MINIMUM STANDARD
Preventing Unauthorised Access from Occupied Premises onto Scaffolding

The following Minimum Standard is applicable on all projects

Introduction

Where Unitas is required to carry out works to the external envelope of occupied buildings there is a risk of unauthorised access onto the scaffold from members of the public.

Planning

Houses/Flats that have Balconies:

- Efforts should be made to determine whether or not anyone under 16 lives there, or if there are any vulnerable adults who may be at risk of harming themselves. The primary source of this information will be the client i.e. the Local Authority/Housing Association/other landlord. Other methods of gathering this information will include letters to the households, or visits to the premises. Any letters will need to have multilingual sections in order to allow non-English speaking residents to understand the importance of the enquiry
- If children under 16, or vulnerable adults are identified as living in the property, then a fence resistant to climbing should be erected on the balcony in order to achieve a barrier height of 2m. If the existing structure would provide a foothold for a child attempting to climb over, it may be necessary to bring the fence down on the inside of the balcony
- The residents of flats without children should be asked if they regularly have children to stay i.e. visiting grandchildren, or through babysitting work. If they do then these flats' balconies should also be fenced
- In the case of other flats whose residents do not fall into the categories identified above there will not generally be a requirement to install 2m high fencing, unless the residents request it
- Site workers should be told to report any incidents in which they see children on unfenced balconies. Any premises identified through such reports should be fenced

Public Areas, such as Walkways:

- As unsupervised children or other vulnerable persons may well access these areas they should be similarly fenced to a height of 2m (signage)

Windows

- It will not normally be necessary to restrict the opening of windows from a property onto the scaffold
- The exception to this will be where the contractor is notified of the presence of a particularly disruptive person (child or adult), who is likely to attempt to access the scaffolding in this manner. In this case some form of internal or external window restrictor may be necessary

Liaison with Emergency Services:

- The Fire Brigade **must** be consulted when measures are taken to secure balconies, public areas or windows, in case these measures would interfere with emergency escape routes or other access routes that they may require

Other Considerations:

- Other means of access should be considered, such as Mobile Elevating Work Platforms, or mast climbers as an alternative to scaffolding. Note: if these are to be used then the operatives **must not** leave the equipment to access any work areas
- Scaffolding should be left in place for the shortest possible period of time required. This will require accurate planning and co-ordination between different trades/subcontractors
- Provision of climb resistant fencing at the base of scaffolds and removal of ladders at ground level out of working hours
- In addition to the statutory scaffold inspections being undertaken and recorded, there should be daily checks undertaken and recorded to ensure that the integrity of any of the above measures is maintained

Further Guidance/Reference

HSG151 Protecting the public – your next move,
SHEMS-STD-GR-048- Temporary Works Standard