

Company sentenced after worker fall from height

Abbots Mead Limited, a building maintenance company based in Cheshire has been fined £20,000 for poorly managing work at height while carrying out repairs to a roof and cleaning the gutters of a commercial unit in Wolverhampton.

Dudley Magistrates Court heard that on 29 January 2021 while carrying out repairs works to a fragile roof of a commercial unit, an apprentice employee fell through a skylight. The employee fell approximately six metres to the concrete floor of the warehouse below contacting the racking on the fall. His injuries included fractures to the hip and wrist.

An investigation by the Health and safety executive (HSE) found that employees had not been informed they were working on a fragile roof and no measures had been implemented for working on a fragile surface. The company failed to properly risk assess the task and to provide the appropriate control measures to prevent a fall.

Abbots Mead Limited, of Knutsford Way, Sealand Industrial Estate, Chester, pleaded guilty to a breach of Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and received a £20,000 fine. Abbots Mead Ltd were also ordered to pay costs of £3,873 and a victim surcharge.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Aaron Fisher 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.

"Companies and individuals in control should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standard."

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. hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>