

Company and director sentenced after worker fractures arm and leg

A company and its director have been sentenced after an employee fell from height and suffered serious injuries.

Andrew Smith fractured his left femur, left elbow, left arm and pelvis after falling approximately three metres off a ladder on 28 July 2021.

He had been working for Profascias Ltd at Park Lane Primary School in Tilehurst, Reading.

The company had been hired to replace guttering and supply fascia boards and soffits at the infant school.

The ladder Mr Smith had been working from against the school wall slipped, causing the 53-year-old to fall to the ground.

He spent 16 days in hospital as a result of his injuries and later underwent surgery to add a bolt to his hip and metal plate to his arm.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found there had been insufficient planning of the work at height by Profascias Ltd and its director, John Nolan. A safe platform from which to work, such as a properly erected scaffold, should have been provided as workers needed both hands to carry out the work and could not therefore work safely from a ladder. Ladders should only be used for access or, where it is not reasonably practicable to provide safer working platforms, for short-term work of up to 30 minutes where workers can normally maintain three points of contact.

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

Profascias Ltd, of Sandy Lane, Pamber Heath, Tadley, Hampshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company was fined £6,000 and ordered to pay £2,000 in costs at Slough Magistrates' Court on 18 December 2023.

Imposing the sentence, District Judge Goozee remarked: "Because of the financial penalty, the company may end up being wound up completely; but that is a consequence of the conviction."

John Nolan, of Sandy Lane, Pamber Heath, Tadley, Hampshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 by virtue of Section 37(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. He was handed a 12-month community order where he must undertake 180 hours of unpaid work and ordered to pay £1,000 in costs at Slough Magistrates' Court on 18 December 2023.

HSE inspector Rachael Newman said: "This worker's injuries were serious. This incident could have been avoided through the selection of suitable work

equipment to prevent persons from falling.

“Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities and injuries in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known.”

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Jon Mack and supported by HSE paralegal officer Cristina Alcov.

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.