

## **ONE IN FOUR REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS ARE UNSAFE**

Health and safety risks do still exist despite the trend towards believing that all health and safety is unnecessary.

If you work on a construction site you are statistically more at risk of having a major injury or suffering a fatal injury than from any other type of employment.

Good health and safety will save lives on a construction site.

The HSE conducted a "refurbishment blitz" early this year and concluded that one in four sites were unsafe. They visited over 2,000 construction sites and stopped work in one in five sites and served Notices or took enforcement action in one in four sites.

The commonest unsafe working practice was working at height.

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 apply to all construction works and place various duties on Clients, contractors, designers and others.

Proper planning is the key. Reviewing hazards and risks and taking steps before works start is essential. It's also a legal requirement.



### **What do we think?**

We believe that health and safety is absolutely necessary and that Clients, i.e. those who commission building/construction works, must take a more active role in leading from the front. This means setting standards as to what they expect in relation to health and safety right at the outset of the project.

Clients must appoint competent contractors. We all know that sometimes cheapest is not the best option – so question those contractors with ridiculously low quotes. Someone somewhere may well pay for the low price - it might be you as Client when your refurbishment project is closed down or delayed due to a fatal or major injury investigation.

We think that, if you are one of the 51 families who suffered a bereavement caused by their loved one suffering a fatal injury in the construction industry during 2008/2009, you will not be thinking "elfin safety" has gone mad. You'll be thinking "they didn't do enough to stop my husband/partner/son/brother/friend from being crushed to death/falling off a roof/being buried in that excavation etc.

And you'd be right. Responsibility for health and safety rests with those who ask people to perform tasks. And yes, it does also rest with those who carry out the tasks - to take care of their own and others' safety.

Perry Scott Nash Associates have extensive experience in advising Clients on their legal duties in respect of managing health and safety in refurbishment projects. Give us a call!

### **Who to Contact?**

Call now: Pat Perry