

# “His best years have been taken away from him”; Wife pays tribute to husband left with life-changing injuries after fall at Leamington Spa property, as construction firm fined for health and safety breaches

- Bricklayer fell more than two metres through an unguarded gap in a balustrade into a basement lightwell.
- No scaffolding or other protective measures were in place before employees began work.
- HSE found company failed to carry out a task-specific risk assessment or method statement for the work.

A construction company has been fined after a worker sustained life-changing injuries when he fell more than two metres while replacing steps at a residential property in Leamington Spa.

On 16 July 2024, 65-year-old Nicholas Crow, a bricklayer employed by Sibbasbridge Limited, was working at a domestic property on Binswood Avenue in Leamington Spa when he fell through a gap in a balustrade into a basement lightwell approximately 2.6 metres below.

The gap had been created the previous day when railings were removed to allow the old steps to be taken out. While helping to install new steps, Mr Crow fell through the opening and landed on the floor below.

Mr Crow suffered serious injuries, including head trauma and a stroke. He now experiences difficulty writing and holding objects, has mobility issues requiring the occasional use of a wheelchair, and has been left with speech and memory impairments.

## ***In a victim personal statement, Nick’s wife Sarah said:***

*“My children feel that his best years have been taken away from him – what he worked for, for nearly 50 years of his working life. To have these taken away at such a late stage is deeply regrettable, especially as he deserves more.*

*“Nick was quiet, reliable, and the heart of our very close, extended family. The loss of his steadfast, constant love and support for all of us just cannot be measured.*

*“I experience living grief for the loss of my Nick every single day and I always will. I know Nick is grieving too – he suffers the same desolation and despair that engulf and overwhelm me on bad days. It is deeply painful to both experience and witness.”*



(photos from the scene)

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Sibbasbridge Limited failed to put in place suitable and sufficient measures to prevent a fall from height. The company did not produce a task-specific risk assessment or method statement for the work, and failed to ensure that scaffolding or other protective measures were in place before employees began replacing the steps at the property.

HSE guidance states that employers must take suitable and sufficient measures to prevent falls when working at height. This includes properly planning the work, carrying out task-specific risk assessments, and putting in place physical safeguards such as scaffolding, guardrails or coverings to prevent falls.

Further guidance can be found here: [Work at Height – HSE](#).

Sibbasbridge Limited, of 175a Evesham Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 6(3) of The Work at Height Regulations 2005.

The company was fined £16,000 and ordered to pay £7,638 in costs at Birmingham Magistrates' Court on 29 June 2026.

***HSE Inspector Zach Morris said:***

*"This incident was entirely preventable. Sibbasbridge failed to properly plan the works and put suitable measures in place to prevent a fall.*

*"Falls from height are one of the leading causes of workplace injury, and companies must ensure that all work at height is properly planned, risk-assessed and carried out using appropriate control measures to protect workers. HSE will not hesitate to take enforcement action against duty holders which fail to protect their employees while working at height.*

*"My thoughts remain with Mr Crow and his family, as he continues to live with*

*the lasting effects of the serious injuries he sustained that day.”*

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Edward Parton and paralegal officer Thomas Smith.

#### **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:  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/>
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](#).

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## **[HS2 contractor fined £400,000 after tipper truck driver injured](#)**

- 20-tonne tipper truck fell off edge of excavation ramp
- The driver of the truck suffered multiple injuries
- The joint HS2 venture set up by Skanska Construction UK Limited, Costain Limited and Strabag AG

A joint venture working on the HS2 rail project has been fined after the driver of a 20-tonne tipper truck was injured when his vehicle fell off the edge of an excavation ramp.

The incident happened on 27 July 2021, at a site in Copthall North near Uxbridge, West London. The site was being run by SCS Railways, a venture set up by three major construction companies – Skanska Construction UK Limited, Costain Limited and Strabag AG.

The tipper truck fell approximately two metres and landed on the driver’s side. The man behind the wheel suffered a broken nose, cut hand, and a shoulder injury.



The 20-tonne truck ended up on its side after falling off excavation edge

Inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visited the site after the incident and found that there were no signs on the haulage routes being used. They also identified that there was no edge protection in place to prevent vehicles going over the edge of the ramp, and that excavations adjacent to some of the vehicle routes had unsupported, vertical faces which were at risk of collapse.

The incident occurred in an area where SCS Railways was building a 'cut and cover tunnel'. These are shallow tunnels built on the surface before being buried, with trees, plants, and shrubs planted on top. Material from the excavation was to be reused, removing the need for it to be taken off site.

SCS Railways had contracted another company – ACE Grab Hire and Haulage Limited (ACE) – to transport excavation material via 20-tonne tipper trucks to an area under the control of another joint venture working on HS2, Align JV. ACE drivers had been operating at the site for about two weeks by the time the incident occurred.

The subsequent HSE investigation found that on the morning of the incident, the SCS earthworks team changed their working area after an Align JV representative found the original material could not be used. This meant moving the excavator's loading position and creating a new traffic route – but the change inadvertently left an unprotected edge on the bank above.



The suffered several injuries in the incident

When the first ACE tipper truck driver used the higher-level bank instead of the intended new route, his vehicle slipped on the ramp. The next ACE driver followed the same path – and his vehicle veered off the edge of the bank.

HSE guidance on the management of vehicle movements on construction sites can be found in the HSE publication HSG 144, [The safe use of vehicles on construction sites](#). This states that physical barriers, such as safety banks, should be provided at the edges of excavations. Guidance on excavations can also be found at [Excavations – HSE](#). Haul roads on construction sites are also classed as temporary works and guidance can be found at [Temporary Works – HSE](#).

SCS Railways, of 1 Hercules Way, Leavesden, Watford, pleaded guilty to contravening section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. It was fined £400,000 and ordered to pay costs of £8,974 at Uxbridge Magistrates' Court on 16 June 2026.

**HSE Inspector Gordon Carson said:**

“SCS had detailed procedures in place for much of the work at the site, including temporary works schemes for excavations.

“However, its failure to properly plan and promptly communicate changes in vehicle routes created unsafe conditions for the drivers of tipper trucks.

“The consequences of this could have been even more serious than they were for the driver involved in this incident.”

The investigation was carried out by HM inspectors Saif Deen and Gordon Carson, and the prosecution brought by HSE lawyer Andrew Siddall and paralegal Benjamin Stobbart.

**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 the management of vehicle movements on construction sites can be found in the HSE publication HSG 144, [The safe use of vehicles on construction sites](#). Guidance on excavations can be found at [Excavations – 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 and Wales can be found [here](#) and for those in Scotland [here](#).
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## [Construction company director sentenced after collapsing excavation wall leaves worker with life-changing injuries](#)

- Man critically injured after side wall of excavation collapsed
- Work was not planned, managed or monitored
- Incident not reported to HSE until two months later

The sole director of a London-based construction company has been sentenced after a 50-year-old worker was left with life-changing injuries.

James Harper, who was the sole director of Cavendish Basements Limited, failed to report the incident to Britain's workplace regulator, as required under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2012.

The 50-year-old man had been working for Harper on a construction site on Vant Road, London. He had been levelling the ground in a three-metre deep excavation area. It had been raining and the excavated soil and other material was piled up by the side of the excavation. As he went about the job, the side of the excavation fell towards him, leaving him pinned against the wall.



excavation and stability structure concerns



work at height fall risk from open edge

Rather than wait for paramedics to arrive, Mr Harper and another person, moved the operative to a works van and took him to hospital. The injured workers solicitor reported the incident to HSE two months later.

Inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) then made several visits to the construction site and found that the work being undertaken at the time of the incident and since failed to be suitably planned, managed and monitored. Specifically, regarding stability of structures, excavations, work at height and management/supervision arrangements, resulting in multiple enforcement notices being issued.

HSE guidance states that contractors are required to plan, manage and monitor the construction work under their control so it is carried out in a way that controls the risks. Further guidance can be found here: [Managing health and safety in construction. Guidance on regulations L153](#)

Mr. James Harper, of Ellison Road, London, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 by virtue of regulation 15(2) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. He was sentenced to 6 months, suspended for 2 years and was ordered to pay £4608.32 costs and a £154 surcharge. HSE does not determine fines, which are set by the court.

Following the hearing, HSE inspector Andrew Pipe said:

“This was a wholly avoidable incident, where had appropriate measures been

taken e.g. planning the work and shoring the excavation walls, then the life-changing injuries would not have occurred.

“Mr Harper’s decision to not report the incident, as required by law, resulted in other workers continuing to be put at risk on a daily basis and it was lucky that no one else was seriously injured.

“This case should remind everyone in the construction industry that HSE will not hesitate to take action against individuals and companies that fail to properly plan and manage serious risks on construction sites.”

This prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Neenu Bains 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 [Managing health and safety in construction – Guidance on the Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations 2015 – L153](#)
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](#).

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## **[Construction company sentenced after a worker fell to his death](#)**

- Antonio Rodrigues, 55, fell from a scaffold platform through an unglazed window
- Lima Construction Limited was principal contactor at a redevelopment site in south west London
- Falls from height remain leading cause of workplace injury and death

A construction company has been fined after one of its employees was killed when he fell through an unglazed window opening.

Antonio Rodrigues, 55, had been working for Lima Construction Limited, the

principal contractor on a project to redevelop a former department store on the High Street in New Malden, into a mixture of commercial and residential units.

On 27 July 2022, Mr Rodrigues, who was working as a labourer on the site, fell from an external scaffolding platform through an unglazed window void, landing on an internal concrete ground floor more than three metres below. Although he was taken to hospital Mr Rodrigues died from his injuries several days later on 1 August.



Police bodycam footage of the openings including the door in the centre which Mr Rodrigues fell through

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that in one wall, window voids had been created to install glazed 'Juliet' doors. However, when the doors were delivered it was found some had damaged glazing panels so were not installed. Although the company recognised that the four unglazed window voids created a risk to workers on the scaffolding platform – falling from height through the voids – it was only in the hours after Mr Rodrigues fell that protective boarding was installed.

The HSE investigation identified it was reasonably practicable for boarding or additional inside scaffolding guard rails to have been installed over the window voids to prevent falls from height as soon as they had been created.



The door and the concrete ground below it



The door with the boarding added within hours after the fall

The company had also not ensured that legally required weekly scaffolding inspections had been carried out after 5 July 2022, so the opportunity for identification of the risks posed by the unglazed window voids by a competent scaffolding inspector was lost.

Lima Construction Limited, of Apsley Road, New Malden, pleaded guilty to contravening Regulation 13(1) of The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. It was fined £50,000 and ordered to pay costs of £11,347 at Westminster Magistrates Court on 18 June 2026.

**HSE inspector Andrew Verrall-Withers said:**

“This is a case where a company who generally tried to have good standards of health and safety, failed to react effectively to an unusual situation and there were tragic consequences.

“Falls from height are one of the leading causes of workplace fatalities and major injuries in the UK. Employers and those in control of any work at height activity should ensure a sensible, pragmatic approach when considering precautions for work at height.

“As there was no CCTV and nobody witnessed the incident, we will never know exactly what caused Mr Rodrigues to fall. But if the boards added shortly afterwards had been in place, then there would have been no opening for him to fall through in the first place.”

The HSE’s investigation was carried out by HM inspector Andrew Verrall-Withers, and the prosecution was brought by HSE lawyers Iain Jordan and Tom Ledden-Rocks, and paralegal Anushka Lulith.

**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.

1. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
1. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
1. Guidance on working at height is available at [Working at height – HSE](#) and further guidance on construction can be found at [Get started – HSE](#).
1. 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](#).

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## [Businesses ordered to stop work with engineered stone after failing safety inspections](#)

- HSE serves first Prohibition Notices as part of nationwide health and safety inspection campaign
- Enforcement action taken to protect workers from deadly silica dust
- Four companies ordered to stop work after visits from HSE inspectors
- It comes after guidance issued telling industry to stop dry-cutting engineered stone

Four companies have been ordered to stop working with engineered stone as part of a crackdown to protect workers from deadly dust.

The companies received prohibition notices (PNs) following visits by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors. The notices are enforcement actions that require the businesses to stop the work immediately and take steps to improve safety. Each of the firms was found to have had a lack of control measures in place to keep employees safe while working with engineered stone.

HSE launched a package of measures last month to protect workers from the dangers of engineered stone dust. It followed concern about the deaths of young workers from silicosis – a deadly-but-preventable lung disease caused by breathing in respirable crystalline silica (RCS). A nationwide inspection campaign was launched to run through 2026, and inspections have resulted in these four enforcement notices being served as of the end of May.

HSE enforcement notices are published approximately five weeks after they are served to account for the appeals process and internal quality assurance.

Publication of new [guidance](#) from HSE made it clear that dry cutting of engineered stone is unacceptable, and the regulator plans to conduct more than 1,000 visits at which enforcement action to be taken against those failing to meet the required standards.

Harvey Wild, Head of Operations at the Health and Safety Executive, said: "Our inspectors are visiting businesses across Great Britain to ensure that employers have implemented the correct controls to keep their employees safe.

"We have stopped dangerous work with engineered stone in four workplaces due to serious failures in providing the correct controls.

"Silicosis is incurable, but it is entirely preventable. No worker should lose their life to a lung disease caused by their job, and that is why we have taken this action. If businesses ensure the right controls are being used correctly, then the risks of engineered stone and silicosis can be safely managed. Where these are not in place, workers will be at risk."

**Minister for Social Security and Disability Sir Stephen Timms said:**

"Every worker deserves to come home safe, without fear of losing their life to a preventable, deadly lung disease caused by their job.

"The enforcement action taken by HSE sends a clear message that putting workers at risk of silicosis – an entirely preventable but devastating disease – is completely unacceptable and there will be consequences.

"I urge all businesses working with engineered stone to follow HSE's guidance now. There is no excuse for exposing workers to unnecessary risk."

The dangers of engineered stone include silicosis, a deadly-but-preventable lung disease caused by breathing in silica dust that is released when stone is being processed. HSE's research found that dry fabrication typically results in exposure to respirable crystalline silica (RCS) five to ten times higher than wet methods for processing products. It also found that lower-content silica engineered stone is available at the same quality, meaning businesses can switch to less dangerous products.

This evidence led to HSE acting decisively to ensure those controls become universal across the industry, and to provide clarity to businesses and workers, HSE has published its first-ever COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) [guidance sheet](#) specifically for engineered stone.

HSE's guidance sets out in plain English what employers must do: switch to engineered stone with a low silica content; use on-tool water suppression, control mist; provide appropriate respiratory protective equipment (RPE); and carry out regular health surveillance.

□HSE's first instances of enforcement action also addressed a range of other failures including Health Surveillance; provision of suitable respiratory

protective equipment (RPE); provision of suitable local exhaust ventilation; and machinery guarding.

To support dutyholders HSE provides a range of advice and information for fabricators, installers, and distributors of engineered stone – including managers and supervisors. Visit [Working engineered stone: Control silica risk – HSE](#)

#### **Further Information:**

- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety.
- HSE's new guidance for engineered stone outlines the controls that should be in place when working with the material, which effectively rules out dry-cutting, grinding and polishing, unless businesses can demonstrate an equally effective or better control is in place. This is not a new law, or a formal prohibition as would be achieved with changes to legislation.
- The new [COSHH guidance for engineered stone](#) is available at hse.gov.uk
- Respirable crystalline silica (RCS) dust is invisible to the naked eye and can penetrate deep into the lungs, causing silicosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and lung cancer.
- HSE's 1,000+ inspection programme will run through the 2026/27 period.
- HSE is also working with manufacturers, suppliers and importers to encourage the supply of lower-silica engineered stone products, which research indicates are a viable alternative to high-silica materials. Manufacturers have a legal duty under Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to provide adequate information about the risks associated with their products and the controls required to work with them safely.
- Further details on the latest HSE news releases are available at hse.gov.uk.
- Further details on the latest HSE notices are available at [Public register of enforcement notices](#).
- To account for the appeals process and internal quality assurance, enforcement notices are published approximately 5 weeks after they are served.