

City council fined after school caretaker dies

A city council has been fined after a school caretaker died following a fall from a ladder.

David Mobsby, was working was at Blatchington Mill School, a community school in Hove, and suffered a fatal head injury when he fell from the ladder on 3 August 2018.

Mr Mobsby, 71, had been cleaning the roof of a bike shed at the school, on Nevill Avenue, Hove, using a standard-length broom and a telescopic surface cleaner to reach across the roof before falling approximately 2.5 metres onto the tarmacked surface below.



Mr Mobsby was using the yellow ladder (pictured) before his fall



The bike shed Mr Mobsby was cleaning

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found Brighton and Hove City Council, the local authority that employs staff at Blatchington

Mill School, had failed to ensure that the cleaning of the school's bike sheds was properly planned, appropriately supervised, and carried out using a safe work method.

HSE guidance on work at height can be found here: [Work at height – HSE](#)

Brighton and Hove City Council pleaded guilty to a breach of Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The council was fined £66,666 and ordered to pay £5,000 in costs at Brighton Magistrates' Court on 28 February 2023.

HSE inspector Natalie Pomfret said: "Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well-known. In this case, this tragic incident led to a man's avoidable death. This death could have been prevented if his employer had acted to plan and supervise the work activity and ensured a safe method of work was in place."

Notes to editors

1. The [Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.