

## **COUNCIL ADMITS SAFETY BREACH**

Chester-Le-Street District Council and Brouhaha International Limited, Liverpool based promotion company, have pleaded guilty to a breach of the Health and Safety At Work Act 1974 following the Dreamspace accident in July 2006.

Artist Maurice Agis, 76, who designed the multi-coloured Dreamspace sculpture, also appeared before Newcastle Crown Court to deny two counts of manslaughter and is to face trial by jury on January 26 2009. Mr Agis, of Kirton Gardens, Bethnal Green, East London, also denied a charge brought under Section 32 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974.

The trial is expected to last about four weeks and Brouhaha and the Chester-le-Street Council will be sentenced at the conclusion of Mr Agis' trial.

In July 2006, Claire Furmedge, a 38-year-old mother-of-two, from Chester-le-Street and Elizabeth Collings, a 68-year-old grandmother from Seaham, died in the tragedy, which took place as the plastic inflatable was in the North-East as part of an Arts Council-funded national tour.

More than a dozen other visitors were injured, including three-year-old Rosie Wright, from Langley Park.

The 50m x 50m PVC inflatable structure was big enough for people to enter and experience the changing colours and sounds inside. However, the work of art slipped its moorings and tipped over, before becoming snagged on a pole.

Source: Inflated News / The Northern Echo / Crown Court Services

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