

# Maidstone company fined following death of worker

A Maidstone company has been sentenced after a maintenance worker fell five metres through a roof and died.

Folkstone Magistrates' Court heard that on, 23 September 2015, Justin Hewitt fell through an opening that was being created on the roof of the premises of Maidstone Studios Ltd.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the tower scaffold used to access the roof was damaged, had not been correctly erected and had been purchased second hand by Maidstone Studios Limited with no manufacturer's instructions. No formal planning had been recorded for the work, which was outside the scope of the general maintenance duties of the team.

The work had been discussed, and planned to be carried out from below, but no-one identified the errors with the towers, ladder sections being the wrong way round, damaged bracing or the inadequate guardrails.

The towers were erected by Mr Hewitt, but he had been given no formal training on how they should be erected safely. Although he was supervising the work, no checks were made of how it was actually being carried out.

Maidstone Studios Ltd pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The company has been fined £30,000 and ordered to pay costs of £6,487.76.

HSE inspector Stephen Green said: "Had the work been properly planned with suitable access equipment, correctly placed and erected, by those with adequate training, the work could have been done safely and this tragedy could have been averted.

"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."

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

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.