

Construction company fined after worker fall

Two construction business partners have been fined after a sub-contractor suffered multiple fractures when he fell from an unsafe scaffold.

On 20 December 2018, sub-contractors were installing a roof light on a boot room extension as part of the refurbishment of a house on St James Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. They were not provided with a safe route to the work area from the scaffolding, as there was a board spanning a large gap and step up from the first lift of a scaffold on to the boot room roof. The board was not secured in place.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the scaffold had not been inspected by a competent person every seven days and there was insufficient edge protection around the work area to prevent people falling a distance liable to cause serious injury.

Two of the partners of Orchard Construction, of Queen Street, Sandhurst, Cranbrook, Kent pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(2) of the Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974.

At Maidstone Magistrates' Court, Martin Hayes was fined £2,066 and ordered to pay costs of £7,500. Timothy Hayes was fined £2,800 and similarly ordered to pay costs of £7,500.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Nicola Wellard commented: "This incident could have been so easily avoided by simply ensuring that the scaffold was inspected by a competent person every seven days and any noted deficiencies rectified.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those who fall below the required standards."

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. www.hse.gov.uk

2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/

3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>