

# Construction boss avoids jail after worker died during house extension

- Stephen Pywell fell while walking on roof beams
- HSE guidance on working at height is available

The director of a Leicester-based construction company has been given a suspended prison sentence after a man fell to his death while working on a house extension.

Stephen Pywell was working under the control of Affordable Lifestyle Design Limited at a site in Thurmaston on 18 March 2019. It was during the roof construction phase when the 59-year-old fell while walking on the beams. He had accessed the beams via a ladder, however there was no edge protection in place to prevent falls. He fell from a height of just under eight feet. He was taken to hospital where he underwent surgery, but died as a result of his injuries.



Stephen Pywell fell from the wooden roof beams of the house extension

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that James Pitsillides, the director of Affordable Lifestyle Design Limited, had failed to manage the roof work. This included ensuring that roofing subcontractors, including Mr Pywell, were not exposed to health and safety risks.

Pitsillides pleaded guilty and was given a 20-week prison sentence, suspended for two years. The district judge also ordered him to complete 200 hours of unpaid work.

Working at height remains one of the leading causes of workplace injury and death and HSE has detailed guidance on working safely at height.

That guidance states that work at height must be properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out in a manner that is safe. The “hierarchy of control” prioritizes collective fall prevention measures, for example scaffolding with suitable edge protection. If this isn’t feasible, fall mitigation measures like airbags or netting should be considered to reduce the consequences of a potential fall. In this case, none of these

measures were used, and workers were accessing the roof with a ladder and no additional fall prevention measures in place.

James Pitsillides of Orchard Lane, Great Glen, Leicester, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, relating to an underlying breach of s.3(1) by his company. He received a 20-week prison sentence, suspended for two years and must complete 200 hours of unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay £10,000 in costs at Leicester Magistrates' Court on 7 May 2025.

HSE inspector Phil Gratton said: "Every year, a significant number of incidents occur in construction as a result of poorly planned work at height.

"This was a wholly avoidable incident, caused by the failure to implement simple fall protection measures. Had the company used suitable work equipment or devised a safe system of work, Mr Pywell's tragic death could have been avoided.

"Our thoughts remain with his family and friends."

#### **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 has detailed guidance on [working safely at height](#).
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](#).