

Social housing management firm fined for failing to protect workers

- Multiple workers exposed to vibration-related ill-health.
- Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome can make everyday tasks impossible.
- HSE guidance is available.

An East Midlands social housing provider has been fined £32,000 after multiple workers were diagnosed with vibration related ill-health conditions such as Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS).

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) launched an investigation after it received more than ten reports of vibration related ill-health in a short period of time. The workers affected had until recently been employed by Nottingham City Homes Limited, an arms-length management organisation that managed social housing on behalf of Nottingham City Council between 2005 and 2023.

The HSE investigation found a large number of the company's employees were exposed to vibration in their day to day work. These included bricklayers, joiners, electricians, plasterers, caretakers and others – while their work was varied, all included extensive use of power tools, ranging from drills and impact drivers to vibrating plates and road breakers, over an extended period of time. Despite this, and the dangers exposure can cause, the company had not properly assessed or controlled worker's exposure to vibration.

Prolonged and regular exposure to vibration can affect a worker's health resulting in disorders of the nerves, blood supply, joints and muscles of the hands and arms. These disorders are collectively known as HAVS and symptoms can include pain, tingling, numbness and loss of strength. HAVS can make everyday tasks such as fastening buttons or holding utensils difficult or impossible.

HSE guidance, [available here](#), and in the HSE publication [Hand-arm vibration – The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 \(L140\) \(PDF\)](#), sets out practical guidance to help employers protect their employees and fulfil their legal obligation to control vibration risks. The guidance includes advice on the assessment of risk, ways to control exposure, and in-depth information about health surveillance.

The HSE investigation also found that the company had not undertaken a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks posed by vibration. Control measures, such as removing the need to use vibrating tools, using lower vibration alternatives, or limiting exposure times, had not been properly implemented. Tool maintenance and health surveillance arrangements were inadequate, and employees had not received sufficient training on the risks that they faced.

Nottingham City Homes Limited, of Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £32,000 and ordered to pay £6,226 in costs at Nottingham Magistrates' Court on 3 November 2025.

HSE inspector Tim Nicholson said: "Nottingham City Homes Limited exposed its employees to vibration through the use of power tools for a long period of time.

"The company failed to properly manage this risk which led to employees suffering ill-health – the effects of exposure to vibration can be debilitating and, once damage is done, it is irreversible.

"There is extensive guidance available that is straightforward to follow and includes calculation tools to assist in deciding what is needed to protect employees.

"Employers should take this case as a reminder that HSE will not hesitate to act against companies which do not do all that they should to keep employees safe."

The prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Neenu Bains, and paralegal officer Jorge Kemp.

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. Guidance on assessing and controlling vibration risks can be found [here](#).
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 can be found [here](#) and those for Scotland [here](#).