shop online, buy through EasyFundraising and they will donate a portion of what you spend to us, at no extra cost to you!

They partner with over 8,000 retailers from groceries and electricals to entertainment, travel and insurance so you can turn your daily shopping into much needed funds for us

They even have a mobile app and browser extension with a built in donation reminder so you won't forget to shop through them and generate your donation

To sign up, go to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/emast> and click 'Start raising free donations today'

8,000+ retailers will donate to us whenever you shop with them



Start at the easyfundraising website or app

Click out to where you'd like to shop



Checkout: prices are exactly the same!

The retailer sends a % of your spend to easyfundraising



They pass it on to us :)

Here is a foot tapping way to support EMAST. On February 7th from 1pm to 7pm, there will be a music marathon at Willington Village Hall. Come for an hour or foot tap through all 6 hours. Entry is by donation you can pop in and out as you please. If you are able please come along!

Cathryn Haywood is a very talented musical director, vocalist, piano teacher, artist and art teacher. She has been responsible for five, hugely successful music marathons to raise money for good causes. This year is her 6th music marathon and she has kindly chosen EMAST and Sight Support Derbyshire as the charities to benefit from it this year.

Come along and enjoy vocalists and instrumentalists performing music from musicals, swing, rock, pop and more!

**MUSIC MARATHON 6**

**Willington Village Hall**

**1pm to 7pm on February 7th 2026**

6 hours of live music in aid of East Midland Asbestos Support Team and Sight Support Derbyshire. Featuring vocalists and instrumentalists performing music ranging from musicals to swing, pop to rock and more!

Come for a while...

or stay for the whole event!

East Midland Asbestos Support Team  
Charity No. 1186006

Sight Support Derbyshire  
Registered charity number 1080966



Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March  
10.30 - 2.00pm

# EMAST AGM



Double Tree by Hilton Hotel, Brayford  
Wharf, Lincoln LNI IYW

You are warmly invited to our Annual General Meeting, held this year in Lincoln. This is a great opportunity to mix and meet with EMAST staff, trustees and members.

- Refreshments and buffet lunch provided.
- Hear about the work of EMAST over the past year.
- Presentations from the staff.
- Ask The Panel - an opportunity to ask questions of our panel of solicitors.

Please book your place by contacting the office: 01246  
380415; email: [emast.admin@emast.org.uk](mailto:emast.admin@emast.org.uk)



# Staying Warm and Well This Winter

Winter can be a challenging time, particularly for older people and those living with asbestos-related conditions such as mesothelioma or asbestosis. Cold weather can affect breathing, energy levels and overall wellbeing, making it especially important to take extra care during the colder months. With a few simple steps, it's possible to stay warm, comfortable and as healthy as possible throughout winter.

**Keep Warm Indoors** - Keeping your home warm is one of the most important ways to protect your health in winter. Cold indoor temperatures can make breathing more difficult and increase the risk of chest infections.

Try to:

- Keep living areas warm during the day and heat bedrooms before going to bed.
- Close curtains at dusk to keep heat in
- Use draught excluders around doors and windows if possible

If you're concerned about heating costs, help may be available. Local councils, energy suppliers and charities can sometimes offer advice or support with winter fuel payments, grants or energy efficiency schemes.

**Dress in Layers** - Wearing several light layers helps trap warmth and makes it easier to adjust your temperature. Choose breathable fabrics where possible, and don't forget warm socks and slippers to keep your feet warm indoors.

When going outside, a hat and scarf can make a big difference. Covering your mouth and nose with a scarf helps warm the air before you breathe it in, which may reduce breathlessness in cold weather.

**Protect Your Breathing** - Cold air can irritate the lungs and trigger coughing or breathlessness. Try to avoid going out early in

the morning or in very cold, windy conditions. If you do go outside, take your time and avoid rushing.

Always keep inhalers or prescribed medication close by, and follow your care plan if you have one. If you notice any changes in your breathing or develop symptoms such as a persistent cough, fever or chest tightness, contact your GP or healthcare team promptly.

**Eat Well and Keep Hydrated** - Warm meals and drinks can help you feel more comfortable and provide essential energy. Soups, stews and hot drinks are ideal in winter. Even though you may feel less thirsty, it's still important to drink plenty of fluids throughout the day.

**Stay Active — Gently** - Light movement can help maintain circulation and lift mood. Gentle indoor exercises, stretching or short walks on milder days can be beneficial. Listen to your body and rest when you need to — conserving energy is just as important as staying active.

**Look After Your Emotional Wellbeing** - Shorter days and colder weather can sometimes affect mood. Staying in touch with family, friends or support groups can help reduce feelings of isolation. Even a short phone call or message can make a difference. If you're feeling low, anxious or overwhelmed, you're not alone. Many people living with asbestos-related conditions find it helpful to talk to someone who understands their situation.

**Support Is Available** - Winter can feel daunting, but support is there. Our charity is here to offer information, guidance and a listening ear — whether you need practical advice or emotional support. By taking small, sensible steps, you can help protect your health and wellbeing this winter. Be kind to yourself, take things at your own pace, and don't hesitate to ask for help when you need it.





## East Midlands Mesothelioma Support Group Meetings



With our colleagues from Mesothelioma UK, we are now holding monthly Mesothelioma Support Group meetings. Each date has a specific theme and your specialist nurses Louise and Laura and Benefits Advisor Natalie will be available to offer support and advice and answer any questions you may have. For those who are unable to attend in person, a Zoom link is available.

Events are held at Ulverscroft Manor Activity Centre, Priory Lane, Markfield, LE67 9PH. A buffet lunch is included.

**The next meeting is Friday 6th February 11am - 1pm. Further dates will be announced in future issues and on our Facebook page.**

To book, contact Louise Nelson/Laura Smith on 0116 2502615 or [mesocns@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:mesocns@uhl-tr.nhs.uk) Alternatively contact Natalie Woodward on 01246 380415 or [benefits.advisor@emast.org.uk](mailto:benefits.advisor@emast.org.uk)

**Feel free to bring a friend or family member with you!**

## NOTTINGHAM PATIENT & CARER SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February  
11am-1pm

Nottingham Central Library  
1 Carrington Street  
Nottingham NG1 7FH

Refreshments provided  
Feel free to bring a friend/family  
member

Parking nearby  
Easily accessible by public transport

**NO NEED TO BOOK - JUST TURN UP**

Any queries call 01246 380415 or email  
[emast.admin@emast.org.uk](mailto:emast.admin@emast.org.uk)



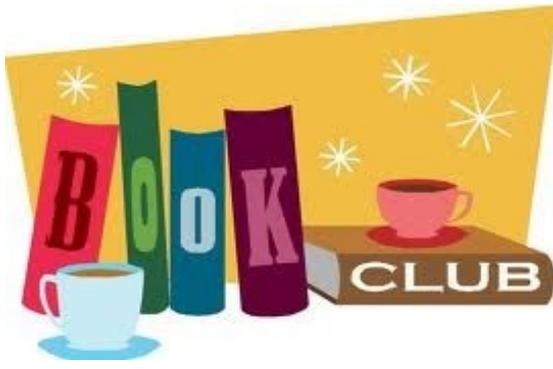
**Winter arrives softly, on a whisper of frost that paints the world in silver.** The days grow shorter, as though time itself is inviting us to slow down, to breathe more gently.

Warm woolly jumpers emerge from drawers like old friends, their familiar weight a comfort against the crisp air. Snuggly scarves wrap around our necks, little cocoons of softness that make each step through the chill feel like a small, warm triumph.

Indoors, the windows bloom with nature's artistry—delicate frost patterns forming fleeting masterpieces, shimmering in the morning light. They invite us to pause, to marvel, to remember that beauty thrives even in stillness. So we settle into the season's rhythm, letting it guide us to moments we too often rush past. A pot of casserole simmers on the stove, its scent filling the house with a promise of nourishment. Bowls of hearty soups warm our hands, and mugs of hot chocolate warm our spirits, marshmallows melting like tiny snowdrifts. This is the season of comfort, not just for the body but for the mind.

With the world outside hushed, winter offers something precious: time to recharge. Books long waiting on the shelf finally find their place in our hands. Crafting projects abandoned in busier months are picked up again, the quiet hours becoming a haven for creativity. The crackle of yarn, the turning of pages, the contented sighs as we sink into soft blankets—each moment a reminder that cosy is not just a feeling, but a state of being.

And so winter, often misunderstood, becomes a gentle season of renewal. A time to rest, to reflect, to savour the small joys that glow warmest against the cold. A season that wraps itself around us like a snuggly scarf, whispering, slow down - you are home.



## How did you find Miranda Hart's book, *I Haven't Been Entirely Honest With You*?

I am aware that some of you found her 'chatty' style of writing annoying and struggled to get through the book. If you are a fan of

Miranda Hart then you may enjoy this book and find it an uplifting story. If you are not a fan of her you may find it a hard read and a bit long and dull at times.

In this book, Hart candidly shares her decade-long battle with chronic illness, including a misdiagnosed case of Lyme disease that left her bedbound for years. Let us know what you thought of it.

Our next book is from a very different genre. **The Shortlist by Andrew Raymond** is a murder mystery set in Scotland. When legendary crime novelist William MacRae is found murdered at his Glasgow home, Police Scotland's premier investigator DCI John Lomond is put on the case. After compiling a shortlist of suspects that includes seven bestselling authors – all old friends of MacRae's – Lomond and his team head to a Highlands crime writing festival, where the seven are gathering to remember their fallen friend. But a vicious storm is closing in. And not everyone, it seems, has fond memories of MacRae. Or each other. Cut off from the outside world at a remote country home, it doesn't take long for the whisky to flow, old resentments to reignite...and another dead body to appear. One of them is a killer. But can Lomond sift through all the secrets and lies to unmask them before it's too late? The Shortlist is shot through with Andrew Raymond's dark Glaswegian humour and thrilling twists.

Taking you from his beloved home city to the north west coast of Scotland. If you like writers like JD Kirk, Ian Rankin, and Stuart MacBride, this addictive murder mystery will have you guessing to the very end.

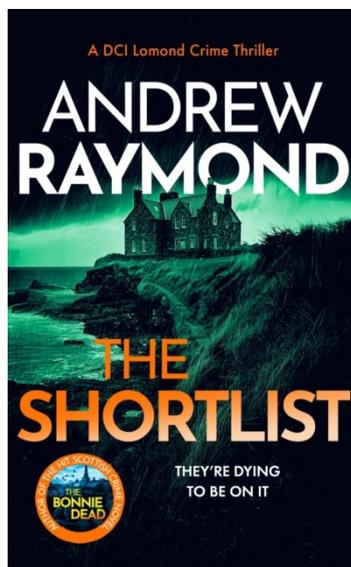
Here are some questions to consider as you read the book:

1. Did you find the author's writing style easy to read or hard to read? Why? How long did it take you to get into the book?
2. Who was your favourite character? What character did you identify with the most? Were there any characters that you disliked? Why?
3. Was there any part of the plot or aspects of the characters that frustrated or upset you? If so, why?
4. Did you find that the clues and evidence presented in the book made sense and fit together? If not, what stuck out for you?
5. Were you surprised by who ended up being the person who committed the crime? If you guessed who did it, what clues did you notice that made you suspect them? If you were surprised, who did you think it was going to be instead? What was the biggest red herring that threw you off track?

Please let us know what you thought. We shall be discussing the book at our **Monday Zoom meeting on January 12th at 10am.**

You can also let us know your thoughts on this book and suggestions for the next, on our Facebook pages.

We look forward to hearing from you.



# Finding Comfort in the Everyday: Living Well with an Asbestos-Related Condition

Living with an asbestos-related condition can change many aspects of daily life - sometimes in ways that are visible, and often in ways that are not. Breathlessness, fatigue and anxiety can quietly shape routines, relationships and confidence. Yet many people tell us that it's the small, everyday moments that still bring comfort, calm and meaning.

This article is not about pushing through or “staying positive” at all costs. It's about finding gentler ways to live well, at your own pace, and recognising that rest, reflection and enjoyment are just as important as activity.

## Listening to Your Body

One of the most important skills people develop over time is learning to listen to their body. Some days will be better than others, and that's completely normal. Fatigue and breathlessness are not signs of failure - they are signals to slow down.

Allowing yourself permission to rest, cancel plans or ask for help can feel difficult at first, but it is often key to preserving energy for the things that truly matter.

## “I've Learned to Take Things One Day at a Time”

John, who was diagnosed with an asbestos-related condition several years ago, describes how his outlook has changed.

*“I used to get frustrated with myself. I'd think, 'I should be able to do this.' But now I listen to my body more. Some days I can potter in the garden, other days I just sit outside with a cup of tea. I've learned that both days are okay.”*

For John, adapting activities, rather than giving them up, has made a big difference. *“I still enjoy the things I've always*

enjoyed,” he says. *“I just do them differently now.”*

## **The Value of Small Pleasures**

Enjoyment doesn't have to be loud or demanding. Many people living with asbestos-related conditions find comfort in simple activities:

- \* Sitting in the garden or by an open window
- \* Listening to music or the radio
- \* Reading, puzzles or gentle crafts
- \* Watching birds, clouds or the changing seasons

These quiet moments can provide a sense of normality and calm, particularly on days when physical activity feels harder.

## **Staying Connected - in Ways That Work for You**

Connection looks different for everyone. For some, it's regular phone calls or messages with family and friends. For others, it might be a support group, charity event, or simply knowing there is someone at the end of a helpline who understands.

As John puts it: *“Talking to people who ‘get it’ has really helped. You don't have to explain yourself, they just understand why some days are tougher than others.”*

## **Adapting, Not Giving Up**

Many people with asbestos-related conditions speak about adapting activities rather than abandoning them altogether. Gardening might become lighter and slower. Walks may be shorter, with more stops. Hobbies might move indoors.

These changes are not a loss — they are a way of continuing to enjoy life while respecting your health.

## **Emotional Wellbeing Matters Too**

It's natural to experience a wide range of emotions, including frustration, sadness or worry about the future. Talking about

these feelings, whether with loved ones, a support worker or others with shared experiences, can make a real difference.

You do not have to be brave all the time. Support is not a weakness; it's a vital part of living with a long-term condition.

## **You Are More Than Your Diagnosis**

An asbestos-related condition may be part of your life, but it does not define who you are. Your experiences, memories, humour, kindness and resilience still matter — deeply.

Here at EMAST, we are continually inspired by the honesty and strength of the people we support. Whether you are newly diagnosed or have been living with your condition for some time, please remember: you are not alone, and your story matters.

# **SPONSOR US?**

**DO YOU KNOW OF AN INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL BUSINESS THAT MIGHT WANT TO SPONSOR AN EDITION OF THIS MAGAZINE?**

**COULD YOU ASK FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS?**

**THEY COULD HAVE A PAGE ADVERTISING THEIR SERVICES**

**PLEASE CONTACT US ON 01246 380415 FOR MORE INFORMATION**





**Are you a member of a community group?  
Perhaps Rotary, WI, RAOB,  
Masonic Lodge, Inner  
Wheel, Oddfellows U3A  
etc?**

**The Team here at EMAST,  
are always happy to come  
along to your group to give  
a talk.**

**We can speak about  
EMAST and our work, the  
history of asbestos,  
Justice for asbestos  
victims, welfare benefits  
and compensation.**

**Please contact the office  
to find out more or to book  
a speaker for your event**

# Speakers

**A diagnosis of mesothelioma doesn't just affect the person with the disease, those close to them are affected too.**



- ◆ You may want to offer practical help or emotional support
- ◆ You may struggle with your own feelings about the diagnosis
- ◆ Whether you live with them full time or not, if they are a family member, friend or colleague, being a carer for someone can mean:
  - ◆ Emotional support – company, a friendly face, a listening ear
  - ◆ Helping with daily tasks
  - ◆ Driving them to appointments
  - ◆ Talking to other people on their behalf, such as health and social care professionals
  - ◆ Helping with personal care such as bathing and dressing

If any of this rings true for you, why join the Mesothelioma UK, Carers Hour.

The Mesothelioma UK Carers' Hour is designed specifically to support anyone who knows someone living with mesothelioma.

Not everyone knows how it feels to have a family member or friend living with mesothelioma. Our monthly Carers' Hour is an opportunity to talk to those who know exactly how it feels.

**Facilitated by one of our Mesothelioma UK nurses, should any clinical questions arise, the meetings take place virtually on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 2pm. For joining details, please contact [support@mesothelioma.uk.com](mailto:support@mesothelioma.uk.com)**



## CARERS COURSE

**Are you caring for someone with mesothelioma or know someone who is?**

Our six week Carers Course will help you learn more about what to expect and where to get support - both for yourself and the person you care for. Sessions will be presented by Mesothelioma UK Clinical Nurse Specialists and will cover:

- Getting the best out of your NHS
- Looking after yourself
- Symptom control
- Benefits, Lasting Power of Attorney, wills, and role of the coroner
- Thinking ahead, palliative and end of life care
- Q&A - ask the professionals

This free six week course runs via Zoom for one hour each week.

To register your interest please email [support@mesothelioma.uk.com](mailto:support@mesothelioma.uk.com). You'll be sent a pre course questionnaire so we can tailor the sessions to your needs as far as possible.

# Looking After Your Mental Health

Taking care of your mental health is just as important as looking after your physical health, yet it's something that is often overlooked. Mental wellbeing affects how we think, feel and cope with life's challenges, and it plays a key role in maintaining overall health, particularly for older adults or those living with long-term conditions.

## Understanding Mental Health

Mental health isn't just about feeling happy all the time. It includes how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Everyone experiences ups and downs, and it's normal to feel anxious, sad, or frustrated at times. What matters is recognising when support is needed and taking steps to protect your wellbeing.

## The Link Between Physical and Mental Health

Living with a respiratory or asbestos-related condition can make daily life more challenging. Fatigue, breathlessness, or pain can affect mood, and feelings of isolation or worry about the future are common. Looking after your mental health can improve your energy, motivation, and even help manage physical symptoms more effectively.

## Simple Ways to Support Your Mental Health

**Stay Connected:** Keep in touch with friends, family or support groups. Social contact, even a short phone call or message, can lift mood and reduce feelings of isolation.

**Be Active:** Gentle exercise, stretching or short walks can help reduce stress and improve wellbeing. Listen to your body and pace yourself.

**Create a Routine:** Having a daily structure, including regular meals, sleep, and enjoyable activities, can provide a sense of control and stability.

**Take Time for Yourself:** Engage in hobbies, reading, music, or simply resting. Small moments of calm and enjoyment make a big difference.

**Talk About Your Feelings:** Sharing worries or concerns with someone you trust, a counsellor, or a support helpline can provide relief and perspective.

**Mind Your Thoughts:** Practices such as mindfulness, meditation, or gentle breathing exercises can help reduce anxiety and encourage a calmer mindset.

### **When to Seek Extra Support**

It's important to recognise when extra support is needed. If feelings of sadness, anxiety, or isolation persist, or interfere with daily life, reach out to a healthcare professional, counsellor, or charity support service. Seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

### **You Are Not Alone**

Looking after your mental health is an ongoing journey. Small steps every day can make a real difference, and support is always available. Our charity offers guidance, information, and a listening ear to help you cope with the emotional impact of living with a long-term condition.

Remember, your mental wellbeing matters. Taking care of yourself isn't a luxury — it's an essential part of living well.





# Top Tips for Mental Health



## Stay Connected

Phone, message, or video call friends, family, or support groups. Even brief contact can lift your mood.



## Be Active

Gentle exercise, stretching, or short walks help reduce stress and improve wellbeing. Pace yourself and listen to your body.



## Keep a Routine

Regular meals, sleep, and enjoyable activities provide structure and stability.



## Make Time for Hobbies

Reading, music, crafts, or relaxing activities bring small daily pleasures.



## Talk About Your Feelings

Share worries with someone you trust, a counsellor, or a charity helpline. Talking helps lighten the load.



## Try Mindfulness or Relaxation

Gentle breathing exercises, meditation, or mindful moments can calm your mind.



## Ask for Help When Needed

If feelings of sadness, anxiety, or isolation persist, reach out to your GP, healthcare team, or support charity. Seeking help is a sign of strength.

# Those were the days...

*We continue our nostalgic journey back in time through the memories shared by friends and beneficiaries of EMAST.*

It was a conversation about our carbon footprint that set my husband Dave thinking. How could we reach New Zealand with as little flying as possible - and as cheaply as possible? For several months we planned. The aim was to travel across Russia, Mongolia, China, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand before flying the remainder.

Our main adventure started on the Tran-Siberian railway. We never knew who would be sharing our carriage. That in itself led to many interesting days and nights. Who would have thought I would have woken one morning on a top bunk gazing across at a gorgeous Russian soldier with rippling muscles?

From Russia through to Mongolia then China we trundled along. We each had a small haversack with wheels. Careful thought had gone into the contents. We knew the train's restaurant was somewhat limited so packets of dried rice, cereals and hot chocolate were crammed in. Each carriage had a samovar with boiling water freely available. Kellogg's had sent two plastic bowls to accompany us. When not in use they contained my two clean pairs of quick dry pants! It's amazing how long you can survive with just three pairs of most things, one jumper and a coat.



We had home stays in Russia. I had imagined a country cottage with Babushka holding court with the family. The reality were tall blocks of flats with steel doors and no lifts. And our stay was usually on one of the top floors. Dave thought he was in seventh heaven at our first one when a Barbie lookalike opened one door. She was not our hostess. Just the extremely young-looking daughter who had popped by to meet

us. For the next three nights we slept on sofas that had clearly seen better days. I curled around the visible spring and hoped I wouldn't be skewered! Our evening meals were buckwheat and buckwheat. The hostess made it clear on the first night that we should be out by 9am and not home until 8pm. She wasn't unkind, just very assertive. Our evening entertainment was a succession of Russian songs intermingled with whatever English or Scottish songs I could bring to mind. 'Auld Lang Syne' went down well and tears of laughter rolled down Dave's cheeks.

Our final home stay in Ulan Ude brought a charming lady into our lives. She spoke no English. A former teacher, she eked out her money by having homestays. By the time we reached her, our clothing was ready for a wash. Dave's socks could have walked home on their own! I gestured washing my clothes. She took me to the bathroom and placed a wooden board across the bath. A plastic bowl and my travel soap were soon in use. Fortunately it was good weather as the only way to dry clothes was a clothes horse on the balcony. No mod cons here!



Our hostess Victoria was such a gentle soul who followed the teachings of Buddha. She gave us a postcard of Itigilov, a Buddhist monk who reached Nirvana. Well worth a Google. Quite fascinating.

Back onto the train and Mongolia next. We didn't linger in the city which we'd heard was full of black markets and dodgy dealings. Instead we were driven to the middle of nowhere to stay in a Mongolian ger. We were taught the traditional way of entering and moving around the ger. Clockwise at all times and never cross between the two centre poles or an argument would ensue.



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at all times and never cross between the two centre poles or an argument would ensue.

The beds were wooden with the thinnest of mattresses. I doubted we would get a wink of sleep. It also felt odd having a 'his' and 'hers'. As night fell, we wished each other a good night and clambered into bed.

After leaving the locomotive works in 1967 I joined the Merchant Navy as an Engineer Officer joining my first ship in King George Dock, London. I went to Las Palmas in the Canary Islands to bunker on a Far East deep sea voyage. We went the long route via the Cape of Good Hope due to the Suez Canal being closed by



the Seven Day War (June 5th). This was in the Glen Line ship "MV Glengyle" then on to Dakar in Senegal - this is where I had a smallpox jab with a pen nib at the Institute Pasteur. Next stop was Durban in South Africa, then across the Indian Ocean to Malaysia calling at: Port Swettenham, Penang, Kuala Lumpa then Singapore. From there it was on to Bangkok in Thailand then Hong Kong. This was at the height of the Vietnam War, US personnel and warships were everywhere the ship had to show a large British flag on the hatch tops.

The next stop was somewhere totally different - Shanghai in China. This was the Communist China of Mao Tse Tung and the Red Guards. Shanghai then was not the Shanghai of the James Bond film. I had a conducted visit to the Friendship Store which meant a trip on a ferry across the Wang-Po River and a Communist Party car to the store. The only things on the streets were people, bikes and the odd lorry. Our limo was a black top of the range Vauxhall Velox. We foreigners were objects of curiosity especially to the children. The crowds and bikes just parted in front of us like Moses must have seen the Red Sea. Due to the political situation (some other ship officers had been arrested on flimsy pretext) we departed Shanghai after about four days with no return cargo.

What cargo we should have got was destined for Genoa & Japan so these stops would be missed out on our return. We returned via Hong Kong again but had to depart in hurry (ship in ballast only) to get sea room due to a Typhoon heading in from the South China Sea. Apparently this was the worst Typhoon in 40 years: the seas were truly mountainous.

*Jim Perkins*

***Look out for more stories in the next issue!***



# MESOTHELIOMA UK

Mesothelioma UK offer a range of in person and online support groups and courses:

**Online Support groups** - joining details for all these available by emailing: [support@mesothelioma.uk.com](mailto:support@mesothelioma.uk.com)

**1st Weds** of each month at 1pm – **Youngers Group** – For those younger than a typical person living with a mesothelioma diagnosis

**2nd Weds** of each month at 2pm – **Carers Hour** – For those who have a loved one with a mesothelioma diagnosis

**3rd Weds** of each month at 2pm – **Online Patient Support Group** – For those with a mesothelioma diagnosis

**Facebook Groups** These are closed groups, monitored by the Support Team at Mesothelioma UK

**Mesothelioma UK Patient and Carer Facebook Group -**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/161449728267828/>

**Mesothelioma UK Peritoneal & Multicystic Mesothelioma Facebook Group -**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1640698032921115/>

**Online Short Courses –**

These courses are free to attend - registration details for all these available by emailing [support@mesothelioma.uk.com](mailto:support@mesothelioma.uk.com)

# GARDENING CLUB

## Winter Gardening: Staying Safe with Respiratory and Asbestos-Related Conditions

Gardening can be a source of comfort, routine and enjoyment, even during the winter months. However, for people living with respiratory conditions, including asbestos-related illnesses such as mesothelioma or asbestosis, it's especially important to take extra care during colder weather.

Winter gardening doesn't need to involve hard labour. With the right approach, it can remain a gentle and rewarding activity while protecting your breathing and overall wellbeing.

### **Protect Your Breathing in Cold Weather**

Cold air can irritate the lungs and make breathing more difficult. If you do venture outside, choose the mildest part of the day — usually late morning or early afternoon — and avoid frosty, damp, or windy conditions.

Wearing warm layers and loosely covering your mouth and nose with a scarf can help warm the air before you breathe it in. Always keep inhalers or prescribed medication close by, and don't hesitate to stop if you feel breathless or uncomfortable.

### **Avoid Dust, Soil and Compost Disturbance**

Soil, compost, leaf mould and old plant material can release dust and spores that may irritate the lungs or trigger symptoms. For those with asbestos-related conditions, avoiding airborne particles is particularly important.

If possible:

- \* Avoid digging, turning compost, or emptying old pots
- \* Keep compost bags sealed and stored away from doors and windows

\* Ask for help from family, friends, or neighbours with heavier garden tasks

If you do handle compost or soil, wearing gloves and a suitable gardening mask may reduce exposure.

### **Choose Gentle, Low-Effort Tasks**

Winter is a good time for lighter, slower gardening jobs such as:

- \* Tidying pots and containers
- \* Light pruning on mild, dry days
- \* Sweeping leaves when they are dry
- \* Planning next year's garden indoors

Avoid lifting heavy pots or bags, and don't feel pressured to "keep up" — your health always comes first.

### **Take Frequent Breaks**

Short periods of activity with regular rests are far safer than working for long stretches. Sit down often, keep warm, and enjoy a hot drink.

Gardening should be calming, not tiring or breath-stealing.

### **Enjoy Gardening Indoors**

Indoor gardening can offer many of the same benefits without exposure to cold air or dust. Planting bulbs for spring, growing herbs on a windowsill, or caring for houseplants can lift mood and provide a sense of purpose during the winter months.



### **Be Kind to Yourself**

Living with a respiratory or asbestos-related condition means adapting how you do things — and that's perfectly okay. Gardening looks different for everyone, and rest is just as important as activity. By taking simple precautions and listening to your body, you can continue to enjoy the comfort of gardening through winter, while keeping your breathing safe and supported.

# EMAST MERCHANDISE



T Shirts, S, M, L  
£10.50 or 2 for £18



Foldable Shopper £5  
or 2 for £8

Help us spread the word!



Tote Bag £4 or 2 for  
£7



Key Rings £6.50, 2 for £12, Pens £3 or  
2 for £5, badges £2.50 or 2 for £4

TO PURCHASE PLEASE CONTACT US ON 01246 380415



## 200 CLUB NEWS



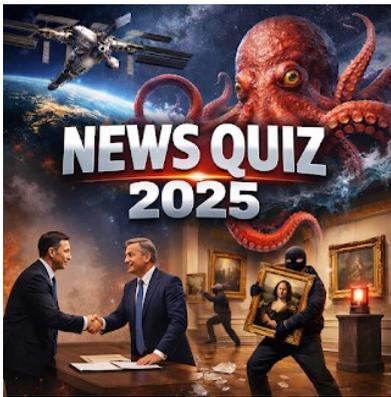
Congratulations to our latest 200 Club winners, Charlotte England-Black (no 166), Shay Boyle (no 77) and Carol Harris (no 125)! We hope they enjoyed their winnings.

The 200 Club is a valuable regular donation that we use to continue supporting people with asbestos related diseases and their families and we are incredibly grateful for your generous contributions.

Since we launched the lottery in 2016, we've worked hard to keep prices unchanged to ensure they are reasonable and affordable. However, as you can appreciate, the costs of running both the 200 Club and the organisation overall have continued to rise over the years. Therefore, we've had to adjust our prices to cover these rising costs and **from January 2026, 200 Club renewals and new numbers will be £2 each per month.**

With a smaller pool of participants than larger lotteries, you still have a greater chance of winning, plus the new 200 Club cash prizes will be larger! We truly appreciate your understanding and ongoing support for our small charity - your participation continues to have a meaningful impact.

For more information on joining the 200 Club, please get in touch with us at [admin.assistant@emast.org.uk](mailto:admin.assistant@emast.org.uk) or 01246 380 415.



1. In which city was the 2025 Eurovision Song Contest hosted?
2. Who won this year's Great British Bake Off?
3. Who won The Celebrity Traitors 2025?
4. Which former Strictly Come Dancing presenter is to host her own BBC chat

show?

5. More than 300 of what were recorded in the UK this year, according to the latest data from the British Geological Survey?
6. What is the name of the Olympic swimmer who married his partner Holly Ramsay at Bath Abbey on Saturday amid a fallout with his family?
7. Singer Chris Rea died aged 74 in December 2025. What Christmas song is he known for?
8. Who won this year's edition of Strictly Come Dancing?
9. What was the most complained about TV programme of the year according to regulator Ofcom?
10. The UK will rejoin a European scheme from 2027. Can you name it?
11. Which film won the Best Picture Oscar at the 2025 awards?
12. Which country won the Eurovision Song Contest with their contestant JJ and the song Wasted Love?
13. Who was crowned the BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2025?
14. Who is threatening to sue the BBC over their editing of a Panorama programme aired last year?
15. Which song has been voted Greatest Hits Radio listeners'

favourite of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, for the seventh year in a row?

16. What jumped to a new record high of £299,862 in October, according to the Halifax?

17. ITV made which iconic former teenage drama available to stream from next month?

18. Who was Spotify's top global artist of 2025?

a) Taylor Swift b) Bad Bunny c) ABBA

19. Where was the Women's Rugby World Cup held in 2025?

a) Australia b) France c) England

20. How old did Queen's 'Bohemian Rhapsody' turn this year?

a) 40 b) 45 c) 50

21. What was the hottest temperature recorded in the UK in 2025? a) 34.2°C b) 35.5°C c) 35.8°C

22. Which of these films celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2025?

a) Jaws b) The Exorcist c) Grease

23. Which princess gave birth to her second child in January?

24. Which 90s rock band reunited for a tour and held their first performance since 2009?

25. Which world famous art gallery was robbed in October this year?

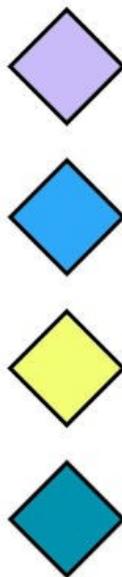
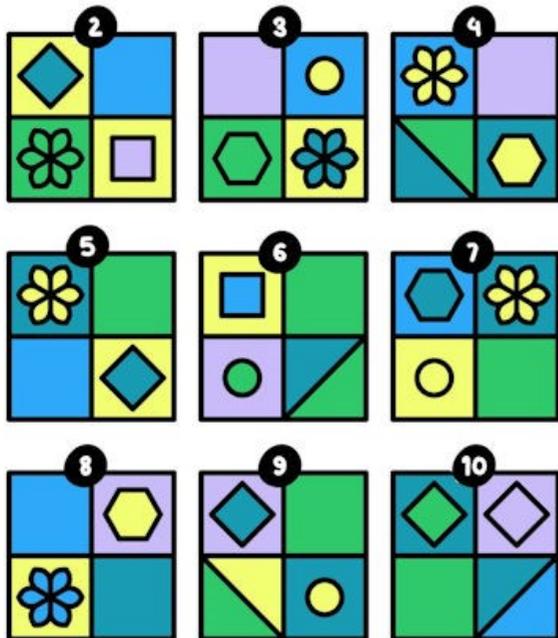
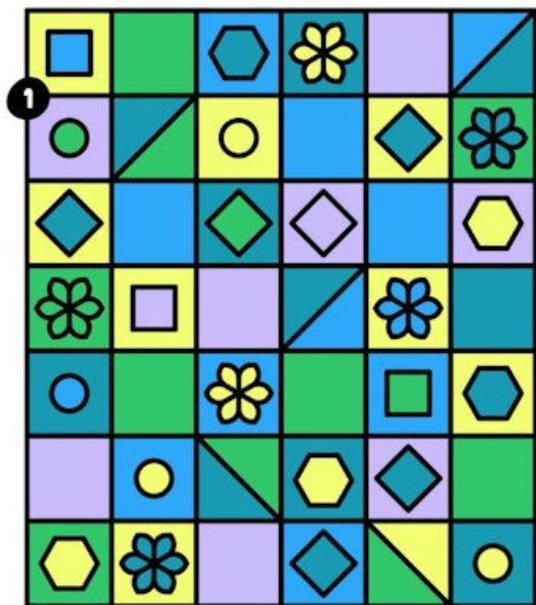
1. Basel, Switzerland. 2. Jasmin Mitchell. 3. Alan Carr. 4. Claudia Winkleman. 5. Earthquakes. 6. Adam Peaty. 7. Driving Home for Christmas. 8. Karen Carney. 9. Love Island. 10. Erasmus Student Exchange Scheme. 11. Anora. 12. Austria. 13. Rory McIlroy. 14. Donald Trump. 15. Bohemian Rhapsody. 16. Average house prices. 17. Byer Grove. 18. Bad Bunny. 19. England. 20. 50. 21. 35.8. 22. Jaws. 23. Princess Beatrice. 24. Oasis. 25. The Louvre.

## Answers

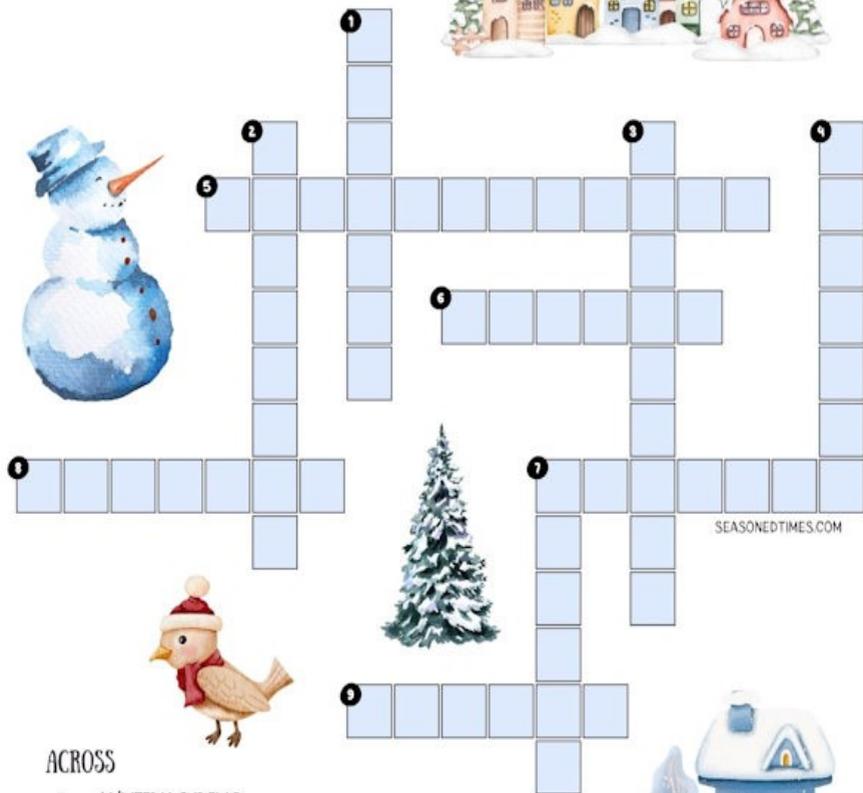
# PUZZLE CORNER

## MISSING FRAGMENTS

WHICH FRAGMENTS  
#2 - #10 ARE PART  
OF IMAGE #1.



# WINTER FUN



SEASONEDTIMES.COM



## ACROSS

5. WINTERY SURFING
6. MOVING IMAGES
7. LENGTHS OF WARMING FABRIC
8. INTERPRETING SYMBOLS FOR MEANING
9. EXPOSING TO DRY HEAT FOR CONSUMPTION



## DOWN

1. SNOWY FIGURE
2. CRAFT OF CREATING INTERCONNECTED LOOPS
3. SOURCE OF WARMTH
4. DESIGNED TO SOLVE
7. MOVING ON FLAT RUNNERS

# NEW YEAR WORD SEARCH



J A N U A R Y N U R D C  
H X E P N C L O C K A O  
F M W H G R V F E T R U  
I I Y T F A P O L U P N  
R D E M I N U T E R A T  
E N A T N T B H B K R D  
W I R E I H A C R E T O  
O G E N G A L D A Y Y W  
R H R E S O L U T I O N  
K T R A E I O O E R I S  
S F A M F L O C R A F N  
B R I N D A N C E N E L

MINUTE



DANCE



PARTY



CLOCK

CELEBRATE

MIDNIGHT

NEW YEAR

JANUARY

COUNTDOWN

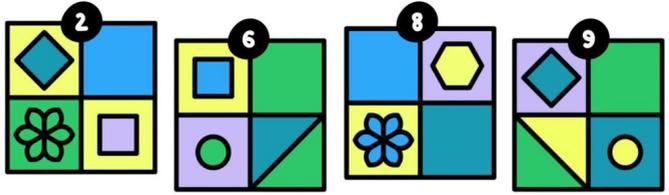
FIREWORKS

RESOLUTION

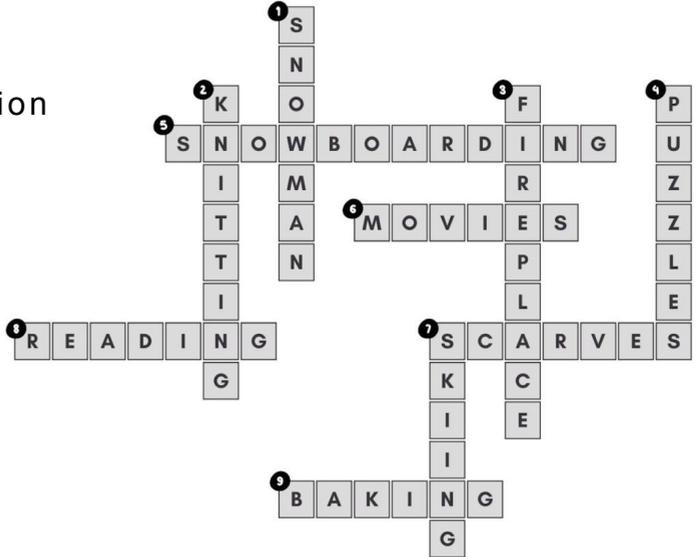
BALLOON

# Puzzle Answers

## Missing Fragments Solution



## Winter Fun Solution



## New Year Word Search Solution

# DONATE TO EMAST



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Full address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE TICK THE BOX IF YOU'D LIKE TO GIFT AID YOUR DONATION:**

I am a UK Income or Capital Gains taxpayer and I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to EMAST.

### Gift Aid

If I have ticked the Gift Aid box, I confirm that I am a UK Income or Capital Gains taxpayer. I have read this statement and want EMAST to reclaim tax on the donations detailed on this form, given on the date shown. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax or Capital Gains tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all of my donations, it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given. I will notify EMAST if I want to change this declaration, if I change my name or address or if I no longer pay sufficient tax.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE MAKE ALL CHEQUES PAYABLE TO 'EMAST' AND SEND ALONGSIDE THIS FORM TO 1 ROSE HILL EAST, CHESTERFIELD, S40 1NU**

You can also make a BACS payment (please call us on 01246 380 415 for our bank details) or donate at

[www.localgiving.org/charity/east-midlands-asbestos-support-team](http://www.localgiving.org/charity/east-midlands-asbestos-support-team)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION!**