

An illegal immigrant was sentenced after a police raid found 96,800 pounds worth of cannabis harvest in an abandoned Sheffield pub.

Klajdi Bica, a 21-year-old Albanian citizen was jailed after police officers found him tending to a cannabis farm inside the disused Sheffield Arms pub on Upwell Street, according to a Sheffield Crown Court hearing on the 20th of April.

Louise Gallagher, prosecuting barrister, said police found 176 cannabis plants in the property, which was guarded by two steel doors. Bica was found in an unused shower room hiding amongst cannabis waste.

She added that police found a total of 44 high-powered lights in the property, as well as a bypassed electricity meter. They also found a fully stocked fridge with a receipt from the local Tesco on the premises.

Judge Andrew Smith MBE said in his sentencing: "The involvement of people like yourself performing limited function under direction allows large profits to be made by criminals higher up the chain"

He acknowledged Bica had no previous convictions, and is of good character.

The defendant, who was residing in the pub on Upwell street, Sheffield, pleaded guilty to the production of cannabis.

Bica entered the UK illegally on a lorry from Belgium after paying thousands of pounds. He came to Sheffield after being told he can find work outside of the construction industry.

He claimed he had been offered the job as a "gardener" by a Romanian man, who said payment will be discussed after the harvest.

Eran Reilly, Bica's lawyer said: "His main purpose was to come here to earn money to help his mother in Albania, who has been paralysed since 2014.

"He did not understand the gravity of the situation."

He also added he had substantial debt in his home country, which led to his family being threatened by debt collectors.

Judge Smith sentenced Bica to 58 weeks of custody, to be served immediately. He also wished Bica all the best in any legitimate action in the future.