



## Building Condition Surveys Getting the Expert where it Counts The Benefits of using Industrial Roped Access Techniques

*There are many reasons why buildings require condition surveys, often when being sold or as part of planned maintenance. Older buildings may be at risk from weathered and loosened fabric that can fall, with even relatively small pieces being potentially fatal.*

*The decay mechanisms affecting the built environment are complex and require specialist investigation to determine their true nature. This typically will include close inspection, sampling and non-destructive investigation methods. Where allowed samples may also be taken for more detailed laboratory examination and analysis.*

*Traditionally, the specialist may be able to obtain limited close access but often will direct others such as abseilers to make observations on their behalf. However, an abseiling technician not skilled in construction materials may incorrectly interpret features that could be of significance and not know how to investigate them further as and when necessary. Alternatively, a surveyor or other expert faced with a catalogue of features may find an interpretation difficult to achieve with a reasonable degree of confidence.*

*The solution to the problem is combining the specialist and the abseiler so that the problem can be confronted directly by the specialist. This has many obvious advantages, none more so than being highly cost-effective and providing the highest quality inspection. IBIS offers this unique service of the specialist who is able to use roped access to a highly trained, professional and safe level.*

*Most buildings may be quickly accessed and viewed, with a wide range of tests being able to be carried out whenever required. The benefits are especially applicable to ancient buildings where there can be serious restrictions to access by other means that might cause damage or be prohibitively expensive.*

### Safety First

*Industrial roped access, is one of the safest areas of construction. Understandably, what is perceived to be a high risk activity has strict guidance from the HSE. IBIS follows the various recommended procedures and can advise on the precautions necessary for any investigation work being undertaken. All operatives have passed IRATA\* examinations and all equipment used conforms and is traceable to appropriate standards.*

\* IRATA – the Industrial Roped Access Trade Association is the professional body set up by those carrying out roped access as part of their profession. IRATA has worked closely with the HSE to develop acceptable guidelines that have resulted in no serious accidents in the UK since its inception over ten years ago.

