

10th July 2018

Acoustic vinyl flooring solutions for housing

Unwanted sound can have a detrimental effect on people's health and well-being especially when living where constant nuisance noise can be acute, says **Kenny Miller, National Sales Manager - Housing, Gerflor**

In residential environments nuisance noise is usually more bothersome to occupants of homes where impact sound travels from one dwelling to another, especially from rooms above to spaces below. This has been exacerbated by the building of more flats and multi-storey apartments, the conversion of older, single dwellings into multi-occupancy homes and the trend for extending homes to include three or more floors.

The greater use of hard floorings such as wood, stone and wood laminates over carpets and cushioned floorings in homes has also contributed to higher levels of disturbance caused by impact sound on upper floors to rooms below.

Impact sound transmission is a form of structure-borne sound made by the impact of an object on another, generating sound transmission. Impact sound can be transmitted through the floor construction to the room below, commonly by footsteps. Sound insulation levels are measured using a decibel (db) scale, which involves logarithmic units to measure airborne and impact sound.

Pioneering vinyl flooring manufacturers have therefore responded to the need to control impact sound by introducing residential acoustic vinyls with sound insulation levels as high as 19db. These floorings are now playing a vital role in minimising impact sound within homes, both in multi-occupancy and single dwellings, and in the private and public sector.

As acoustic, residential floorings can mimic wood, wood laminate and stone floorings so successfully and look and perform better than ever before, they provide a quieter and more practical solution where sound-proofing is required, especially in buildings that have been converted into flats and apartments.

The UK's Building Regulations 2003 Part E: Resistance to the Passage of Sound sets minimum standards for impact sound insulation. Acoustic floorings can help achieve performance requirements.

Whereas wood and laminate floors generally rely on underlay to provide acoustic insulation, domestic, cushioned vinyls with integrated textile-backing systems and sound-insulating foam backing systems benefit from sound-insulation built into their specification. And, usually the thicker and more effective the textile backing system, the more sound-absorbent and thermally-efficient

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the flooring will be. Textile-backed vinyl floorings can also be loose-laid, thereby speeding up fitting and lowering installation costs.

For housing applications where slip resistance as well as sound insulation is essential, some high performing, acoustic textile-backed and foam-backed residential vinyl floorings are $\geq 36/R10$ slip-resistant and meet HSE guidelines.

In addition, some of the new wood-effect interlocking click and lock system residential vinyls provide a secure yet floating floor and are a quieter alternative to LVT, wood and wood laminate.

Cushioned, high performing, easy-maintenance, acoustic residential vinyl floorings with additional benefits such as waterproofing, slip resistance and cost-effective installation are bringing solutions to housing projects. While flooring manufacturers continue to invest in innovative new technologies, advanced acoustic, thermal and high performing vinyl floorings will meet the challenges ahead for flooring in housing.

Learn more about Gerflor solutions, ask for a free sample or contact us to speak to a specialist today by calling 01926 622 600, emailing contractuk@gerflor.com, or visiting gerflor.co.uk for the latest innovations.

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