

Walking for clean air

2 months ago



The [Building Engineering Services Association](#) (BESA) is staging [two sponsored walks](#) to mark this year's national [Clean Air Day](#) in support of the [Ella Roberta Foundation](#), which is dedicated to raising awareness of air pollution and its impact on human health.

The Association's [Next Gen network](#), of young engineers, and its specialist [Indoor Air Quality group](#) will lead the walks, which are sponsored by [Nuaire](#) and [S&P Ventilation](#).

The first event will take place on June 19 in London to highlight the impact of air pollution in an urban setting; and the second in the Peak District the next day to emphasise the health & wellbeing benefits of clean air.

Almost nine million premature deaths are caused by air pollution worldwide every year including 43,000 in the UK, according to the [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO). On top of this it has a hugely detrimental impact on people suffering from asthma, other respiratory conditions, and heart disease.

Ella Kissi-Debrah, who died from a severe asthma attack triggered by spikes in air pollution in 2013, was the first person in the world to have air quality listed on her death certificate as a contributing cause of her death. Her mother, [Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah](#) CBE, has become a prominent advocate for clean air, and the [Ella Roberta Foundation](#) was set up in her memory.

Vulnerable

Rosamund (below) is also honorary president of the BESA [Indoor Air Quality](#) Group working to raise awareness of the impact of poor indoor air, damp and mould on the health of children and the most vulnerable. The [UK Health Security Agency](#) estimates that upwards of two million people in England are living in homes with "significant levels of damp and mould" posing a direct threat to their health.

Adam Taylor, chair of the IAQ Group, will lead the London walk. It will start at Ella's memorial in south London and then split into three groups. One will follow the heavily polluted South Circular Road associated

with Ella's death, another will plot an alternative 'cleaner' route, and a third will use a new software tool to plot 'clean air paths'.

"By splitting up in this way, we will demonstrate both the impact of air pollution and the ways in which we can leverage technology to raise awareness and reduce people's exposure," said Taylor. "This links with our work to improve building ventilation to mitigate the threat to human health posed by the combination of outdoor and indoor pollutants."

Danielle Norfolk, BESA's NextGen operations manager, will lead the Peak District walk around the spectacular Mam Tor peak in an exercise of "mindful and scenic reflection on the importance of clean air".

Both events finish with networking and feedback time in nearby pubs.

If you would like to take part in either (or both) walks and support the Ella Roberta Foundation [visit the website](#) to register.

BESA has also produced a series of guides on addressing indoor air quality, damp and mould, and the crucial role of building ventilation, which are freely available on its [website here](#). It is also a supporter of the annual [World Ventilation Day](#), which takes place on November 8.