

Construction company fined after worker seriously injured in fall from height in handbag factory renovation

- Worker suffered multiple serious injuries after falling from ladder during refurbishment project.
- HSE investigation found there was no safe system of work for working at height.
- Company had previously been served with a Prohibition Notice for unsafe work at height.

A construction company has been fined after a worker sustained serious injuries when he fell from a ladder during renovation works in London.

On 5 August 2021, the worker was engaged on a refurbishment project in Islington for Bow Tie Construction Limited. The project involved converting an existing domestic property and a former handbag factory into a single dwelling.

As part of the works, a new concrete staircase was to be installed between the ground and first floors. Temporary timber formwork was required to construct the staircase.

The worker, along with two others, had been instructed by company director and acting site manager Rafael Delimata to build the formwork. While standing on the top of a stepladder and using a gas-powered nail gun, the worker fell approximately 1.65 metres to the floor below.

He sustained multiple serious injuries, including crush injuries to both elbows requiring several surgeries, a fractured forearm, dislocated wrists, and injuries to his right leg and left knee.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Bow Tie Construction Limited had failed to implement a safe system of work for working at height during the construction of the staircase.

The investigation also identified wider failings in the management of work at height on site, including inadequate edge protection, incorrectly assembled tower scaffolds, staircases without edge protection, and uncontrolled use of ladders. These failings continued despite a previous HSE visit on 2 July 2021, during which a Prohibition Notice had been served for unsafe work at height.



Photo from the scene

Working at height remains one of the leading causes of workplace injury and death. HSE has detailed guidance on how to plan and carry out work at height safely, including the importance of selecting appropriate equipment and ensuring suitable supervision. These can be found on our website: [Construction – Work at height – HSE](#).

Bow Tie Construction Limited, of Cliveden Office Village, Lancaster Road, High Wycombe, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £24,000 and ordered to pay £4,101 in costs at Southwark Crown Court on 13 February 2026.

HSE Inspector Emma Bitz said:

“The risks associated with working at height are well known, and this incident could have easily been prevented.

“Employers must ensure suitable control measures are in place, safe working practices are followed, and workers are provided with appropriate supervision.

“Failure to do so can result in life-changing injuries, as this case clearly demonstrates.”

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Rebecca Schwartz 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 [Construction – Work at height – 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](#).