

Teenager fell more than 20 feet through roof of Bodmin dairy farm

A Bodmin dairy farm has been fined more than £60,000 after one of its workers sustained multiple injuries when he fell more than 20 feet through a roof on to a concrete floor.

Mike Rossiter, was just 18 when he was airlifted to Derriford hospital in Plymouth after the shed roof he was clearing gutters from gave way. As well as rupturing his spleen and liver, the farm worker also fractured several vertebrae. An additional fracture to his left elbow required surgery and a permanent plate in his arm.

"I was in hospital for two-and-a-half weeks," he explained.

"I have been left with permanent damage in my arm and no longer have full movement and I'm unable to lift and carry heavy things.

"I recently found the cold weather is making it worse, so I now have to take the weather into account when I am working outside."



Mike Rossiter fell more than 20 feet through a shed roof

A keen rugby player before the incident, 20-year-old Mr Rossiter, went on to say that despite being back in work and fully-supported by his employer, he still fears for his long-term future in the industry.

"My employer has given me a job that doesn't involve heavy lifting," he said.

"I don't know how much longer I will be able to keep working in the farming industry as a result of my injuries.

“I am hoping this will not be the case as I enjoy what I am doing and would not like to leave the profession.”

Plymouth Magistrates Court heard that employees of C.P. Button Limited were clearing the gutters on the grain and silage pit shed roofs on 13 July 2021. Although they were using crawling boards, Mr Rossiter had stood on a fragile rooflight, which failed under his weight causing him to fall.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company failed to control the risk of falls. They failed to adequately assess the risks and did not have a safe system of work. Wider failings were identified in respect of the information, instruction, training, and supervision provided for the employees involved. HSE guidance can be found at:

[Agriculture: Preventing falls \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/preventing-falls/)



CP Button Limited were fined more than £60k at Plymouth Magistrates Court

C.P. Button Limited, of St Tudy, Bodmin, Cornwall, pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 after failing to ensure so far as reasonably practicable the health and safety and welfare at work of all its employees against the risk of falling when carrying out the planned maintenance task of clearing gutters. The company was fined £63,466 and ordered to pay £4,223.50 in costs at Plymouth Magistrates' Court on 20 April 2023.

HM Inspector of Health and Safety James Hole said: “This was a wholly avoidable incident which resulted in life changing injuries.

“Roughly half the deaths and serious injuries caused by falls in agriculture involve work on fragile roofs.

“Any work on roofs should be adequately planned and suitable protection should be provided which will normally include a combination of coverings, guard rails, safety nets and safety harnesses.”

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.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
4. HSE guidance can be found at: [Agriculture: Preventing falls \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)