

Company and director fined after public seriously injured by falling scaffold tower on busy high street

- Two members of the public suffered serious injuries when a scaffold tower toppled onto Putney high street.
- HSE found the tower had been assembled incorrectly and covered with sheeting which acted 'as a sail' in windy conditions
- Company had previously been served a prohibition notice for unsafe scaffolding at another site

A London construction company and its sole director have been fined after a tower scaffold fell onto two members of the public on a busy high street in south-west London.

On 19 July 2023, operatives working for Add Prop Limited assembled a mobile tower scaffold on Putney High Street while under the supervision of the company's sole director, Atif Riaz. The scaffold tower, which had been assembled incorrectly with inadequate measures to separate it from members of the public, was subsequently covered in sheeting.

The sheeting acted as a sail in windy conditions, causing the tower scaffold to overturn. The structure struck and trapped two members of the public, resulting in serious injuries.



The scaffold fell onto a busy high street and injured two people

Add Prop Limited was acting as principal contractor on a project to convert a commercial building into residential flats. Mr Riaz was both the project manager and site supervisor and was present overseeing the work on the day of the incident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Add Prop

Limited had failed to ensure the temporary structure was designed, installed and maintained so that it could withstand foreseeable loads, including those created by wind acting on the sheeting. The company had previously been served with a Prohibition Notice in relation to unsafe work involving a tower scaffold at another site.

The investigation also found that the tower scaffold had neither been assembled nor inspected by adequately trained and competent persons. It had not been erected in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or established industry guidance.



The tower scaffold had neither been assembled nor inspected by adequately trained and competent persons

HSE further found that Atif Riaz had been negligent in his role as both sole director and project manager. Despite the well-known risks associated with wind loading on scaffold structures, neither the company nor Mr Riaz took adequate account of those risks before deciding to sheet the scaffold.

HSE guidance states that tower scaffolds must be erected by trained and competent persons and in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. Dutyholders must also ensure temporary structures are stable and capable of withstanding foreseeable environmental conditions, including wind loading. Further guidance can be found at: [Tower scaffolds – HSE](#).

Following a hearing at Westminster Magistrates' Court, Add Prop Limited was found guilty of breaching Regulation 19(2)(a) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. The company was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay £7,000 in costs.

Atif Riaz, the company's sole director, was found guilty of an offence under Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. He was fined £1,730 and ordered to pay £1,730 in costs.

HSE Inspector Daniel Burton said:

"The public have a right to expect scaffolding they pass by is safe and has

been properly installed – yet every year people are injured when scaffold towers overturn.

“In this case, two members of the public suffered serious injuries when a scaffold tower overturned on a busy high street. The risks associated with scaffold towers and wind loading are well known within the construction industry – this kind of incident simply should not happen.

“The fines imposed on Add Prop Limited and Atif Riaz should underline to everyone in the construction industry that the courts, and HSE, take failures to follow health and safety requirements extremely seriously.

“HSE will not hesitate to take action against companies and, where appropriate, directors who fail to do all that they should to keep workers and members of the public safe.”

The HSE prosecution was brought by enforcement lawyer Gemma Zakrzewski and paralegal officer Melissa Wardle.

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