

# Staffordshire construction firm and director sentenced after worker seriously injured falling through stairwell

- Worker fell through unprotected stairwell opening during construction of an apartment block.
- HSE investigation found work at height was not properly planned or controlled.
- Company and director sentenced after allowing unsafe working practices.

A Staffordshire-based construction company and its director have been sentenced after a worker sustained serious injuries when he fell through a stairwell opening during the construction of an apartment block in Staffordshire.

The injured worker, who was 26 at the time of the incident, had been appointed by BHG (Stone) Limited, the principal contractor, as a labourer. On 5 December 2023, he was assisting with the installation of wall insulation on the first floor of the building.

To reach the top corner of the wall, the worker placed a ladder across the stairwell opening. While carrying out the task, he fell from the ladder through the opening to the ground below.

The fall resulted in serious injuries, including fractures to his skull and back.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that BHG (Stone) Limited failed to properly plan the work and did not put in place suitable measures to prevent or protect against a fall from height.

The investigation also found that company director Alistair Howells was working in close proximity to the injured worker and had allowed the work to be carried out in an unsafe manner.

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 require work at height to be properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe manner. [HSE guidance](#) highlights the importance of using suitable work equipment and implementing effective control measures to prevent falls.

BHG (Stone) Limited, of Michaelmas Barn, Aston Lane, Aston-by-Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 0BW, pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £16,000 and ordered to pay £4,000 in costs at Telford Magistrates Court on 1 April 2026.

Alistair Howells, 58, of Michaelmas Barn, Aston Lane, Aston-by-Stone,

Staffordshire, ST15 0BW, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. He was fined £2,000 and ordered to pay £1,386 in costs at Telford Magistrates Court on 1 April 2026.

**HSE Inspector Sara Andrews said:**

“This incident highlights the importance of undertaking a thorough assessment of the risks associated with all work at height activities and ensuring suitable control measures are in place.

“Had the work been properly planned and sequenced, and suitable work equipment provided, this incident would not have happened.”

This HSE prosecution was brought by enforcement lawyer Matthew Reynolds and paralegal officer Rebecca Withell.

**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 working at height can be found here: [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 in England can be found [here](#) and those for Scotland [here](#).