

A BRISTOL-based construction company has been sentenced for carrying out unlicensed asbestos work.

Bristol Magistrates' Court heard how, during July 2017, a project was undertaken to refurbish The Cherry Tree pub at Oldland Common, Bristol, into eight flats. T.W. Parker (Building & Groundworks) Ltd was commissioned to conduct the works.

A survey of the site on 13 July found waste materials, including asbestos insulation board, were left lying outside the building. Asbestos containing materials, which would require a licence to remove, were also found to be present amongst the debris and in the building structure.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the removal work was initiated under the control of T.W. Parker (Building & Groundworks) Ltd and was done prior to the refurbishment survey. Mr Parker had been advised that a refurbishment survey was to be undertaken before works commenced. He failed to request information from the client with regards to the potential presence of asbestos containing materials, despite some material being marked as containing asbestos, and failed to use a licensed contractor to undertake the removal works.

T.W. Parker (Building & Groundworks) Ltd of Hicks Common Road, Winterbourne pleaded guilty to breaching Section 5, 8(1) and 16 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. The company has been fined £7,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,264.60.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ian Whittles said: "The dangers associated with asbestos are well-known and a wealth of advice and guidance is freely available from the HSE website.

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