

Building firm fined after employee killed by collapsing wall in Bath

- Gary Anstey, 57, had just become a grandad
- Inspector slams lack of planning that is “all too common”
- HSE guidance on temporary structures is available

A building company has been fined after an employee was crushed to death when a 1.8m high retaining wall collapsed onto him.

Gary Anstey, 57, from Bristol, was working for H. Mealing & Sons Limited at a construction site at a school in Bath when the incident happened on 19 March 2019.



Gary James Anstey

An investigation by the Health Safety Executive (HSE) found that H. Mealing & Sons Limited failed to properly plan and supervise the construction of the retaining wall at Swainswick School. This led to it becoming unstable when a large load of aggregate was placed against the incomplete wall which was not supported.



Collapsed wall

HSE guidance [Temporary Works – HSE](#) requires that any temporary structure must be designed and installed to withstand any loads placed against it and that it is used in accordance with its design. This includes ensuring appropriately trained operatives are provided with a suitable written design and plan to install to ensure the structure remains stable.



Aggregate at the construction site in Bath

In a victim personal statement, Gary's wife Anne Anstey, said: "Gary's workplace should have been a safe place to work – he should have come home as he always did – and now he hasn't been here to celebrate all the family milestones and that is something that we as a family have to live with."

She added: "Gary was 57 years old when he died. He was always full of life and he had recently become a grandad for the first time. He has missed Scarlett grow up into a funny loving girl and missed out on the celebration of Scott and his wife buying their first house, all the children starting school and many other milestones in our lives."

1974. Mealing & Sons Limited of Northend, Batheaston, Bath pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The company was fined £56,775 and ordered to pay £44,000 in costs at Taunton Magistrates' Court on 11 September 2025.

HSE inspector Ian Whittles said: “This was a horrific incident which had heartbreaking consequences.

“It happened because of a lack of planning and coordination, which is all too common in construction activity. With simple clear procedures and appropriate training this incident would not have happened.”

Contributions to this statement were made by Gary’s wife, Anne along with their two sons Shaun and Scott.

Notes to Editors

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](#) is available.
4. Relevant guidance can be found here [Temporary Works – 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](#).