

Abseiling Innovation

The photo demonstrates innovative problem solving - abseiling saved the client money and provided improved working access on an external redecoration project.

Priory Heights, a residential block managed by the Community Housing Association, was due for external redecoration. Decorators' convenience had clearly not been a major consideration in its original design.

Above a certain height, it becomes increasingly less cost effective to scaffold, leading the project team quickly to conclude that rope access would be the most cost effective, practical solution.

Using abseilers instead of scaffold to touch up the more hard-to-reach areas provided further benefits including reduced disruption to residents, especially in flats with satellite dishes. The potential security risk posed by scaffolding was also eliminated.

Site Manager for the project, Steven Howard, worked closely with the abseilers during their three months on site. He had this to say; "The abseilers carried out the vast majority of the external redecoration works. The residents were extremely pleased with the work, as was the client."

The considerable cost savings achieved on the project enabled the client, Community Housing Association, to invest that money in other areas of the program of works.

To scaffold out the project would have cost around £80,000. By applying a little ingenuity the work was completed at a fraction of that cost.

At handover, the Project Surveyor had the option of checking the work using the same rope gear as the abseilers. Despite the fact that Kenyon and the client had established an excellent relationship based on mutual trust, the Clerk of Works was very happy with what could be seen from ground level!