

## Plasterer injured in fall on site before even starting due to lack of edge protection

A plasterer visiting the site of a new house construction to make preparations for starting work had a serious fall from height that put him in hospital for three weeks instead.

Dream house; nightmare for plasterer

The self-employed plasterer was due to start work on the project at Highfield Caldecott, Cambridge and dropped in on the site on 9th July 2018 to check on materials on his way back from another job.

He helped a labourer to move plaster boards from ground level to the first-floor landing. But as there was no edge protection he fell 2.4 metres from the landing. He spent three weeks in hospital and suffered fractures to his wrists ribs, eye sockets, skull and nose.

Peterborough Magistrates' Court heard last week that a subsequent investigation by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) found the work was not properly planned, managed or monitored by the plastering contractor, Michael Fletcher. There was a failure to plan for the right equipment, such as guard rails, to be provided. There was also a failure to manage the work to ensure that effective preventative and protective measures were put in place to control the risk of falling, and a failure to monitor the work effectively as the need for guard rails was not identified during routine checks.

Michael Fletcher of St Alban's Road, Cambridge pleaded guilty a breach under Regulation 6 (3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. He was fined £2,000 and ordered to pay full prosecution costs of £935.60.

HSE inspector Alison Ashworth said after the hearing: *"All work at height needs to be properly planned and the most effective preventative measures applied. Guard rails are a well-known and effective safeguard which could easily have prevented this incident."*



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