

North West company fined after two workers fall from height

A Manchester-based principal contractor has today been sentenced for safety breaches after two workers both fell when working from height.

Leeds Crown Court heard how, on 3 October 2014, the two subcontracted joiners were working on the refurbishment and construction of new build dwellings at the former Wharfedale Hospital in Otley, West Yorkshire. They were working in the bell tower at the site on a temporary access platform when it collapsed. The men fell approximately 3.4 metres onto a lower platform which also collapsed. They then fell a further 3.4m onto the ground floor of the building. The platforms were installed by PJ Livesey Living Space (North) Ltd to allow other contractors to access the roof structure. One of the workers injured their ankle while the other has suffered permanent nerve damage to the face.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the work platforms had been designed by the site manager, an employee of PJ Livesey. The site manager was not competent to carry out such a design and the design had not been reviewed by another competent person. Consequently, the platform was unsafe and collapsed.

PJ Livesey Living Space (North) Ltd of Ashburton Park, Trafford Park, Manchester pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and has been fined £56,000 and ordered to pay £7262.16 costs

After the hearing, HSE inspector Chris Tilley commented: "The risks associated with working at height are well known.

"Temporary works must always be designed to meet British Standards by a competent person and in the case of more complex works such as this, be subject to a secondary overview."

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>

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