

Construction firm fined after death of teenage labourer

- 19-year-old labourer died after falling six floors from a ventilation shaft
- HSE investigation found that the ventilation shaft had been covered only by a sheet of plasterboard and roofing foam
- Jerram Falkus Construction Limited fined £40,200

A construction firm has been fined £40,200 after a teenage labourer died falling down a ventilation shaft on a London building site.

Renols Lleshi, 19, was helping to dismantle scaffolding on the 12th floor roof garden of a block of flats being built at the Ark Soane Academy site, Mill Hill Road, London W3 on 5 July 2023. As he stepped onto a ventilation shaft the covering gave way, and he fell six floors to his death.

Renols father said "My family and I are devastated by the loss of Renols. To know that his death was caused by an accident which was entirely avoidable only makes our loss even harder to cope with.



Renols Lleshi

“We are grateful to the Health & Safety Executive for their efforts to investigate the accident and prosecute one of those responsible for Renols’s death. However, nothing anybody can do can bring our loved one back or lessen our grief in any way.”

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that the ventilation shaft had been covered only by a sheet of plasterboard and roofing foam. Routine inspections of the building did not include the roof garden area, meaning the inadequate covering went undetected and no warning was given to the scaffolding team.

HSE guidance on [working at height](#) states that employers should carry out as much work as possible from the ground and ensure workers can safely access and leave areas where work at height is required. Equipment used for working at height must be suitable, stable and strong enough for the task and properly maintained.

Employers and those in control of work at height must ensure activities are properly planned, supervised and carried out by competent people, including the use of appropriate equipment.

Jerram Falkus Construction Limited pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company was fined £42,200, a surcharge of £2000 and ordered to pay £5000 in costs at City of London Magistrates Court on 18 March 2026.

HSE Inspector Natalie Prince said: “Falls from height are one of the biggest causes of workplace fatalities and major injuries. This was a wholly avoidable incident that led to the death of a young man.

My thoughts are with Renols family and friends.”

This prosecution was brought by HSE Enforcement Lawyer Arfaq Nabi and Senior Paralegal Manager Stephen Grabe.

Further Information

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
2. More information about the legislation referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest HSE news releases are available.
4. Relevant guidance can be found here: [Work at height – HSE](#)
5. HSE does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect any fines imposed. Relevant sentencing guidelines must be followed unless the court is satisfied that it would be contrary to the interests of justice to do so. The sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences can be found here.

Waste management company fined after employee falls from height

- Worker broke leg after falling from compost screening machine while clearing blockage.
- HSE investigation found company failed to assess risks and provide safe system of work.
- Employees were able to bypass safety measures while cleaning machinery.

A green waste recycling company based in West Sussex has been fined after an employee broke his leg when he fell from a compost screening machine.

Simon Pateman was working for Woodhorn Group Limited at its green waste recycling site in Tangmere, Chichester, on 16 February 2024 when he climbed onto a Komtech compost screening machine to clear a blockage from the fan housing.

The machine was suspended at height within a large barn and lacked sufficient measures to prevent falls. As Mr Pateman climbed onto the machine he slipped, trapping his left leg between the machine and its frame.



Compost screening machine

The momentum and lack of guardrails around the fan housing caused Mr Pateman to fall backwards onto the gantry, striking his head on a handrail while his leg remained trapped. He sustained a broken leg which required surgery to insert a metal plate and screws.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Woodhorn Group Limited had failed to assess the risks associated with cleaning the machine, including the risk of falls from height from the unguarded edges around the fan housing.

The company's standard operating procedure also failed to provide employees with instructions on how to safely clean and unblock the fan housing. The investigation further found the company had failed to prevent access to

dangerous parts of the machine, with the interlocked gate not preventing access to employees during the cleaning process for the 'stars' – rotating discs used to break down larger clumps of compost

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Woodhorn Group Limited, of Woodhorn Business Centre, Woodhorn Lane, Oving, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 2BX, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £14,000 and ordered to pay £6,500 in costs at Brighton Magistrates' Court on 16 March 2026.

HSE Inspector Stephanie Hickford-Smith said:

"This was an entirely preventable incident that has had a significant impact on Mr Pateman's mobility and quality of life.

"The measures implemented by Woodhorn Group after HSE's intervention, including new guarded working platforms around the fan housing and over the 'stars', demonstrate what was reasonably practicable and should have been in place all along."

This HSE prosecution was brought by enforcement lawyer Gemma Zakrzewski and paralegal officer Hannah Snelling.

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Bakery company fined after employee suffers hip fracture in fall

- Employee fractured their hip after falling from a large plastic pallet box while disposing of food waste into a skip
- The company failed to carry out a suitable risk assessment for loading skips and did not provide appropriate equipment for safe working at height
- HSE guidance is available

A Bolton bakery company has been fined £16,667 after an employee fractured their hip falling from a large plastic pallet box while working at height.

The incident occurred on 15 April 2024 at Greenhalgh's Craft Bakery Limited's site in Lostock, Bolton. The employee had been standing on a pallet box to dispose of food waste into the top of a skip when they fell.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that Greenhalgh's Craft Bakery Limited had failed to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for loading skips and had not provided appropriate equipment to ensure safe access. The investigation also found that inadequate supervision and monitoring had allowed unsafe working at height practices to become commonplace.

Greenhalgh's Craft Bakery Limited, of Crescent Road, Bolton, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £16,667 and ordered to pay costs of £4,333.66, plus a victim surcharge of £2,000, at Tameside Magistrates' Court on 13 March 2026.

Working at height remains one of the leading causes of workplace injury and death. HSE guidance on [working at height](#) explains how to plan and carry out work at height safely, including the importance of selecting appropriate equipment and ensuring suitable supervision.

HSE Inspector Leanne Ratcliffe said: "Every employer has a duty to conduct a risk assessment. Employers should identify work-at-height activities and ensure that safe access is available and used. They should also ensure systems are in place for supervision and monitoring so that unsafe practices are identified and prevented."

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Arfaq Nabi and paralegal officer Hannah Snelling.

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available.

3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
 4. Relevant guidance can be found here [Managing risks and risk assessment at work: Overview – HSE](#)
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[Recycling company fined after employee suffers life-changing injuries in telehandler incident](#)

- Worker was crushed against a wall by a reversing telehandler.
- HSE investigation found no suitable risk assessment had been carried out.
- Company failed to segregate vehicles and pedestrians in the yard.

A waste and recycling company has been fined after an employee suffered life-changing injuries after being crushed by a reversing telehandler at a site in Lancashire.

Jordan Campion, from Burnley, was working for Sheridan Skips Burnley Limited at its site in Smiths Yard, Clifton Street when the incident occurred on 12 March 2024.

Mr Campion, now 21, and three other employees were sorting and separating waste material by hand in the same yard as a colleague who was operating a telehandler. Mr Campion was standing against a brick wall at the side of the yard when the telehandler reversed into him, crushing him against the wall.

As a result, Mr Campion suffered multiple fractures, nerve damage to his right arm and internal organ injuries. He also lost partial hearing in his right ear and developed a blood clot which caused optical damage to his right eye, resulting in permanent sight loss in that eye.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Campion and other employees frequently worked in the yard while vehicles operated alongside them. Sheridan Skips Burnley Limited had not undertaken a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks and failed to provide adequate measures for the safe segregation of vehicles and pedestrians. There was no physical protection from vehicle movement, which regularly put employees in considerable danger.

The investigation also found that the telehandler operator could not see clearly while reversing, as the machine was missing mirrors to aid reversing – a deficiency the company had failed to address.

[Workplace transport safety](#) and [hand sorting of recyclables with vehicle assistance](#) provides advice for employers on what they need to do to comply with the law and reduce risk. The guide is also useful for managers, supervisors, employees and their safety representatives, as well as contractors, vehicle operators and other organisations concerned with workplace transport safety.

Mr Champion was in hospital for nearly two weeks following the incident. In his victim personal statement, Mr Champion said: “My incident has caused my family great distress. They permanently worry about me; they never thought that I wouldn’t be safe in work. They say you never expect to see your child go off to work and to get a phone call to say that they have had an incident and might not survive.”

Sheridan Skips Burnley Limited, of Cathedral Gates, Manchester, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £24,000 and ordered to pay £4777 in costs at Blackburn Magistrates’ Court on Wednesday 11 March 2026.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Anthony Banks said: “This young man’s injuries could so easily have been avoided with the implementation of safe working practices, including pedestrian and vehicle segregation and safe refuges for workers whilst vehicles were operating. These measures would have ensured that workers present in the yard were not put at risk of being struck by vehicles moving in and around where they were working.

“This should serve as a reminder to businesses operating in the waste industry to ensure that workplace transport is appropriately considered, with control measures introduced to ensure the appropriate separation of vehicles and pedestrians.”

The prosecution was supported by HSE enforcement lawyer Julian White and paralegal officer Hannah Snelling.

Notes to editors

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England and Wales can be found [here](#) and for those in Scotland [here](#).

[Two companies and site manager prosecuted following large-scale asbestos disturbance](#)

- Demolition work at a Staffordshire site was halted after asbestos was discovered
- An unlicensed company and individual were appointed to manage the clear-up instead of a licensed contractor
- HSE investigation found that the demolition was not properly planned or managed

Two Midlands companies and a site manager have been sentenced after a largescale asbestos disturbance and illegal clearance operation was carried out at a Cannock demolition site, putting workers and members of the public at risk of exposure to the deadly carcinogen.

Following concerns about unsafe demolition work, an HSE inspector visited a site at Greenheath Road, Cannock on 7 September 2023. The inspector found that demolition had been halted after asbestos was discovered on site. A subsequent refurbishment and demolition asbestos survey identified 218m² of asbestos-containing materials and debris.



Greenheath Road

The investigation established that Sohan Group Limited, the client for the project, had commissioned an asbestos management survey before work began, which identified some asbestos-containing materials within the building. This survey was shared with the demolition contractor, Maize Metals Limited, who nonetheless proceeded with the demolition work despite being aware of the asbestos present.

Sohan Group Limited had not appointed a principal contractor to manage the

construction project, as required under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. Following the refurbishment and demolition survey, the company obtained a quote for removal by a licensed asbestos removal contractor but instead appointed Disa Properties Limited, represented by Ali Raza Baig, to carry out the asbestos clear-up. Neither the company nor Mr Baig held the necessary licence or competence to work with asbestos. Mr Baig failed to engage a licensed contractor and failed to ensure appropriate measures were in place to prevent exposure to, and spread of, harmful asbestos fibres.

HSE guidance on managing and working with asbestos states that, under the [Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](#), employers must commission a refurbishment and demolition asbestos survey before starting any work likely to disturb the fabric of a building constructed before 2000. Any asbestos-containing materials identified must either be left undisturbed or removed by a competent, and in many cases HSE-licensed, contractor under controlled conditions.

At Birmingham Magistrates' Court on 6 March 2026:

– Sohan Group Limited, of Sneyd Lane, Essington, Wolverhampton WV11 2DU, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 5(4) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and was fined £74,900 and ordered to pay costs of £3,658.14 and a statutory surcharge of £2,000.

– Maize Metals Limited, of Pikehelve Street, Hill Top, West Bromwich B70 0TU, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 15(2) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and was fined £13,400 and ordered to pay costs of £1,359.51 and a statutory surcharge of £2,000.

– Ali Raza Baig, of Alton Close, Amington, Staffordshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 15(2) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 by virtue of Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. He was sentenced to 26 weeks' imprisonment, suspended for two years, and made subject to an electronically monitored curfew between 19:00 and 07:00 for three months. A director disqualification order was made under Section 2(1) of the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 for five years from 6 March 2026. Mr Baig was warned that breach of the order is a criminal offence carrying a maximum sentence of two years' imprisonment. He was ordered to pay costs of £5,899 and a statutory surcharge of £154.

HSE Inspector Rob Gidman said: "Asbestos is a Class 1 carcinogen which is known to kill around 20 tradespeople each week due to past exposure. By failing to ensure the demolition was properly planned and managed, considering the presence of asbestos on site, these companies and Mr Baig put workers and members of the public at risk of being exposed to a substance known to cause fatal lung disease.

"This case should serve as a reminder to those engaged in demolition and refurbishment work that they have responsibilities when it comes to managing the risks associated with asbestos."

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Gemma Zakrzewski and paralegal officer Stephen Grabe.

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4. Relevant guidance can be found here: [Asbestos – HSE](#)
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