

# Serious Injuries: An introduction to claiming compensation.



**“... I was a passenger  
in a terrible car  
accident... I had  
broken my neck and  
was trapped..”**

Mark Cook

**T** THOMPSONS  
SOLICITORS

THE MOST EXPERIENCED  
PERSONAL INJURY FIRM IN THE UK

## **“Thompsons were there for me when I needed them”** Greg Arde

Greg Arde, a South African citizen, suffered severe spinal and head injuries when he was crushed by a fork lift truck. Thompsons helped Greg get leave to remain in the UK and obtain substantial interim payments to enable him to buy and adapt a house and to employ carers. Greg settled his claim for £2.4 million.



# A life sentence?

Nothing comes easily to the sufferers of serious accidents and their families.

First, there is the injury itself to begin to cope with – be it spinal, head and brain injury, serious burns or amputation.

The damage and its effects are often lifelong.

At the same time, there is also the beginning of coming to terms with all the other emotional, caring and monetary costs.

The prospect is daunting and it's no surprise that many victims and their families hardly know which way to turn.

Thompsons Solicitors, the most experienced injury claim firm in Britain, fully understand and sympathise with this.

Their Serious Injuries Team is a specialised group of professionals who use all their expertise to work to maximise the compensation that can ease the suffering of victims and their families.

What follows on these pages is a brief guide to how Thompsons Serious Injuries Team can help you to pursue such a claim.

## **Experience counts! Why you should use the most experienced injury law firm in Britain.**

Thompsons has been established over 85 years and has more injury claim experience than any other law firm.

We use that experience to work to maximise every claim. Which has resulted in several record settlements over the years.

In addition, Thompsons' personal injury services, without exception, are always free to our clients, which is not always the case today.

It follows that it also costs absolutely nothing to have an initial chat with us about your own case.

**“... thanks to the Thompsons team and their negotiating skills, the funds are there to make sure Robin is looked after for the rest of his life.”**

Dave Bence

“When my son, Robin, was 16 he was the victim of a road traffic accident.

While crossing the road on his way to see his sister he was hit by a car driving on the wrong side of the road.

He was thrown about 10 feet into the air, landed on the car and suffered a severe brain injury.

My daughter heard the accident but didn't realise that the victim was her brother.

Seeing that first aid was already being given she continued on her way home.

Robin spent 5 days in a coma in intensive care. He then spent a further 3 weeks in hospital before being allowed home.

I got in touch with Thompsons Solicitors who are personal injury claim experts.

Both Robin and I found it easy talking and dealing with them throughout the period of the case.

They explained the processes, laid out timescales, negotiated interim payments for Robin so that his rehabilitation could continue, appointed a Case Manager to look after his rehabilitation needs and general welfare.

They were also very thorough at going through all the costs connected with Robin's claim.

Their Serious Injuries Team went into every detail ensuring that all costs expended to date and future costs for care and loss of earnings were taken into account.

They appointed a number of medical



experts to examine Robin and help assess his claim.

Initial nervousness at meeting Thompsons' barrister was soon calmed by his approachability.

I appreciated the way both Thompsons and their barrister patiently explained things to Robin so that he could understand what was going on.

Thompsons had such an empathy with Robin that he calls the solicitor who handled his case his 'Guardian Angel'.

Dave Bence

# Four important points for you to consider

## 1. Get the best evidence possible

To make a successful claim for compensation for you, we need to prove that someone else was to blame for your accident and injuries.

And the stronger the evidence, the stronger your claim.

For example, in a road traffic accident, the kind of evidence you may already have or that we can help collect for you, might be that another driver was driving without proper care and attention or was speeding.

Or with accidents at work, your employer at the time was responsible for providing a safe place of work and safe plant and equipment.

Was this the case when you were injured? The person at fault may be the employer or a third party – such as a contractor.

It may also be helpful if you have any photographs relevant to the accident or your injuries.

Even if the evidence collected shows you were partly to blame for your accident you may still have a valid claim if we can prove someone else was also at fault.

**“Thompsons service was fantastic from start to finish... they were really thorough and determined in pursuing the best settlement they could get for me.”** Roger Adams



“I’m Head Groundsman at a college in Kent, in charge of maintaining 42 acres with a team of 3 others.

In October 2003 I was driving a tractor mower which became blocked with grass cuttings and, while trying to free it, the machine cut off my left forearm.

The pain was excruciating and it was very traumatic.

I’ve had 11 operations and been fitted with a prosthetic arm.



And as a result of a Health and Safety investigation a prosecution was successfully brought against the manufacturers of the tractor-mower involved.

I’ve managed to get on with life and have returned to work part time.

At home some even simple things are impossible, like tying my shoe laces, clipping my finger nails or mashing potatoes.

I live with my brother, Peter, who is an enormous help.

It was quickly obvious I was not going to be able to work to the full retirement age and that raised all sorts of questions about providing for myself in the future.

Including covering the additional costs of those areas of my life in which I now needed help.

My union...discussed the whole issue of compensation with me and then took over.

After my first op they had Thompsons Solicitors, who do a lot of work for UNISON, phone me and take up my case.

Thompsons service was fantastic from start to finish.

They kept me in the picture every step of the way, explaining what was happening next.

And when it came to negotiating the actual settlement they were really thorough and determined in pursuing the best settlement they could get for me.

They fought and fought.

Life may not be the same but I’m a positive person and determined to make the best of it and Thompsons have been a real help with that.”

Roger Adams

**“My mam describes Thompsons as being ‘Absolutely great – they can’t do enough to help you!’ And I know she’s recommended Thompsons to other people.”**

Mark Cook

“In 2001, when I was 17, I was a passenger in a terrible car accident.

The car I was in skidded and went over a 70 foot drop and into a beck.

I had broken my neck and was trapped, and the car was letting water in.

I’m lucky to be alive.

The day I was told I would be paralysed from the chest downwards and wouldn’t walk again was the day I determined not to break.

I drive using only my hands and passed my driving test 2 years ago.

And I’ve developed other interests.

I was a very keen footballer and rugby player and have now started playing wheelchair rugby. I play for the Newcastle Bulls.

During my time in hospital, which included an 8-hour session in surgery, my family and I discussed the degree of support and treatment I need, the very considerable costs involved and claiming compensation.

Thompsons Solicitors acted for us in our claim.

They were really thorough in evaluating my needs.

They talked to my carers at length about my current and future needs and their costs.

Thompsons’ Andrew McDonald became a very good friend.

He mostly dealt with my mam. But when he needed to see me he would call round to our home which was much easier than me getting to him.



Thompsons were also really good at keeping us in the picture.

They made sure we knew what was going to happen and when it would happen.

Today, I’m getting on with moving forward in my life in a variety of ways and I’m grateful for how Thompsons have helped with it all.”

Mark Cook

## **2. How much compensation might be awarded**

Compensation is awarded for pain, suffering and the inability to do things you could do before your accident.

It is also awarded for the accident's effect on your physical mobility and mental health.

Thompsons has more experience at working to maximise such claims than any other law firm in Britain.

We will obtain expert medical reports on your injuries if necessary.

If a Judge requires it we will also obtain a report from an Independent Financial Advisor suggesting the most suitable way to pay your compensation and how it might be invested.

And we will claim for all your losses and expenses.

Including loss of earnings now and in the future, and the costs of the care and assistance now and in the future – right down to the costs of having others do jobs for you that you used to do yourself such as DIY, gardening and car maintenance.

If your home needs to be adapted to your condition, we will claim for that.

And we will claim all travelling expenses incurred because of the accident, including those of close relatives visiting you in hospital.

## **3. Timing can be vital**

You should seek legal advice promptly - action needs to be started within 3 years of the date of the accident.

There are exceptions, for example in relation to claims made by children.

But it is always best to see a solicitor as soon as possible after the accident.

As far as Thompsons is concerned the more time you have in hand, the more thoroughly we can prepare your claim.

In appropriate cases, we can apply for an 'interim payment' of compensation.

This can help with essential things like the cost of care or urgent housing adaptations.

If you are a member of a trade union, contact your local representative as your claim will probably be supported by their own union legal scheme.

**“Eventually we got an offer we accepted.  
To be honest, it was more than we  
expected and we’re over the moon!”**

**Stuart Duncan**

Mr Duncan went into hospital for a routine gall bladder removal which went badly wrong. This resulted in eight further operations, permanent injury and the impossibility of Mr Duncan being able to return to his job.

## **4. What about state benefit claims?**

You may be entitled to disablement benefit and/or other State Benefits.

Thompsons can advise you on this as, of course, can your local Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) office.

Any such claims are made separately to your claim for compensation.

The phone number for the DWP benefit enquiry freephone is opposite, along with other helpful numbers.

## **Who will represent you?**

This booklet has shown you just four of Thompsons’ clients.

We have, literally, thousands more who are delighted with the service and settlements they received.

And, as already mentioned, they all kept 100% of their settlements.

If you have had an accident that has resulted in an injury you may be entitled to claim for compensation.

If so, surely it is in your interest to use the most experienced injury claim firm in Britain – why settle for less.

Specially as our services are completely free to you as one of our clients.

# Useful contacts

Department for Work and Pensions benefit enquiry line:

Freephone **0800 88 22 00**

Textphone **0800 24 33 55**

[www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

Spinal Injuries Association

Freephone advice line **0800 980 0501**

Aspire **020 8954 5759**

Headway

Freephone **0808 800 2244**

The Child Brain Injury Trust (Cbit)

**0845 601 4939**

## Thompsons Solicitors are members of

- Law Society's Personal Injury Accreditation Scheme
- Law Society's Clinical Negligence Accreditation Scheme
- The Legal Services Commission Franchised Firm (Clinical Negligence)
- The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers
- Headway
- The Spinal Injuries Association
- avma Action Against Medical Accidents

# Thompsons Solicitors Offices

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Middlesbrough 01642 554 162

South Shields 0191 4974 440

## Yorkshire

Leeds 0115 205 6300

Sheffield 0114 270 3300

## Midlands

Birmingham 0121 262 1200

Derby 01332 224 680

Nottingham 0115 989 7200

Stoke-on-Trent 01782 406 200

Wolverhampton 01902 771 551

## North West

Liverpool 0151 224 1600

Manchester 0161 819 3500

## Wales & South West

Cardiff 029 2044 5300

Bristol 0117 304 2400

Exeter 01392 211 731

Plymouth 01752 675 810

Swansea 01792 484 920

## South East

London 020 7290 0000

Southampton 02380 212 040

Chelmsford 01245 228800

Dagenham 020 8596 7700

Wimbledon 020 8947 4163

## **Further Information**

Call us, without obligation, for free compensation claim advice on 08000 224 224. Or if you are in a union ask your representative for advice. You can also find out more information on our website at [www.thompsons.law.co.uk](http://www.thompsons.law.co.uk)



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PERSONAL INJURY FIRM IN THE UK

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