

**Information Services**  
**Technical Information Memorandum**  
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**Home Owner Risked Residents Lives**

Firefighters were stunned when they arrived at a Lancashire care home to find most of its residents were unaware there was a blaze downstairs, a court heard.

Asjed Rafiq of Watling Street Road, Fulwood, Preston, was ordered to pay more than £9,000 for a series of fire safety breaches at his Tudor House Care Home.

Preston Magistrates Court issued a stern warning that anyone endangering the lives of their tenants would be severely punished. The court heard that on 5th April last year a chippan fire broke out in the ground floor of the building when one of the tenants fell asleep. Fire crews were called to the scene to discover six other tenants in upstairs flats were oblivious to the fire which was spreading downstairs. Watch manager Gary Kiyani noticed that the fire alarms had failed to sound and ordered an audit on the premises, which revealed a number of potentially life-threatening breaches of fire safety regulations under the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005 (RRFSO 2005).

Owner Rafiq pleaded guilty to endangering the lives of his tenants by failing to provide an adequate risk assessment, emergency exit routes and lighting and fire fighting equipment. He also admitted that he had failed to properly protect the electrical intake cupboard from fire. He also pleaded guilty to failing to provide and maintain a fire alarm, which revealed had been disconnected six weeks earlier.

The fire service entered the premises four minutes after the call, had it taken them any longer or had the fire spread quicker then clearly lives would have been placed at considerable risk. Mr Rafiq, representing himself said "Since this fire had occurred he had learned his lesson, and all work had been done to a high standard and that now in place was regular checks on his premises. Mr Rafiq was ordered to pay £6,000 fines and £3,327 costs but warned the fine could have been considerably more had he not acted quickly to rectify the breaches.

The court warned "All landlords in Preston should heed what had happened and should realise that they have not got to put their tenant's lives at risk and that all landlords who operate premises wherever they may be should ensure they familiarise themselves with the regulations of the RRFSO 2005 and ensure that premises comply.

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