

Bupa Care Homes fined £400k after falling tree crushes child

A care home provider has been fined £400k after an eight-year-old girl suffered catastrophic injuries when a tree fell on her.

Bupa Care Homes (CFHCare) Limited pleaded guilty after it [failed to provide a system to manage trees](#) on its site at Oak Lodge Care Home in Bitterne, Southampton.

West Hampshire Magistrates Court heard that on 8 July 2021, the girl was out for an evening jog with her father. As she was running on a pavement outside the entrance to the care home, a lime tree fell on her. She suffered serious crush injuries and her leg had to be amputated. It was subsequently found that the tree was diseased with a common fungus and had likely been rotting for several years prior to the accident.



The lime tree fell on the girl as she was running along a pavement outside the entrance to the care home (HSE)

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that, over a number of years, Bupa Care Homes had failed to have in place a strategy to manage trees, including adequate risk assessment, proactive surveys, inspections, and monitoring of trees, to identify where remedial work may have been required to prevent risk of the tree falling.



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Bupa Care Homes pleaded guilty to a breach of Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and received a fine of £400,000. The company was also ordered to pay costs of £3,275 and a victim surcharge.

HSE Inspector Natalie Pomfret said: "This was a tragic and wholly avoidable incident, caused by the failure of the company to have in place suitable arrangements for managing trees on their premises, and failure to ensure that the trees were properly inspected and maintained."

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. Guidance about managing the risk from [falling trees](#) is available.