



[www.rmp.biz](http://www.rmp.biz)  
[rmp@napier.ac.uk](mailto:rmp@napier.ac.uk)



building performance centre

[www.napier.ac.uk/bpc](http://www.napier.ac.uk/bpc)  
[bpc@napier.ac.uk](mailto:bpc@napier.ac.uk)



THE QUEEN'S  
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES  
2009

Acoustic Research and Consulting, Edinburgh Napier University, 42 Colinton Road, Edinburgh, EH10 5BT

## **BPC proudly receives the Queen's Anniversary Prize 2009 for the development of Robust Details**



The Building Performance Centre within Edinburgh Napier University has been awarded the prestigious [Queen's Anniversary Prize 2009](#) for our work in "Innovative housing construction for environmental benefit and quality of life" through the development of Robust Details.

The prize, which was officially awarded at Buckingham Palace on 18th February 2010, recognises the effect that this world leading research has had on revolutionising new-home building practices and standards in England and Wales.

Professor Dame Joan K Stringer DBE and Professor Robin Mackenzie receiving the Queen's Anniversary Prize.

The new innovative constructions dramatically reduce noise transmission within new homes and have also led to a range of other benefits for the environment and society.

The Robust party wall and floor details developed by BPC are now used in over 80% of all new housing in England and Wales. Robust Standard Details co-project director Richard Mackenzie stated "we are extremely proud that the Robust Details have resulted in a significantly improved quality of life for over half a million households. This award recognises the ground-breaking collaborative research between the BPC team, legislative body, national housebuilders and product manufacturers."

[Read more...](#)

### **Are you ready for the new Section 5: Noise?**

April 2010 sees the most significant changes to the Noise section of the Scottish Building Regulations in over 25 years. RMP were involved in undertaking a number of research studies for the Scottish Building Standards Agency during the review of the building

regulations.

The final document has now been published and confirms that there will be a significant increase in the required level of sound insulation for both new build and existing constructions.

The new standards will result in significant changes to the typical party wall and floor constructions used in Scotland. The new standards will also be enforced by compulsory testing on all sites for the first time.

A further significant change is the introduction of acoustic standards for internal walls and floors within individual dwellings.

RMP will be running a number of conferences and CPD events throughout 2010 to outline the changes and their implications to architects and house-builders. Individual CPD courses can also be arranged. We will shortly issue a Sound Advice update dedicated to the new regulations.

In the meantime for further information, please email [rmp@napier.ac.uk](mailto:rmp@napier.ac.uk)

### **Noise from Concerts**

BPC returns to work for the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) on their 'Attitudes to Environmental Noise from Concerts' research project. This project aims to update the 'UK Noise Council Code of Practice on Environmental Noise at Concerts', for



the first time since the regulations were introduced in 1995. The core of this project will be social surveys amongst people who live in vicinity of open air concert venues. BPC will be working with Ipsos MORI on a series of concerts throughout 2010.

### **New permitted development (PD) rights for Micro Renewables**



In February 2010 the Scottish Government granted PD rights for domestic micro-wind turbines and air-sourced heat pumps. To limit noise disturbance PD is restricted to installations over 100 metres from neighbouring domestic property. The Scottish Government are currently consulting on further PD which would allow wind turbines mounted on buildings and free-standing turbines and air-source heat pumps within 100 metres provided noise limits are achieved. The current consultation can be viewed at [www.scotland.gov.uk/Consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Consultations).

### **Nutritious design**

RMP has been appointed to provide design advice for the construction of the new £32m Rowett Institute of Nutrition & Health research facility at the University of Aberdeen. Detailed acoustic design is required in order to obtain the appropriate BREEAM credits, taking into account noise from road traffic and external plant as well items of internally generated noise from laboratory equipment. Open-plan areas adjacent to a large atrium will be a prominent feature of the design.



[www.airtest.org.uk](http://www.airtest.org.uk)

In January 2010 RMP launched [www.airtest.org.uk](http://www.airtest.org.uk) - a website fully devoted to air tightness and thermal imaging services which we provide in conjunction with Building Test Services.



The new site provides all the information house builders, developers and architects need to organise and prepare for air testing and thermal imaging. The new look of the site was designed to complement the company's website [www.soundtest.co.uk/](http://www.soundtest.co.uk/), relaunched in December 2009.

RMP have also been elected to serve on the BINDT L1A Committee for air tightness testing in dwellings, initiated to improve standards of air tightness within homes. In addition to domestic air tightness testing throughout the UK, RMP also conducts commercial air tightness testing in Scotland.

### Western Isles Schools Project

RMP have been appointed as acoustic designers on the Western Isles Schools project. The development of four new primaries and two high schools is the biggest construction project ever undertaken on the Western Isles and stretch from sites as far afield as Benbecular and Barvas. RMP will be working with 3D Reid Architects to ensure that the designs meet the stringent BB93 and BREEAM requirements.

### KTP project speaks volumes

In May 2009 BPC started a two-year KTP project with SFX Technologies Ltd. The project will investigate the acoustic properties of new gel materials for use in the design and development of gel-audio speakers for a wide range of applications. The development of an acoustic modelling capability will provide an opportunity for the company to respond flexibly & quickly to customer demands for future products.



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