

In partnership with



# IT'S TIME TO STEP IN...

...and stop the sale of unsafe ladders

## Phase 2 Telescopic Ladder Surveillance Survey

...the UK government and online platforms must step in to stop the sale of dangerous imported telescopic ladders.

The Ladder Association calls for urgent action.

ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up

April 2023

### IN THE REPORT

INTRODUCTION Background and introduction	Page 1	
LATEST TESTING The Results	2	
THE ONGOING PROBLEM Comparison to earlier testing What needs to change?	4 5	
MARKET ANALYSIS RE-CAP About the Ladder Association UK ladder market snapshot	6 7	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Appendix 1 Test Results Summary	8	
Appendix 2 Detailed results and photographs of testing	10	
Appendix 3 Detailed explanation of testing	16	
Appendix 4 Guidance for Consumers	21	
		┝
	INTRODUCTION Background and introduction LATEST TESTING The Results THE ONGOING PROBLEM Comparison to earlier testing What needs to change? MARKET ANALYSIS RE-CAP About the Ladder Association UK ladder market snapshot ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Appendix 1 Test Results Summary Appendix 2 Detailed results and photographs of testing Appendix 3 Detailed explanation of testing Appendix 4 Guidance for Consumers	INTPODUCTIONPage Background and introduction1LATEST TESTING The Results2CMEST TESTING The Results2THE ONGOING PROBLEM Comparison to earlier testing What needs to change?4Comparison to earlier testing What needs to change?4MARKET ANALYSIS RE-CAP About the Ladder Association UK ladder market snapshot6DITIONAL INFORMATION Appendix 1 Test Results Summary8Appendix 2 Detailed results and photographs of testing10Appendix 3 Detailed explanation of testing16Appendix 4 Guidance for Consumers21

### 01 INTRODUCTION

The Ladder Association has been highlighting the real and serious issue of the availability and use of substandard imported telescopic ladders on the UK market for many years.

Despite ongoing campaigning, there is still not enough being done to remove these unsafe products from sale and take appropriate enforcement action against rogue manufacturers and suppliers. The Ladder Association calls for urgent action.

The Ladder Association firmly believes that importers, manufacturers, suppliers and retailers should not only have a duty of care, but a legal responsibility, to only place safe products on the market for consumers to use.

Consumers place trust in manufacturers and suppliers to only supply safe products, but our previous research has proven this is not always the case.

The boom in online stores and marketplaces has further compounded the issue, as consumers assume proper safety checks have already been carried out before the product is placed on the market for sale. But we know that too many of these e-commerce corporations take little or no responsibility for the quality or safety of the products sold on their platforms and place the responsibility for safety firmly with the seller.

The result? Thousands of unsuspecting consumers are buying and using ladders that are unsafe, non-compliant, and in worst cases, deadly. This must stop.

#### Phase 1 - Partnership Surveillance Activity

In September 2021, the Ladder Association, in partnership with the East of England Trading Standards Association (EETSA), Suffolk Trading Standards Imports Team and the UKASaccredited Test & Research Centre, embarked on a telescopic ladder surveillance study. A total of 17 telescopic leaning ladders were tested as part of that first phase study:

- 8 samples selected and supplied by East of England Trading Standards Association (EETSA);
- 3 samples detained at port by Suffolk Trading Standards Imports Team;
- 6 samples selected and supplied by the Ladder Association.

In May 2022, the Ladder Association released the findings of that study in the 'Step Up to Safe Ladders' Report. The report can be downloaded from the Ladder Association website: https://ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up/

The outcome of the investigation uncovered some very concerning results; 4 out of 5 of the telescopic ladders tested failed the most safety critical tests, were non-compliant and, in the majority of cases, were unsafe to use.

Worse still, some manufacturers of these unsafe products consciously misled consumers by claiming they did meet the product standard.

We were unable to disclose the names of the retailers and brands as some of them may have been subject to Trading Standards legal action, which could not be compromised.

#### Phase 2 - The Ladder Association Re-Testing

The Ladder Association has re-tested the 6 samples we selected and supplied for the Phase 1 study, following identical testing procedures against the same samples (or the closest currently available on the market).

The results of this Phase 2 surveillance study show that the earlier failures were not 'one-offs'. We are also able to publicly release the names of the products and sellers.

### 02 THE RESULTS

The latest Ladder Association telescopic ladder surveillance study, which re-tested the 6 Ladder Association samples (or the closest products available), from our May 2022 study 'Step Up to Safe Ladders' has found that:



Telescopic ladders that do not meet the requirements of the current product standard, even if used correctly, can significantly compromise user safety, leading to injury or at worst, a fatality.

The table below shows a summary of the 6 products re-tested in this follow-up study. An extended summary of test results can be found in Appendix 1, with detailed results of tests and product photographs in Appendix 2.

	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4	Sample 5	Sample 6
	LA #1	LA #2	LA #3	LA #4	LA #5	LA #6
Brand	Arcohome	Nestling	Tough Master	Unbranded	Unbranded	Not disclosed <sup>1</sup>
Market- place	Amazon	Amazon	eBay	OnBuy.com	eBay	Not disclosed
Shows CE Mark?	CE & UKCA on box	CE & UKCA on box	No	CE on box	No	No
States EN 131?	Yes - on product labels	Yes - on product labels	Yes - on box packaging	No	Yes - on markings & instructions but manually crossed out	Yes - both EN 131 and 3rd party certification on box packaging
RESULT	FAIL	FAIL	FAIL	FAIL	FAIL	FAIL

#### **Product Selection**

A total of 6 telescopic leaning ladders were re-tested as part of this follow-up product surveillance survey.

All products were selected and supplied by the Ladder Association. All samples were obtained anonymously from a range of sources.

While 1 sample was re-purchased from a physical store, the other 5 samples were bought from two of the world's best-known online retailers Amazon and eBay, and popular online marketplace OnBuy.com. This is a true and accurate reflection of how these products reach the market.

#### **Scope of Product Testing**

Telescopic leaning ladders should be produced in accordance with EN 131-6, which was last revised in April 2019. You can learn more about ladder standards in the 'Guidance' section on the Ladder Association website:

#### https://ladderassociation.org.uk/standards

All 6 of the ladders selected fall under the product standard EN 131-6.<sup>1</sup>

The standard has requirements for:

- · Functional and dimensional requirements;
- Strength tests;
- Deflection tests;
- Durability (cyclic) tests;
- Markings and user instructions.

This study again carried out limited scope testing of each sample, focussing on the key strength tests and dimensional characteristics. These are the most safety critical tests. If a product is found to be substandard based on these tests, it could lead to complete product failure whilst in normal use, and cause the user to fall from height.

The tests were performed in the same specific sequence as Phase 1, as listed in Annex A of EN 131-6, working through the tests with deflection requirements before moving onto the overload tests.

The limited scope of tests from EN 131-6 repeated for this project were:

- Clause 4 Functional dimensions
- Clause 5 Requirements
- Clause 6.2 Ladder preconditioning
- Clause 6.5 Lateral deflection
- Clause 6.4 Bending test of the stiles
- Clause 6.3 Strength test
- Clause 6.12 Asymmetrical bending test
- Clause 6.7.2 Vertical load on rungs
- Clause 6.7.4 Rung strength test in the unlocked position
- Clause 6.7.6 Pull out test of rungs

### A detailed explanation of all tests can be found in Appendix 3.



<sup>1</sup> British Standards Institute – BS EN 131-6 – Part 6: Telescopic ladders Image shows product sample included in our testing programme.

### 03 COMPARISON TO EARLIER TESTING

Phase 2 test results highlight this is not a new issue.

All 6 Ladder Association samples again failed to pass the required safety critical tests designed to keep users safe.

5 out of 6 ladders tested had product or packaging labelling that stated the products complied with EN 131. Our tests however proved that none of the samples complied with the product standard, showing no improvement has taken place since Phase 1 testing in 2021. The same sellers continue to sell the same unsafe products with little or no concern for consumer safety.

Half of the samples were 'CE marked'. Despite what consumers may think, ladders cannot be CE marked. The presence of a recognised quality mark on the packaging and/or product gives consumers a false sense of security that the telescopic ladder is safe to use.

The table below shows a comparison of this study to previous tests.

Study	Sample Size	Unsafe	Non- Compliant	Shows CE Mark (as % of sample)	Stated EN 131	Complied to EN 131	% Fraudulent EN 131 Claims	% Products Failed Testing
Phase 1 - All products	17	14	14	3 (18%)	13	3	77%	82%
Phase 1 - Ladder Association samples specifically	6	6	6	3 (50%)	5	0	100%	100%
Phase 2 - Ladder Association samples	6	6	6	3 (50%)	5	0	100%	100%

### 04 WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

It is clear that the issue of unsafe telescopic ladders available for sale on the UK market is neither new nor improving.

Whilst we acknowledge that some importers, manufacturers, suppliers, retailers and sellers do take their responsibilities seriously, there are a significant number who do not. In those instances, they are misleading consumers and ignoring their legal requirements by showing a complete disregard for product and consumer safety.

Products bought from online marketplaces can be sold directly to consumers from anywhere in the world. Some of our ladder samples arrived in the UK, via shipping containers, already marked with fulfilment courier barcodes, ready for dispatch to the customer from a distribution centre.

There is no quality inspection on arrival. There is no 'importer' undertaking their legal duties in the UK. In these cases, the first person to look at the product after it left the factory, is the consumer when they open the box - who assumes and expects the product to be safe to use.

As we have seen in our studies, markings on the box, the product or the website listing can be meaningless, as in most cases, the product was never designed to comply from the outset.

Online marketplaces pass the responsibility for product safety to the seller. But, if the seller does not care and has no threat of legal consequence due to being virtually anonymous and based overseas, our current legal framework is allowing people's lives to be put at risk.

The Ladder Association believes that Government must step in urgently to make regulatory changes to hold suppliers and online platforms accountable for ensuring the products they sell are compliant and safe to use.

#### **Consumer trust in product safety**

- Only 17% of consumers consider safety when purchasing a product;
- Consumers were consistently found to trust and believe that an effective system is in place in the UK;
- There is a common assumption amongst consumers that manufacturers would not risk reputational damage by making unsafe products and that retailers would carry out due diligence to sell safe products;
- Consumers sought reassurance that central government are providing an overall leadership role in setting and upholding safety standards;
- Overall, consumers expect the government to show strong leadership in setting and upholding legal safety requirements.

### **Regulatory Action**

### The Ladder Association calls for the following action to be taken:

- The Government immediately release the long-awaited Product Safety Review and address the sale of dangerous goods from online marketplaces once and for all;
- Introduce regulatory change to hold suppliers and online platforms accountable for selling safe products;
- 3) Widen the powers of the Office for Product Safety & Standards (OPSS) to obligate online marketplaces to monitor ladders offered for sale on their platforms and stipulate that all products listed meet the General Product Safety Regulations 2005, have appropriate certification, and are safe for use;
- Empower the OPSS to take representative enforcement action against the online marketplaces;
- 5) Strengthen consumers' rights to bring civil actions against the online marketplaces.

5

### 05 ABOUT THE LADDER ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1947, the Ladder Association is the not-for-profit lead industry body dedicated to promoting the safe use of portable ladders.

Members include manufacturers, rental companies, training providers and ladder users. Separately, these businesses innovate and compete. But when it comes to advancing user safety, they all work together.

Membership of the Ladder Association shows clear commitment to adhere to the Ladder Association Code of Practice which puts safety at the heart of everything members do:

- Ladder Association Manufacturers only make ladders that comply with EN 131 (or international equivalents) and those products must be certified by a third-party Conformity Assessment Body and be subject to ongoing surveillance;
- Ladder Association Suppliers only supply ladders that are certified to EN 131 (or international equivalents);
- Ladder Association Training Providers conduct training in approved centres, using Ladder Association trained instructors, and only use equipment that complies to EN 131.

The Ladder Association works closely with a number of organisations to support codes of good practice, minimum standards for equipment, trained and qualified operatives and education in the work at height sector. These include the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), the British Standards Institution (BSI) and other National Standards Bodies, the Access Industry Forum (AIF) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). The Ladder Association has spearheaded a number of hugely successful ladder safety campaigns, including our award-winning 'Get a Grip' initiative, which promoted a very clear message "If it's right to use a ladder, use the right ladder and get trained to use it safely."

In 2022, the Ladder Association released the 'Step Up to Safe Ladders' Report to shine a light on the very real dangers of poor-quality telescopic ladders on the market, and raise awareness of the issues.

The Ladder Association currently offers five training courses delivered through a network of audited and approved training centres:

- Ladder & Stepladder User;
- · Ladder & Stepladder Inspection;
- Ladder & Stepladder Combined Use and Inspection;
- Steps & Step Stools for Users;
- Ladders for Managers.

In addition to administering the LadderCard training scheme, the Ladder Association publishes safety guidance, Code of Practice and technical notes - all free to download from our website https://ladderassociation.org.uk

Ladders are an everyday tool in homes and workplaces across the world, allowing millions of people to work at height quickly and easily. They're a versatile and vital piece of equipment, that can be used for a whole range of jobs.

Working at height can be risky enough, without the additional danger of unsafe equipment – every 11 minutes in the UK, someone attends A&E after sustaining an injury involving a ladder<sup>1</sup>. We know that a fall from height can cause life changing injury, and in some cases, death.

The Ladder Association wants everyone who climbs a ladder to come back down safely.

...too many people still fall from ladders, and the consequences of these falls can be life-changing, for both the injured party and their families.

The Ladder Association wants everyone who climbs a ladder to come back down safely and will continue to root out unsafe ladders, one step at a time.

Peter Bennett OBE, Executive Director, The Ladder Association

-//

### 06 UK LADDER MARKET SNAPSHOT

 The Ladder Association estimates that the UK ladder market is worth in excess of £124 million per annum<sup>1</sup>.

 Based on an average price of £80.00 per ladder, this equates to approximately 1.55 million ladders being sold in the UK each year<sup>1</sup>.

That's one ladder every 20 seconds!

 It is estimated that over a million UK businesses and 10 million workers are estimated to carry out work involving some form of work at height every year<sup>2</sup>.





### APPENDIX 1 TEST RESULTS

	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4	Sample 5	Sample 6
	LA #1	LA #2	LA #3	LA #4	LA #5	LA #6
Brand	Arcohome	Nestling	Tough Master	Unbranded	Unbranded	Not disclosed <sup>2</sup>
Marketplace	Amazon	Amazon	eBay	OnBuy.com	eBay	Not disclosed
Seller	Estero (Sunhoo Trade Co Ltd)	Derikee Ltd	Compare the Tools <sup>1</sup>	Beautylark (Junan Ltd)	Benmotor2015	Not disclosed
Product Code	B089Y4QPL6	B010L44DXE	403662024096	P6NW659	233930930304	Not disclosed
Length	4.5m	3.8m	3.8m	6.2m	3.8m	3.27m
Shows CE Mark?	CE & UKCA on box	CE & UKCA on box	No	CE on box	No	No
States EN 131?	Yes - on product labels	Yes - on product labels	Yes - on box packaging	No	Yes - on markings and instructions but manually crossed out	Yes - both EN 131 and 3rd party certification on box packaging
EN 131-6 Clauses:	EN 131-6 Clauses:					
4 - Functional dimensions	Fail	Fail	Pass	Fail	Fail	Pass
5 - Requirements	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass
6.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Fail	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
6.5 - Lateral deflection	Fail	Fail	Pass	Fail	Fail	Pass
6.4 - Bending test of stiles	Fail	Fail	Pass	Fail	Fail	Pass
6.3 - Strength test	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass
6.12 - Asymmetrical bending test	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	Pass
6.7.2 - Vertical load on rungs	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	Pass
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	N/T	Pass
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass
OVERALL RESULT	FAIL	FAIL	FAIL	FAIL	FAIL	FAIL

Key: Pass = Met requirements, Fail = Did not meet requirements, N/T = Not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test

<sup>1</sup> Since our testing occurred, we have noted that this seller is no longer selling telescopic ladders

<sup>2</sup> Product and seller details not disclosed as the sample was subject to a minor fail during ladder preconditioning test only

N.B. Detailed results and photographs of testing can be found in Appendix 2

8

### APPENDIX 2 DETAILED RESULTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF TESTING

#### LA #1 - 4.5m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	Fail	361mm rung pitch, no 35mm clearance to wall
5 - Requirements	Fail	rungs anywhere, no safe closing, b2 51% of requirement
6.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Fail	bent at top, wouldn't close
6.5 - Lateral deflection	Fail	overlimit 172%
6.4 - Bending test of stiles	Fail	overlimit 146%
6.3 - Strength test	Fail	stile buckled before non-professional load applied
6.12 - Asymmetrical bending test	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.2 - Vertical load on rungs	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Fail	separated multiple rung joints on first test
OVERALL RESULT	FAIL	





EN 131-6 Clause 6.4 - Bending test of stiles



#### LA #2 - 3.8m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	Fail	no 35mm clearance to wall
5 - Requirements	Fail	rungs anywhere, no safe closing, b2 56% of requirement
6.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Pass	
6.5 - Lateral deflection	Fail	overlimit 134%
6.4 - Bending test of stiles	Fail	overlimit 143%
6.3 - Strength test	Fail	stile buckled before non-professional load applied
6.12 - Asymmetrical bending test	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.2 - Vertical load on rungs	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Fail	separated multiple rung joints on first test
OVERALL RESULT	FAIL	





Model:KME 1038



EN 131-6 Clause 4.2 and 4.3 - Top rung clearance



EN 131-6 Clause 6.5 - Lateral deflection





#### LA #3 - 3.8m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	Pass	
5 - Requirements	Fail	rungs anywhere, separation by hand
6.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Fail	after test, rungs could be separated by hand
6.5 - Lateral deflection	Pass	
6.4 - Bending test of stiles	Pass	
6.3 - Strength test	Fail	9th rung section jammed
6.12 - Asymmetrical bending test	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.2 - Vertical load on rungs	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Fail	technicality – supported test loads, but requirement is that it operates correctly. As it had jammed on earlier test, it fails this requirement
OVERALL RESULT	FAIL	







Stile tube deformation preventing closure





#### LA #4 - 6.2m

OVERALL RESULT	FAIL	
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Fail	separated multiple rung joints on first test
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.2 - Vertical load on rungs	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.12 - Asymmetrical bending test	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.3 - Strength test	Fail	stile buckled before non-professional load applied
6.4 - Bending test of stiles	Fail	overlimit 232%
6.5 - Lateral deflection	Fail	overlimit 237%
6.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Fail	lock ejection, rung movement, permanent deformation, etc
5 - Requirements	Fail	rungs anywhere, no safe closing, b2 45% of requirement
4 - Functional dimensions	Fail	392mm rung pitch, no 35mm clearance to wall
EN 131-6 Clauses: 0		Comment











Typical rang separation

Buick (

#### LA #5 - 3.8m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	Fail	no 35mm clearance to wall
5 - Requirements	Fail	rungs anywhere, no safe closing, b2 55% of requirement
6.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Fail	lock ejection, rear of 9th rung bracket ruptured (cracked) and others
6.5 - Lateral deflection	Fail	overlimit 122%
6.4 - Bending test of stiles	Fail	overlimit 175%
6.3 - Strength test	Fail	stile buckled before non-professional load applied
6.12 - Asymmetrical bending test	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.2 - Vertical load on rungs	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	N/T	not tested due to structural failure of ladder in earlier test
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Fail	separated multiple rung joints on first test
OVERALL RESULT	FAIL	



#### LA #6 - 3.27m

EN 131-6 Clauses:		Comment
4 - Functional dimensions	Pass	
5 - Requirements	Pass	
6.2 - Ladder preconditioning	Fail	rear of 9th rung bracket ruptured (cracked)
6.5 - Lateral deflection	Pass	
6.4 - Bending test of stiles	Pass	
6.3 - Strength test	Pass	
6.12 - Asymmetrical bending test	Pass	
6.7.2 - Vertical load on rungs	Pass	
6.7.4 - Rungs strength test in the unlocked position	Pass	
6.7.6 - Pull out test of rungs	Pass	
OVERALL RESULT	FAIL	





EN 131-5 Clause 6.4 - Sending test of stilles





Test arrangement



0



14

### APPENDIX 3 DETAILED EXPLANATION OF TESTS

Each test selected in the limited scope assesses a different aspect of the ladders design and performance.

#### Clause 4 –

Functional dimensions This clause has requirements for specific dimensions and the minimum clearance provided at the top rung with the vertical surface / wall.

It also cross references to EN 131-1<sup>1</sup> for dimensional requirements of leaning rung ladders. This ensures that all leaning rung ladders have common minimum and maximum dimensions for features such as rung pitch and inner width.

#### **Clause 5 – Requirements**

Clause 5 includes design requirements for telescopic ladders, such as having a two-point contact with the vertical surface/wall. It has design requirements for features of the ladders, such as a safe closing mechanism, to prevent finger crushing or entrapment.

The clause also has a dimensional requirement for a wider base width (where the ladder contacts the ground) for ladders over 3 metres in extended length. This follows the approach in the other EN 131 family of standards.



Clause 6.2 - Ladder preconditioning

Ladder preconditioning, in this case a drop test, requires the sample ladder to be fully extended vertically and then allowed to fall under its own weight.

The ladder is then inspected for damage, including any damage to the locking mechanisms and any deformation in the ladder which prevents it from operating normally. The brackets between the rungs and stiles must not have any relative movement following the drop test.

The test and inspection is then repeated with the ladder falling on the opposite face to the first test.



#### Clause 6.5 – Lateral deflection

This test is cross referenced to clause 5.4 in BS EN 131-2:2010+A2:2017 – Ladders Part 2: Requirements, Testing, Marking.<sup>2</sup>

With the ladder placed horizontally on its side and supported by rollers at both ends, a preload (100N / 10.2kg) and then a test load (250N / 25.5kg) is applied to the centre of the ladder on the lower stile. The deflection measured under load must be less than a limit calculated based on the length of the ladder.



#### Clause 6.4 – Bending test of the stiles

This test is cross referenced to clause 5.3 in BS EN 131-2:2010+A2:2017 – Ladders Part 2: Requirements, testing, marking.

With the ladder placed horizontally and supported by rollers at both ends, a preload (100N / 10.2kg) and then a test load (750N / 76.4kg) is applied at the centre of the ladder across both stiles. The deflection measured under load must be less than a limit calculated based on the length of the ladder.



#### Clause 6.3 – Strength test

With the ladder placed in the position of use, against a wall at 65 degrees, a test load is applied to the rung nearest the centre of the ladder adjacent to one stile.

The test load is based on the ladder class as stated in the user instructions or markings.

For a Non-Professional class ladder the test load is 2250N (229kg) and for Professional class it is 2700N (275kg).

The ladder must withstand the test load without rupture of parts, locking mechanisms and indicators must be operational, and no relative movement between brackets and rungs/stiles.

Permanent deformation is acceptable provided that the ladder remains fully functional and does not impair the fitness for use or safety of the ladder.



#### Clause 6.12 - Asymmetrical bending test

This test is cross referenced to clause 5.21 in BS EN 131-2:2010+A2:2017 – Ladders Part 2: Requirements, testing, marking.

With the ladder placed horizontally and supported by rollers at both ends, a preload (491N / 50kg) is applied across both stiles at the centre of the ladder. Then a test load (750N / 65kg) is applied at the centre of the ladder on one stile.

Under the test load, the difference between the deflection in the stiles (twist) must be less than a limit which is calculated based on the ladders length.



#### Clause 6.7.2 - Vertical load on rungs

With the ladder in the position of use, a preload (200N / 20.3kg) and then a test load (2600N / 265kg) is applied to the centre of the weakest rung design.

The permanent deformation after removal of the test load must be less than 0.5% of the inner width of the longest rung.



### Clause 6.7.4 - Rung strength test in the unlocked position

With the ladder in the position of use, leaning against a wall at 75 degrees, a test load of 2600N (265kg) is applied to the highest rung permitted for the user to stand on.

Prior to the load being applied, the lock mechanism must be disengaged at the rung where the load is applied.

The ladder must withstand the test load without rupture of parts, locking mechanisms and indicators operational, and no relative movement between brackets and rungs/stiles.

Permanent deformation is acceptable provided that the ladder remains fully functional and does not impair the fitness for use or safety of the ladder.



#### Clause 6.7.6 – Pull out test of rungs

With the ladder placed horizontally on its side, the upper stile of the ladder is suspended with blocks adjacent to a rung bracket. On the lower stile, and on the same rung, blocks are placed adjacent to the rung bracket and a test load (2600N / 265kg) is applied.

After the test, the telescopic ladder and the locking mechanisms shall function in all sections normally and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.



### APPENDIX 4 GUIDANCE FOR CONSUMERS

Guidance from the Ladder Association on buying ladders online or in store:

- Take some time to research before you buy. You can carry out a quick online check of the company or brand to check their business location and visibility in the market. If they don't have a UK/EU address then it can make it much more difficult to contact them if you have an issue after you buy;
- Check product reviews. These are a great way of hearing first-hand from other consumers and often give valuable insight in the product quality, mainly if it falls below standard. But beware, some companies and brands post fake positive reviews, so read them carefully, note where the reviewer is based or how many reviews they have previously posted;
- Don't make decisions solely on price. But, if something is very cheap, you should question why. That's not to say it's poor quality, but it's certainly a prompt to make you do a bit more homework. Genuine quality products can cost more to manufacture due to the enhanced testing and cost of materials, but equally, a higher price doesn't necessarily mean quality;
- Remember, online platforms take little or no responsibility for the quality or safety of the products sold on their platforms and place the responsibility for safety firmly with the seller. Don't assume product safety and compliance checks have been carried out by them before they placed them online for sale;
- Don't assume physical stores sell only safe products. They could knowingly - or unknowingly - be stocking products that don't meet product standard EN 131-6. Check the labelling for print quality or spelling errors, check the product quality as best you can, and speak to the retailer themselves if you have any questions;

- Avoid ladders that are CE Marked. Despite what you might think, ladders cannot be CE marked, so avoid any that bear that marking;
- Buy from a Ladder Association member. Members are committed to high standards of safety, and by joining the Association, they pledge to only make or sell ladders that comply with EN 131 (or international equivalents) and are certified by a third-party Conformity Assessment Body. A full list of members can be found on the Ladder Association website: https://ladderassociation.org.uk
- When you receive your ladder, check it. Check the product, the instruction manual (every ladder should come with one) and the labelling on the ladder itself;
- If you think the ladder is unsafe, dangerous or not made to standard, don't use it! You should then contact your local Trading Standards team or report via our website: https://ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up





P.O Box 26970, Glasgow G3 9DS +44 (0)345 260 1048 | info@ladderassociation.org.uk

### ladderassociation.org.uk/step-up

'It's Time To Step In' - Telescopic Ladder Surveillance Report', Version 1, Revision 0, April 2023

© The Ladder Association 2023. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permisson of the copyright holder. For further information, visit ladderassociation.org.uk/copyright.htm