

style

moveable partition specialists



FIS CONTRACTORS
10 GOLD AWARDS

Breathtaking moveable wall divides Newcastle University's stepped auditorium

The Frederick Douglass Centre at Newcastle University is a £34 million flagship building and part of the Newcastle Helix scheme, formerly known as Science central.

Named in honour of the famous US anti-slavery campaigner, this is a very modern teaching and learning facility for 2200 students spread over three floors including seminar rooms, an auditorium and collaborative lecture theatre.

With a desire to create maximum flexibility in the auditorium, the aim was to have 500 and 250 seats in theatre style, opening up to a capacity 750 seats.

As this was a particularly difficult room to divide Style was brought in by architects, Sheppard Robson, at a very early stage to advise on the design process.

Working with contractor, Sir Robert McAlpine, the challenge was to meet an acoustic separation of 55DnTw, however the division was to run between the tiered seating.

As a result, collaboration was needed with Style's manufacturing partners, Dorma Huppe, to design two bespoke, and fully automated, stepped acoustic moveable walls. These are deployed back to back to provide maximum site performance, and with on-site testing completed by acoustic consultants, Sandy Brown, the final rating was a phenomenal 59DnTw - far exceeding anyone's expectations.

Andy Gibson, Style's director for the north said, "Everything on this project was a world first, from the stepped design, the installation challenges, the building structure and the site tests.

"The system we designed with Dorma Huppe was based on their Variflex Comfortdrive K moveable wall, with panel faces finished in Formica Almond Oak Linewood, internal faces and pocket doors in Formica Matte Black and head tracks colour coated in Black Ral 9011 - all to complement the ceiling bulkhead design.

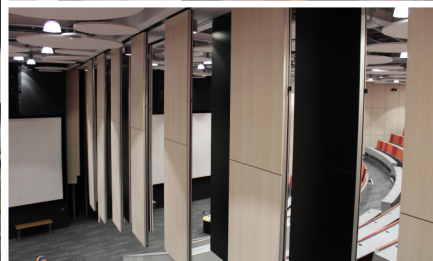
"The horizontal joints on the panels are designed to line through with the tiering of the auditorium seating, which means these individual sections can be replaced without ever having to take down a full height panel.

"Bespoke manufactured automatic acoustic seals engage as each panel meets the next, perfectly closing off the tiered elements of the auditorium.

"The panels are also automatically driven in and out of the storage area using Dorma's Comfortdrive track and programmable trolley system, which incorporates an impact safety system during panel movement.

"Working with the design team of Sheppard Robson and Sir Robert McAlpine has been a pleasure from start to finish," continued Andy, "and the final solution is one that the University is thrilled with.

"Style's installation engineers were absolutely pivotal to the success of this project, facing new challenges and demands every day, and we were proud to deliver, on time, our most challenging moveable wall installation to date."



Style South Style Midlands Style North Style Scotland

☎ 01202 874044 ☎ 01530 831144 ☎ 01204 845590 ☎ 01259 750600

Consort House
Princes Road
Ferndown
Dorset
BH22 9JG

Unit 3, Phoenix Park
Telford Way
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 3HB

Bolton Golf Club
No.2 Cottage
Chorley New Road
Lostock, Bolton
BL6 4AJ

Bank Street
Tillicoultry
FK13 6DP

