



The Trade Association for Underpinning and Subsidence Repair Techniques, Engineered Foundation Solutions and Retro Fit Basements

DRAMATIC HOUSE COLLAPSE BRINGS CALL FROM ASUC FOR TIGHTER BASEMENT CONTROL

Following the collapse of a two-storey house from roof to basement in London this week, specialist trade association ASUC has called on local authorities to put in place tighter control on contractors undertaking basement works.

Firefighters were called to the dramatic scene in Sumatra Road, the police cordoned off the area and ten people were evacuated while the site was made safe by Camden Council's structural engineer and London Fire Brigade.



Although the cause of the collapse is not yet known, planning permission for a basement extension was granted for the house in West Hampstead in 2014.

Rob Withers, ASUC Chief Executive, said: "Images of the site show a conveyor and small excavator in the basement that suggest the collapse could be basement related.

"Whatever the case it is apparent, on a structure in which major renovation works are being carried out, the temporary works design, if it existed must be at fault or been incorrectly installed.

"We have called upon local authorities many times to insist on competent contractors being engaged in this type of work, with many recommending ASUC members, but apparently lacking the will to make it mandatory.

"How many more collapses of this nature will it take for action to be taken or do we need a fatality in the news to get action?"

ASUC members are audited on health and safety and technical capabilities in order to gain membership, which is reviewed every two years to ensure standards are maintained. In 2017 one member was expelled from ASUC membership because of non-compliance with a health and safety audit.

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ASUC is the only association representing specialist contractors in domestic: underpinning and subsidence repair techniques, engineered foundations and retrofit basements. The latent defects insurance can cover all the works carried out under contract at a property - not just the subsidence repair. Members of ASUC offer an extended range of foundation solutions, including new build, basements and other forms of subsidence repairs.

Members of ASUC are subject to annual health and safety reviews, are audited for technical expertise by an independent assessor, are monitored for financial probity and all share the common goals of setting the benchmark for standards within the industry, to lead in providing innovative solutions and maintain skills levels through education and training.



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