General Protection of Unoccupied Buildings

Unoccupied buildings can be particularly prone to malicious damage, arson, theft and intrusion by squatters or vagrants and flooding (e.g. due to burst pipes).

In order to reduce the associated risks, the following courses of action should be considered:

1. Combustible contents including waste are to be cleared from inside the buildings.
2. The site surrounding the building cleared and kept cleared of combustible materials including waste.
3. Combustible construction sheds and / or demountable buildings relocated at least 10 metres from the buildings or alternatively removed from the site.
4. Tanks of combustible liquids drained and appropriate action taken to make safe from any explosion risk arising from residual vapour.
5. All door keys to the property to be accounted for; if any key is missing, the locks should be changed immediately.
6. All utilities other than those required for fire or security protection disconnected at the perimeter of the building or other such suitable location. Disconnection is to be undertaken in such a way that reconnection cannot easily be made.
7. Water services are to be shut off at the incoming main and internal pipe work and tanks are to be drained down. The incoming main from the point where it emerges from underground to the shut off point is to be securely lagged to a minimum thickness of 32mm using good quality lagging.
8. The integrity of any fire main, sprinkler installation, and automatic fire alarm is to be preserved. This must also include the upkeep of weekly testing and inspection arrangements, and the continuation of maintenance contracts.
9. The integrity of the intruder alarm and other electrical or electronic security systems is to be preserved, including the continuation of maintenance contracts and regular testing.
10. Letterboxes are to be sealed to prevent the malicious introduction of flammable liquids or other incendiary devices into the building. As an alternative an enclosed metal container may be fixed onto the rear of the letterbox.
11. Perimeter fence security is to be maintained and any damage found following routine inspection is to be repaired as a matter of urgency.
12. Overgrown bushes and shrubs are to be cut down to below window level so that they cannot be used by intruders to hide.
13. A thorough external and internal inspection of vacant buildings is to be made as a **minimum once every seven days** by the University or an authorised representative to check for damage or breaches of security. Details and observations from such visits are to be recorded in a log or register.
14. Any defects in security or condition identified by such inspection are to be remedied as a matter of priority. All breaches of security are to be reported to the Insurance Office immediately.