



## **Roofs (working on) Standards**

### **Contents**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Constructing the roof</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Tiling the roof</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Tiling dormers</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Fitting solar panels</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Monitoring</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Further reading</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Tool Box Talk</b>	<b>8</b>

### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of these Roofs (working on) standards is to give guidance to site management and those that work on roofs or construct roofs for new build properties.

Working on roofs cannot be avoided during the construction of new properties; carpenters, roof tilers and solar panel engineers etc. have no alternative but to work on the roof structure. All roof work is classed as working at height must be appropriately risk assessed by the work height assessment and contractor RAMS. Suitable supervision must also be in place by site management and contractor supervisors when anyone is carrying out work at height on roofs.

### **2. Constructing the roof**

On most occasions the roof structure will be constructed by carpenters, they then install the trusses and the spandrel panels.

Prior to roof construction work commencing site management must ensure that the following safety measures are in place:

- The scaffold platform is within the 7 day inspection requirements;
- The scaffold platform is level all round;
- The scaffold is fitted with brick guards;
- The scaffold working platforms are no more than 450mm from the wall plate;
- There is no fall risk of greater than 900mm;
- Safety decking or a scaffold birdcage is in place internally;
- A loading bay is available;
- Table/gable lifts are installed, with internal hand rails fitted, which are high enough not to impinge the operative when they need to load out on the opposite side from the loading bay;
- The working at height assessment is being followed; and
- Rubbish chutes or skip bays are available to safely remove waste materials.

The carpenter contractors must ensure that they have the following in place:

- A set of RAMS is on site that the operatives have read and signed;
- The operatives are experienced and qualified;
- Supervision is in place;
- Crane slingers and banksmen are trained and qualified;

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- A lifting plan has been written by an Appointed Person and that a lift supervisor is controlling the crane lift; and
- Operatives are trained to use nail guns and that they have the correct PPE.

### 3. Tiling the roof

On most occasions tiling the roof will be done by sub-contract roof tilers, they will install the roof batten, felt and roof tile components.

Prior to tiling of the roof commencing site management must ensure that the following safety measures are in place (in addition to the measures set out for roof construction):

- Up and over gable edge protection is in place; and
- The safety deck or a scaffold birdcage remains in position until the roof has been fully felted, battened and loaded out with the tiles. Best practice would keep this in place until the roof is fully completed.

If there are delays in tiling the roof then the safety decking or birdcage can be removed before the roof is fully completed, provided arrangements are made to ensure fall protection is in place when roofers are completing the roof work.

It is not usually practical to reinstall the safety decking or birdcage once work has started inside a plot. Therefore, to protect the roofers from a fall, a safety system Cover Safe, can be hired from [Oxford Safety](#). This is a trellis system that sits on top of the rafters. When it is initially hired, a trainer will attend site to train the site management and the onsite installers. The Cover Safe system must be installed while the safety decking or birdcage is in place as fall protection for the installers.

The only stipulation with this system is that the ceiling must not be plaster boarded, due to the securing straps needing to go around the ceiling joists. Once the roofers have finished loading out or tiling, the system can be removed from inside the plot using hop ups.

The roof tiling contractors must ensure that they have the following in place:

- A set of RAMS is on site that the operatives have read and signed;
- The operatives are experienced and qualified;
- Supervision is in place;
- The battens are fixed to rafters set at centres not more than 600 mm apart;
- The battens are a minimum size of 50 mm x 25 mm (maximum span 600 mm);
- The battens are at least 1.2 m long to make sure they span a minimum of three trusses;
- The battens are fixed only with the recommended nails;
- The operatives never deliberately walk on the battens mid-span between the trusses;
- The operatives always walk on the rafter line when installing the tiles and slates;
- If nail guns are used then the operatives must be trained and have the correct PPE;
- The operatives wear correct PPE and never wear training shoes on roofs, safety footwear and hard hats must always be worn;
- When cutting roof tiles water suppression must be used in conjunction with an FFP3 face fit tested mask by the person cutting and anyone in the cut zone;
- Fuel cans are not permitted on the scaffold, refuelling of saws must be carried out on the ground away from the structure;
- Sacrificial plywood used to prevent scaffold boards being cut or damaged from disk cutters; and
- Waste roof battens cut down small enough as not to block the rubbish chutes, or longer pieces place on a pallet and removed by the telehandler.

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#### 4. Tiling dormers

Most of the dormers come pre tiled; however, occasionally it is required to fit dormers that are not tiled. In this case a scaffold platform must be erected for the roofers to work safely and prevent a fall from height, this will need a design from the scaffolders. The roofers will need to include in their RAMS on how they are going to carry out this task safely.

#### 5. Fitting solar panels

These will be fitted by a specialist contractor, with site management ensuring all the general safety measures for constructing the roof is in place. The contractor must work in accordance with their RAMS.

#### 6. Monitoring

Due to the higher risks involved with working on roofs it is essential that such work is closely monitored by the relevant contractor and site management on a daily basis. The Group HS&E department will monitor compliance with these standards during routine HS&E inspections.

#### 7. Further reading

Refer to HSMS [Guidance](#) – Roof Truss Installation

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg33.pdf>  
<https://www.tra.org.uk/>

#### 8. Tool Box Talk

Refer to HSMS [TBT](#) – W@H Roofs

VERSION ISSUED	Date
<u>Version 1</u> Sections 1,2,3, 4,5,6,7,8	08.11.2021
<u>Version 2</u> Section 3 – change that decking/ bird cage to remain in place until loaded out with tiles and best practice to keep in place until the roof is fully completed	18.11.22
<u>Version 3</u> Section 3 – added Oxford Safety trellis option	30.01.23
<u>Version 4</u> Roof Truss Installation guidance added	01.01.24

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