

# Recycling company fined after employee suffers life-changing injuries in telehandler incident

- Worker was crushed against a wall by a reversing telehandler.
- HSE investigation found no suitable risk assessment had been carried out.
- Company failed to segregate vehicles and pedestrians in the yard.

A waste and recycling company has been fined after an employee suffered life-changing injuries after being crushed by a reversing telehandler at a site in Lancashire.

Jordan Champion, from Burnley, was working for Sheridan Skips Burnley Limited at its site in Smiths Yard, Clifton Street when the incident occurred on 12 March 2024.

Mr Champion, now 21, and three other employees were sorting and separating waste material by hand in the same yard as a colleague who was operating a telehandler. Mr Champion was standing against a brick wall at the side of the yard when the telehandler reversed into him, crushing him against the wall.

As a result, Mr Champion suffered multiple fractures, nerve damage to his right arm and internal organ injuries. He also lost partial hearing in his right ear and developed a blood clot which caused optical damage to his right eye, resulting in permanent sight loss in that eye.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Champion and other employees frequently worked in the yard while vehicles operated alongside them. Sheridan Skips Burnley Limited had not undertaken a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks and failed to provide adequate measures for the safe segregation of vehicles and pedestrians. There was no physical protection from vehicle movement, which regularly put employees in considerable danger.

The investigation also found that the telehandler operator could not see clearly while reversing, as the machine was missing mirrors to aid reversing – a deficiency the company had failed to address.

[Workplace transport safety](#) and [hand sorting of recyclables with vehicle assistance](#) provides advice for employers on what they need to do to comply with the law and reduce risk. The guide is also useful for managers, supervisors, employees and their safety representatives, as well as contractors, vehicle operators and other organisations concerned with workplace transport safety.

Mr Champion was in hospital for nearly two weeks following the incident. In his victim personal statement, Mr Champion said: “My incident has caused my family great distress. They permanently worry about me; they never thought

that I wouldn't be safe in work. They say you never expect to see your child go off to work and to get a phone call to say that they have had an incident and might not survive."

Sheridan Skips Burnley Limited, of Cathedral Gates, Manchester, 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 £4777 in costs at Blackburn Magistrates' Court on Wednesday 11 March 2026.

**After the hearing, HSE inspector Anthony Banks said:** "This young man's injuries could so easily have been avoided with the implementation of safe working practices, including pedestrian and vehicle segregation and safe refuges for workers whilst vehicles were operating. These measures would have ensured that workers present in the yard were not put at risk of being struck by vehicles moving in and around where they were working.

"This should serve as a reminder to businesses operating in the waste industry to ensure that workplace transport is appropriately considered, with control measures introduced to ensure the appropriate separation of vehicles and pedestrians."

The prosecution was supported by HSE enforcement lawyer Julian White and paralegal officer Hannah Snelling.

#### **Notes to editors**

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) 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 found here: [Workplace transport safety](#) and [hand sorting of recyclables with vehicle assistance](#).
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 in England and Wales can be found [here](#) and for those in Scotland [here](#).