

Construction company fined after three contractors fell from height

A construction company has been fined following an incident where three contractors fell from height suffering serious injuries.

North Somerset Magistrates' Court heard how, on 18 July 2018, three bricklayers fell approximately 2.5 metres onto a concrete floor sustaining serious injuries ranging from a broken back, a broken sternum to a swollen knee. The three workers fell through a temporary stairwell cover, which gave way underneath them because it had not been correctly fitted.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that St Modwen Homes Limited did not have a robust system in place to ensure that the temporary stairwell cover was identified as a temporary working platform and treated as such. It failed to coordinate matters relating to the safe use of the temporary platform and it failed to plan, manage and monitor the installation, inspection, maintenance and use of the temporary working platform.

St Modwen Homes Limited of Park Point, High Street, Longbridge, Birmingham pleaded guilty to breaching the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015, contravening Regulation 13(1). The company has been fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £13,332.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Stephan Axt-Simmonds said: "Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known. This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices. Temporary stairwell covers need to be inspected the same as any other working platforms.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."



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 www.hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>