



By Appointment
to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
Damp Proofing and Timber
Treatment Specialists
ProTen Services Ltd., Bath

ProTen Services celebrates 80 Years of Service

1928 was a year of many milestones: Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin, Mickey Mouse appeared in the first ever cartoon with sound, and Coca Cola became available in Europe. It was also the year that ProTen Services' ancestral firm, British Knapen, was founded.

Belgian Professor Achilles Knapen invented the Knapen Atmospheric Siphon in the early 1900s as an innovative method of treating rising damp. The system allowed buildings to 'breathe', through the installation of hollow tubes through the external walls. These tubes were in contact with the open air, allowing the damp air inside the building to be evacuated and the walls to dry. One of the system's earliest installations was famously in the Royal Palaces of Versailles.

British Knapen was established in 1928 as the sole proprietors of the system in the British Isles, and began successfully installing the system across the land. By December 1929, British Knapen had carried out over 200 installations, including New College, Oxford and Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

Over 35,000 siphons were being installed annually by the 1950s, and the Company was also dealing with the damp-related problems of dry rot and other timber infestations. This led to the Company becoming a founder member of The British Wood Preserving and Damp-proofing Association, today known as the Property Care Association.

In the mid 1950s, the Company became part of the Protim Group, so-called for its focus on protecting timber. When the companies were floated on the Stock Exchange in 1967, Protim Services Limited became a separate service-only division.

In 1976 Protim Services were awarded the Royal Warrant of Appointment, given by of Her Majesty The Queen, for Damp Proofing and Timber Treatment Services.

Protim Services merged with Phoenix Timber Preservation in 1987, and over the next two decades, the Company enjoyed much success, acquiring the business of several smaller players in the industry. The expertise and skills of the workforce subsequently mushroomed, and the Company was now offering clients a whole range of property preservation services, extending much further than 'protecting timber'.

For this reason, in 2007 the company was rebranded as ProTen Services, as ten separate service categories were now provided. These other services include cavity wall tie replacement, timber resin repairs, bird control, radon gas testing & remediation and air quality management.

David Marshall, Chairman of ProTen Services explains that the Company has evolved to meet the changing market requirements; "We recognise that, whilst there is still a market for our traditional services, demand for innovative solutions to more modern concerns is increasing. Not only are householders concerned over the physical condition of their properties, but also the potential implications that a property could have on its

occupants' health and on the environment; we have expanded our range of services to ensure that we can satisfy these demands."

"One of our latest additions is a system which allows for the rapid reoccupation of flooded properties. Using our experience of structural waterproofing and air management, we were able to design The Wetaway System, a unique and express way of returning flooded houses to dry, healthy and habitable homes. Given the increasing occurrence of flooding in the UK, we believe that this system will be a welcome innovation to many householders who would otherwise face spending months in temporary accommodation. "

Mr Marshall continued, "I'm lucky enough to have experienced many sides of the Company; having started with the firm in 1976 as a surveyor, after a succession of promotions I was appointed Managing Director in 1998, and was later part of a management buy-out in 2001. I've seen many changes occur, but one thing that has always remained constant is the professionalism and prestigious reputation of the organisation."

He continued, "80 years of trade is a significant achievement, and our continued success is a direct result of the hard work and dedication of all our employees. We are currently experiencing consistent growth and have new employees joining us regularly, but we also have many long-standing employees, who have witnessed the same evolution of the firm as I have."

John Langley, a surveyor who has spent 39 years working for the firm, commented, "Customers feel confident when they know how long we've been around – if we weren't doing a good job, we wouldn't still be in business. To be able to tell them we've got 80 years of experience and satisfied customers under our belts is a big plus."

Mr Marshall concluded, "Over the past 80 years, we have created strong partnerships, enabling us to offer an unbeatable level of protection to our clients and their properties. Our team of surveyors and operatives are professional, knowledgeable and bring a wealth of expertise in these niche fields. Our aim is to continue to be market leaders in our traditional fields whilst matching our success in new domains."

A selection of images showing the Company at work through the years can be found at www.protenservices.co.uk. Here you will also find further information on the Company's current activities and a collection of technical articles that have recently appeared in the trade press.

-ENDS-

For further information, contact:

Rebecca Kench
Marketing Executive
ProTen Services
01225 447960
rebecca.kench@protenservices.co.uk