

## **The mighty midge meets its match**

The inventor of the “Barrfly™ Air Barrier”, heating and ventilation engineer Bobby Motherwell has created a revolutionary new portable device, which creates an air curtain on the edge of outdoor structures for leisure and corporate hospitality. Tents and gazebos benefit from this kit, which prevents midges and other insects from entering.

It’s a well known fact that the Scottish biting midge and its tropical big brother, the mosquito, detest the wind. Realising blowing them away would be difficult to do, Bobby developed the “Air Barrier” method which is common in his industry, and a new technology from Scandinavia called fabric ducting, which, being light and portable, suited itself to camping, canopies, awnings etc.“

This system is a bit like the blast of air you get at the main entrances of shopping malls. In the same way that keeps insects out, this machine uses fans to blow air along fabric ducting suspended around the area to be protected from the insects. The ducting is fitted with outlet nozzles that allow the air to escape downwards, creating a protective curtain of fast-moving air that the midges cannot penetrate.

**Dr Alison Blackwell** of Advanced Pest Solutions Limited and UK authority on midges and mosquitoes says: “It is well known that midges don’t like even a light wind. During tests, midge traps were put in place inside and outside the air curtain area and virtually none were caught inside!”

Innovent (Scotland) Limited filed a patent in 2004. Years of experience in ventilation and acoustic engineering helped make a smooth transition from specialist ventilation services to a completely new product, a different company and a different market. The company approached the Defence Diversification Agency (DDA) for help in developing his invention to protect military forces and is currently seeking trials with the Armed Forces after a meeting was arranged with 52 Infantry Brigade, based in Edinburgh Castle. It is thought that MOD applications could help save lives. Discussions are underway with the MOD on dealing with mosquitoes in field hospitals and command posts. The company has also been introduced to the US defence market and it has just signed an NDA with a US defence manufacturer. The US Department of Defense is looking at protection from vector mosquitoes carrying West Nile fever and malaria.

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