

Fire at Spectrum House, Dagenham

"HSE is continuing to make inquiries into the fire at Spectrum House in Dagenham on Monday 26 August.

"We remain in contact with first responders and we are working closely with colleagues in the London Fire Brigade on the way forward with our respective investigations, this engagement will be ongoing.

"Inspectors from HSE's Investigations and Building Safety divisions are attending site today, Thursday 29 August"

Background:

HSE continue to provide support to the emergency services and are working closely with colleagues in the London Fire Brigade (LFB) to progress our respective investigations and determine the areas that HSE will focus on within its remit under the Building Safety Act, 2022 and the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974.

The building involved in the fire was a working site undergoing remediation and therefore a joint investigation team within HSE will work closely with the LFB, the Police and other parties including the local authority.

Areas to be considered for investigation include:

- how the cladding remediation works were organised and undertaken, and whether this was a factor in the fire
- whether the Principal Accountable Person for the building had discharged their duties under Part 4 of the Building Safety Act in relation to spread of fire.

Separately we are also engaging with the LFB to determine the circumstances of the fire that occurred at New Providence Wharf in Blackwell East London.

Company fined after worker died in excavation

A company has been fined after a man died while working inside an excavation at a construction site in Glasgow.

Derek Caddie lost his life when part of the excavation wall collapsed on 25 November 2019.

This led to the 44-year-old being trapped in soil from the neck down before

being rescued by the emergency services. He died from his injuries in hospital three days later on 28 November.

Graeme McMinn, a principal inspector at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), said: "This was a tragic and wholly avoidable accident, caused by the failure of Carrig Construction Services Limited to put in place measures to control the risk of the sides of the excavation collapsing.

"HSE provides freely available guidance on effective controls for working in excavations on the HSE website."

Mr Caddie had entered the excavation with a colleague to repair damaged and leaking pipework, when the incident occurred. The colleague was left uninjured.

Carrig Construction Services Limited had been appointed as a contractor at the site on Belhaven Terrace West Lane where new houses were being built. Mr Caddie was working under the company's control at the time of the incident.

An investigation by HSE found the collapse was caused by a lack of support to the vertical walls of the excavation. Carrig Construction Services Limited, a company that specialises in groundworks and drainage works, failed to identify the risks from working in the excavation and did not ensure there were practicable steps in place to ensure workers were protected while inside the excavation.

On top of this, none of the workers under the control of Carrig Construction Services Limited had any formal training on working within excavations and were unaware of the risks involved.

HSE guidance can be found at: [Excavations – Construction Safety topics – HSE](#)

Carrig Construction Services Limited, of Hunters Way, Lochwinnoch, Argyll, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) and Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £75,000 at Glasgow Sheriff Court on 28 August 2024.

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We seek to prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk)
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Farmer gives grandchildren rides in tractor: footage released

Video footage taken by a neighbour captured the moment a farmer allowed one of his grandchildren to illegally ride in his tractor and ultimately led to his conviction.

Howard Walters, 78, was given a 12 month community order after he was spotted with the child in the tractor cab as he fed cattle on his farm in South Wales.

Walters had already been issued with a prohibition notice by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in November 2020 after admitting to inspectors he allowed his pre-teen grandchildren to ride in his tractor. However, just two months later, he was filmed by his neighbour flagrantly breaching the terms of that notice.

A HSE inspector who investigated Mr Walters says the law is “very clear”. Children under 13 are specifically prohibited from driving or riding on or in any agricultural machine, including the tractor cab.

At the time of committing the offence, Walters, of Tirmynydd Farm in Birchgrove, Swansea, was already the subject of a suspended prison sentence for unrelated environmental offences. In a case that was heard on 27 August 2024 at Swansea Crown Court, he was fined £500 for breaching the terms of that sentence. As part of his community order, Walters must attend 25 days of rehabilitation.

Agriculture remains one of the most dangerous industries in Britain, with on average around 29 people killed each year. Being killed by vehicles remains the most significant cause of work related fatality over the last five years.

Unfortunately, children are among those deaths with it often being the case that they are family members, with many killed by farm vehicles.

How farmers can keep children safe:

- Children must not be allowed in the farm workplace (young children should enjoy outdoor space in a secure fenced area).
- Any access to the farm workplace by children under 16, for example for education, or knowledge / experience, must be planned and fully supervised by an adult not engaged in any work activity.
- Children under the age of 13 years are specifically prohibited from driving or riding on any agricultural machine. It is illegal.
- Properly trained, instructed, and supervised older children may, in tightly controlled circumstances, be able to help with some

straightforward low risk tasks.

Further detailed guidance about [child safety on farms and in agriculture](#) is available.

Howard Walters, of Tirmynydd Farm in Birchgrove, Swansea, pleaded guilty to breaching section 33(1)(g) Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. He was given a 12 month community order and ordered to pay £3,000 in costs.

HSE inspector Simon Breen said: “The law around children being allowed in the cabs of any agricultural vehicle is very clear. For any child to ride on agricultural machinery like a tractor is unsafe and illegal.

“The fact this farmer chose to ignore a prohibition notice for putting his grandchildren at risk is all the more staggering.

“We will take action against those who break the law.

“The solution is very simple – young children should never ride in agricultural vehicles.”

Notes to editors:

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. 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](#).

Woodworking company fined following collision death

A wood recycling company has been fined after an employee was killed when he was struck by a JCB wheel loader.

On 29 April 2019, Thomas Brooke was walking across the yard at John Brooke (Timber Treatments) Limited in Nottingham. A JCB wheel loader, with its bucket raised, was operating in the yard along with other vehicles, but as the shovel moved forward, it collided with Tom who died from his injuries.



Thomas Brooke

Tragically, Tom was working for the family company. At the time of the incident, Tom's son Rupert was aged four. His wife, Jessica Brooke described Tom as a kind and caring person who was dedicated to his family and was loved by everyone who knew him.

In a statement, she said: "Our hearts are broken. The pain and suffering of his loss has been immense, and no words can describe the impact that his loss has had; both Rupert and I have been forever changed.

"We were partners in crime, soulmates and best friends and together took on whatever challenges life threw in our direction."

Describing the relationship Tom had with Rupert, who is now nine, Jessica said: "From the moment that Rupert was born Tom was a natural father and Rupert and Tom had a very special bond. They were as thick as thieves, both being at their happiest when in the other's company. Tom was a brilliant role model to Rupert in every respect; he was Rupert's favourite person in the whole world and Rupert couldn't have wished for a better father.

"I grieve the future that we will never have but also, and particularly, that Tom will never see Rupert's future."



Family photo with Jessica and

Rupert.

The family have asked for their privacy to be respected at this difficult time.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that John Brooke (Timber Treatments) Limited did not properly organise its workplace to keep pedestrians safe. There were no control measures, such as physical barriers, to prevent pedestrians accessing areas where loading shovels, lorries, forklift trucks and 360 grabs operated. It failed to properly assess the risks from operating machinery with reduced visibility and did not properly train, instruct and monitor employees. [Click here to enter text.](#)

Every workplace must be safe for the people and vehicles using it and traffic routes must be suitable for the people and vehicles using them. HSE has [guidance on workplace transport](#) with advice on keeping traffic routes safe and separating people from vehicles.

On 20 August 2024, John Brooke (Timber Treatments) Limited of Fosse Way, Widmerpool, Nottingham pleaded guilty to breaching regulation 17(1) of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and section 33(1)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 at Nottingham Crown Court. They were fined £22,500 and agreed to pay costs of £44,227.28.

Speaking after the sentencing, HSE inspector Lindsay Bentley said: “This has been a very difficult case for all concerned. However, those in control of work have a responsibility to implement safe methods of working. Had simple measures been taken, this tragedy could have been prevented. “

This HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Kate Harney and supported by HSE paralegal officer Rebecca Forman.

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 5. Link to relevant guidance: [Workplace transport – HSE](#)
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East Sussex body fined as dog walkers struck by tree

A body that manages a major forest in East Sussex has been fined after a husband and wife were struck by a tree, with the latter suffering a traumatic brain injury.

Caroline Leafe, 70, was walking along a deer track in Ashdown Forest with her husband, Kenneth, and their dog, Monty, when the pair were hit by a silver birch tree that was being felled on 25 January 2023.

The Conservators of Ashdown Forest, the body that manages Ashdown Forest, had identified that the 12-metre tree was rotting and needed to be cut down.



Caroline Leafe and her dog Monty

The tree was located in the corner of Broadstone Car Park on Colemans Hatch Road in Upper Hartfield, East Sussex and surrounded by public footpaths, including the main pathway to the visitor centre.

The tree began to fall after a forest ranger made a sink cut with a chainsaw. As it was falling, the ranger noticed Mr and Mrs Leafe walking on the nearby deer track and attempted to warn them but it was too late.

Mrs Leafe suffered a traumatic brain injury, a fractured collar bone, several fractured ribs and a shoulder dislocation. She spent considerable time in hospital following the incident and continues to undergo physical and cognitive therapy several months later. She also had to surrender her driving licence.



The tree began to fall after a forest ranger made a sink

cut with a chainsaw

She said in a statement: "I have suffered a loss of independence and Ken has had to do a lot more support to me. I haven't been able to drive for nearly a year. The head injuries included speech problems and emotional problems.

"There were school children at the forest when we were there and we are relieved that our accident didn't happen to them. Ken and I hope an incident like this never happens again."

Mr Leafe suffered cuts and bruising.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found The Conservators of Ashdown Forest failed to identify the risk to members of the public from tree felling. This meant precautions, such as posting warning signs and using barriers and banksmen, were not implemented to prevent members of the public from accessing areas where the tree felling was taking place.



The tree was located in the corner of Broadstone Car Park

The Conservators of Ashdown Forest pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The trust was fined £8,000 and ordered to pay £3,589.80 in costs at Brighton Magistrates' Court on 12 August 2024.

HSE principal inspector Emma Stiles said: "Members of the public should be able to enjoy a walk in a forest without fear of being struck by a tree being felled. The guidance is clear on how to fell trees safely and this means keeping members of the public out of an area around the tree measuring two times the height of the tree.

"This can be achieved by various means including signs, barriers and banksmen. Given the high levels of public access around this tree, all of these precautions should have been taken."

This prosecution was brought by HSE senior enforcement lawyer Nathan Cook and supported by HSE paralegal officer Imogen Isaac.

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