

Helping GB Work Well Campaign: Call for Firms to do More Pays Off

Employers publicly committing to making positive changes to their firms' health and safety culture has resulted in an estimated 300,000 workers reaping the benefits of improved health and safety practices.

Earlier this year, the [Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE), along with unions and industry leaders called for broader ownership of workplace health and safety by asking for public commitments from business.

The response from many of Great Britain's top businesses was so positive, with more than 100 organisations making commitments, HSE is launching an online community dedicated to inspiring business to share their commitment to Helping Great Britain Work Well.

The launch of the new web community will establish a social sharing network where companies and businesses can make their commitments, share their journey of improvement and help each other and encourage others follow in their footsteps.

Incalculable Rewards

HSE chair Martin Temple said: "Making a workplace commitment to health and safety is something that takes time, energy and passion, but the rewards for delivering on that commitment are incalculable."

"Sensible and proportionate health and safety prevents ill-health, death and injury in the workplace and is good for business and good for workers." It is estimated at least 300,000 workers have benefitted since the initiative was launched last year with companies introducing many schemes to benefit workers.

One example is Welsh Water which launched a 'Back to Health' scheme aimed to providing medical treatment to assist employees' recovery from illness or injury significantly faster than NHS provided treatment.

Also, construction firm Morgan Sindall committed to introducing 'engagement discussions' as part of its '100% Safe' cultural development programme, which has led to improved knowledge and understanding of health and safety practices.

By [James Evison](#) – SHP On-line

Retail Company and Construction Contractor Fined Over Safety Failings

Martin McColl Limited and JMS Retail Concepts Limited have both been sentenced today after two members of the public tripped and fell over construction work outside a convenience store in Dinas Powys, Vale of Glamorgan.

Cardiff Magistrates' Court heard that during the three-day construction of a concrete disabled ramp in January 2016, two members of the public were injured whilst attempting to enter the store. On 12th January an elderly member of the public tripped over the construction work breaking her wrist, hitting her head and suffering severe bruising. The following day, the 13th January 2016 another elderly member of public fell from the partially constructed ramp breaking his collar bone and suffering severe bruising.

An investigation by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) found that construction work which was undertaken while the store was open, meant customers were required to walk through the construction site to enter and exit the store. It would have been reasonably practicable to close the store during the construction of the ramp and install barriers and signs to prevent access by members of the public.

Martin McColl Limited of Ashwells Road, Brentwood, Essex pleaded guilty on the first day of a two day trial after initially pleading not guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and have been fined £600,000 and ordered to pay costs of £11,520.

JMS Retail Concepts Limited of Stump Lane, Chorley, Lancashire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and have been fined £40,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,038.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Gemma Pavey said "These incidents could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

Commercial clients and companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

Calls for Urgent Action After Anxiety & Depression Levels Rise by a Third

Calls for an urgent review of workplace practices have been made following alarming statistics that reveal moderate to extreme anxiety in the workplace has risen by a third since 2013.

The call by the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) follows new research the rise to be most extreme in part-time workers, who have seen stress levels rise by 33.6% since 2013.

Anxiety and depression rates have increased less for full time workers – rising from 7% to 10% over the same period.

Percent reporting moderate to extreme anxiety or depression

	Full time workers	Part time workers	All workers	Whole Population
June 2013	6.85	8.66	7.28	11.95
December 2013	7.01	8.93	7.47	12.07
July 2014	7.24	9.25	7.72	12.27
January 2015	7.28	9.62	7.84	12.27
July 2015	7.43	9.91	8.02	12.44
January 2016	7.54	9.98	8.11	12.51
July 2016	7.84	10.44	8.45	12.70
Feb/March 2017	8.89	11.57	9.51	13.74

UKCP is now calling for an urgent review due to the data.

Extremely Worrying

Chief Executive of the Council, Professor Sarah Niblock said, “It is extremely worrying. Ministers must realise that the crisis is here, and the crisis is now. “The Government promised a review of workplace practices and mental health back in January – but we’re still waiting for this to materialise. This work must be sped up, as workers cannot wait.”

The figures come from analysis of the GP Patient Survey completed by more than 400,000 full or part time workers.

Prof Niblock added: “Compared with the potential cost to the economy in lost productivity, high quality psychotherapies are cheap.

““This World Mental Health Day, UKCP are urging the Government to invest more to improve mental health services both within the NHS and through local authority projects.

“We call for better access to therapy, better quality therapy and ring-fencing of the mental health budget.” said Prof Niblock.

By [James Evison](#) – SHP On-line

Principal Contractor and Site Manager Sentenced Following Asbestos Exposure at a Construction Site

The principal contractor and site manager of a construction site in Derby city centre have been sentenced after workers were exposed to asbestos during refurbishment work.

Derby Magistrates’ Court heard how, on or before 5 January 2017, at the St Peters Churchyard site, labourers removed asbestos insulating board (AIB) ceiling panels from a store room, work which should have been completed by a licensed asbestos removal contractor under fully controlled conditions.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that M&S Developments (Bemrose Court) Limited were the Principal Contractor for the site and Adam Campbell was the site manager (operating as Kynersley Management Services Limited). Work was taking place to convert the former office buildings into apartments.

An asbestos refurbishment survey completed prior to construction work starting clearly indicated that the lower ground floor store room contained an asbestos insulating board (AIB) ceiling. During construction work this AIB ceiling was accidentally damaged and the site manager instructed two young labourers to remove approximately 4-6 square metres of it. Suitable asbestos control measures were not in place and the workers involved were not trained in asbestos removal.

Following the involvement of HSE in January 2017, a licensed asbestos removal contractor was brought in to clean the area. Asbestos containing floor tiles located around the site were also identified as at risk of damage from the construction work and arrangements were made with the principal contractor for these to be removed under controlled conditions by trained staff.

The investigation found that the principal contractor and their site manager failed to suitably manage the site asbestos containing materials. They failed to ensure that the asbestos containing materials (ACM) identified in the asbestos refurbishment survey were removed prior to any potential for disturbance during the construction work and the site manager failed to respond appropriately once the AIB ceiling had been accidentally damaged in the lower ground floor store room.

M&S Developments (Bemrose Court) Limited pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £9,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,336. Kynersley Management Services Limited pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,531.66.

Adam Campbell pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 via Section 37 in his role as a Director of Kynersley Management Services Limited. He was given a community order to carry out 120 hours unpaid work and was also ordered to pay costs of £1,531.66.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Andrew Bowker said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by the duty holders simply carrying out correct asbestos control measures and safe working practices.

"Companies and individual site managers should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action including prosecution against those that fall below the required standard for managing asbestos containing materials during refurbishment work. Most types of asbestos containing material work (ACM) require a licensed removal contractor with suitably trained and licensed workers."

Construction Company Fined After Worker Killed

A construction company has been fined after an employee died after falling over 6 metres.

Plymouth Magistrates' Court heard how an employee of C & R Construction (SW) Ltd suffered fatal injuries after falling whilst carrying out work installing roof sheets on a new agricultural building.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident, which occurred on the 11 May 2016, found that the company failed to provide suitable edge protection, failed to ensure there was a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks from the use of the edge protection and failed to ensure those installing the edge protection and supervising the work had received adequate training.

C & R Construction (SW) Ltd of Lower Park, Crediton, Devon pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 2 (1) of The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and have been fined £100,000 and ordered to pay costs of £11,060.40.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Kate Leftly said: "Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work related fatalities in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known." "If suitable edge protection had been installed, the tragic death of this employee could have been prevented."

Civil Engineering Company Fined After Death of Employee

A civil engineering company has been sentenced for safety breaches after father of three Darren Richardson suffered fatal crush injuries.

Sheffield Crown Court heard in December 2014 RMB Contractors Ltd were working on laying a new concrete slab at Ballast Phoenix Ltd, Claywheels Lane, Sheffield.

During ground preparation an old cable duct had to be dug out before the concrete could be laid. A 21-tonne tracked excavator was being used to dig out the duct, parked behind it was a stationary dumper truck.

As the excavator was working back towards the dumper Mr Richardson was crushed between the two pieces of plant. Mr Richardson was pronounced dead at the scene.

RMB Contractors Ltd of Ripley Road Belper in Derbyshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and has been fined £75,000 and ordered to pay £24,482.80 costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Medani Close said: "Back to back plant activities should be avoided as both pedestrians and vehicles could be put at a higher risk of coming into contact with each other.

"If the two separate work activities cannot be avoided, then the area should be safeguarded and effectively managed with segregation in place, for example using fencing or barriers to delineate the 'no go' areas for pedestrians."

Useful Web Links/Information

- HSE Website www.hse.gov.uk
- Institution of Occupational Safety and Health www.iosh.co.uk
- www.gov.uk (The Business Link website has a tool to help small businesses get a summary of the legislation that is relevant to them (not just on health and safety))
- www.hse.gov.uk/workplacehealth/index.htm (Free and impartial advice for businesses of 5-250 people)
- www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm (HSE Asbestos Information)