



A Swindon man has been given a two-year suspended prison sentence after pleading guilty to stealing £40,000 worth of scaffolding from his former employer and fraudulently claiming wages. Paul House, 53, of Grange Drive, Swindon, was sentenced at Swindon Crown Court today (Wednesday 20 March) after pleading guilty to theft of scaffolding and fraud by false representation. The offences relate to his employment at Combined Scaffolding Ltd, in Swindon, where he worked as a Contracts Manager. Between March 2016 and March 2017 House stole large amounts of scaffolding in order to set-up his own company. He then used this scaffolding and the staff from Combined Scaffolding Ltd to run his own business; secretly defrauding the company he worked for. House was given a two-year prison sentence, suspended for two years. He will also be placed on a five-month electronic-tag curfew, as well as having to complete 200 hours of unpaid work and pay £22,210 in compensation. His crimes were only detected when the company directors saw scaffolding belonging to them at building sites, they had no knowledge of. Det Sgt Adam Fleetwood-Brown, from Melksham CID, said: "The directors of Combined Scaffolding Ltd trusted Paul House to maintain and develop their business. "However, from March 2016 he secretly set up his own business, started to steal their property and use it for his own gain. He also used staff belonging to Combined Scaffolding Ltd to help in his cause to take business away from the company who trusted him."

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