

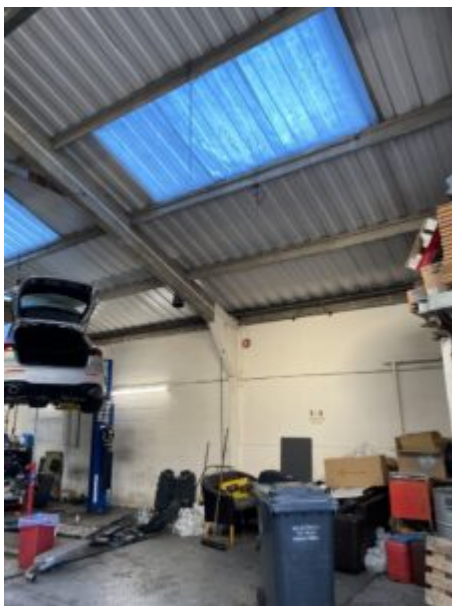
Company and director sentenced after worker fell 15 feet

- Company cut corners to speed up roof repair work.
- Man fell through fragile skylight.
- Despite incident, company carried on with the job the day after.

A construction company in Hampshire has been fined £80,000 after a man fell more than 15 feet through a fragile skylight during roof repair work.

The 29-year-old sub-contractor sustained multiple fractures as a result of his fall at The Tanneries Industrial Estate in January 2024. As a result, he was unable to work for months, and has not regained full use of one leg.

J Smith Construction Services Limited had started the roof repairs at the site in Titchfield in December 2023, but the work had been progressing slowly. In an attempt to speed up the project, the company planned to work over the weekend of 13-14 January 2024 and took on extra workers to help, including the sub-contractor.



Skylight and area below

The company did not arrange for scaffolding to be erected at the open edges of the roof, nor make adequate arrangements to prevent or mitigate falls through fragile areas of the roof. As there was nothing to prevent or reduce his fall through the skylight, the man fell from the height of the roof to the solid floor below.

Despite this serious incident, J Smith Construction Services and the remaining sub-contractors returned to complete the work the following day, with no additional safety measures in place.

Working at height remains one of the leading causes of workplace injury and death and HSE has detailed guidance on working safely at height, [working](#)

[safely at height](#) including roof work. [Health and safety in roof work](#)

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the company had failed to take appropriate precautions to ensure the safety of the workers on the roof.

J Smith Construction Services Limited of Southampton, pleaded guilty to breaching The Work at Height Regulations 2005, Regulation 6(3). The company was fined £80,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2,630 at a hearing at Southampton Magistrates Court on 4 December 2025.

Company director, Mr Joseph Smith, who had been present throughout the works, pleaded guilty to Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, s.37(1). At the same court hearing, he was given a three-month prison sentence, suspended for 12 months, and ordered to pay costs of £2,630.

After the hearing, a HSE spokesperson said: "These sentences should send a clear message to employers that HSE and the courts take a failure to comply with health and safety legislation extremely seriously.

"Too many workers are injured or killed every year as a result of falls from height during construction work. These incidents can be prevented if reasonably practicable measures such as scaffolding or netting are put in place to protect workers."

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Karen Park and paralegal Helen Hugo.

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. 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 in Scotland can be found [here](#).