

Construction firm fined after multiple safety failings

A Stockport construction firm has been fined after putting employees at risk due to widespread safety failings when carrying out work in an unsafe manner at two construction sites.

Manchester and Salford Magistrates' Court heard that Sherwood Homes Limited had appointed several Principal Contractors to construct numerous domestic properties at two sites, in Preston and at Tarporley. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) carried out proactive inspections at both sites and found that those working on site were exposed to risks that included falls from height, electrocution, inhalation of silica dust and being struck by construction plant. As a result of the inspections, various enforcement action was taken against the Principal Contractors involved and the Client, Sherwood Homes Limited.

The HSE investigation found that the company failed to make suitable arrangements for managing the projects. There was no F10 notice of construction work displayed, and insufficient welfare facilities at the Tarporley site. The company also failed to give notice in writing to HSE before the construction phase began at the Preston site.

Further investigation found that since early 2014, HSE conducted 9 inspections to four separate sites developed on behalf of Sherwood Homes Ltd. During these visits, 16 enforcement notices and 9 notification of contraventions were served for various health and safety breaches.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Susan Ritchie said: "Clients cannot delegate their health and safety responsibilities. CDM 2015 places clear duties on Clients making them accountable for the impact their decisions and approach have on the health, safety and welfare of their project. In general terms, the Client must ensure that the construction project is set up so that it is carried out from start to finish in a way that adequately controls the risk to health and safety of those who may be affected by it. In order to achieve this they must engage others (such as Designers and Principal Contractors) that have the necessary skills, knowledge, training and organisational capabilities to fulfil their responsibilities under CDM and deliver the project safely on behalf of the Client. If the Client fails to do this, HSE will consider taking enforcement action against them."

Sherwood Homes Ltd of Houldsworth Street, Stockport, were found guilty of breaching Regulation 6 (2), Regulation 6(3) and two breaches of Regulation 4 of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The company was fined £76,000 and ordered to pay costs of £14,651.64.

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator

for workplace health and safety. We seek to 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>

4. More information on managing health and safety in construction can be found at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l153.htm>

and

<https://www.citb.co.uk/documents/cdm%20regs/2015/cdm-2015-clients-interactive.pdf>