

Company fined after barn roof fall

A company has been fined £133,000 after a man was left seriously injured when he fell through a barn roof in Southampton.

The 37-year-old from Bursledon had been helping his friend repair a fire-damaged storage barn at Dodwell Farm Limited on Pylands Lane on 9 February 2023. The father-of-one had been at the top of a sloped roof fixing new panels to timbers, but they weren't strong enough to hold his weight. They gave way when he stood on them and he fell through to the hard surface about 10 metres below. The injuries he sustained were severe and resulted in an extended period in hospital.



The barn which roof the man fell through

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that safety measures such as barriers, netting or access equipment were not in place.

Dodwell Farm Limited had failed to take appropriate precautions to ensure the safety of workers, and others affected by the work, when replacing the barn roof.

Working at height remains one of the biggest causes of fatalities and major injuries. Common cases include falls from ladders and through fragile surfaces. [HSE guidance is available.](#)



The man fell approximately 10 metres through the barn roof

Dodwell Farm Limited of Bursledon pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £133,000 and was ordered to pay £8,816 costs plus £2,000 surcharge at a hearing at Southampton Magistrates Court on 3 Jan 2025.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Nicola Pinckney said: “Too many workers are injured and killed every year as a result of falling from height.

“The sentence imposed on Dodwell Farm Limited should underline to everyone who carries out work at height that the courts, and HSE, take a failure to follow the regulations extremely seriously.

“Measures to prevent the accident, such as avoiding working from the roof, protecting fragile surfaces and having netting in place, are well known and readily available.

“HSE will not hesitate to take action against companies which do not do all that they should to keep people safe.”

This HSE prosecution was brought by enforcement lawyer Iain Jordan and paralegal Helen Jacob.

Further information:

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
4. HSE does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect any fines imposed. Relevant sentencing guidelines must be followed unless the court is satisfied that it would be contrary to the interests of justice

to do so. The sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences in England and Wales can be found [here](#) and for those in Scotland [here](#).