



## A haunting sound?

Chris O'Keefe (left) and Steve Parsons with the Acoustic Research Infrasonic Array (ARIA). E-mail: 'Big picture' ideas to [jonstallon@psj.org.uk](mailto:jonstallon@psj.org.uk).

With Halloween looming, perhaps you feel more susceptible to spooky sayings and ghostly apparitions.

But in order that you may be influenced by a sound below the normal threshold of human hearing,

perhaps O'Keefe has been researching infrasonic direction and generation for several years.

'We've been running surveys and controlled experiments testing 'vicarious' experiences of infrasound. Frequency of around 18Hz could be responsible for people's 'haunting

experiences'. For example, we've had 60% of people walk around Mary King's Close in Edinburgh in inclement weather and poor visibility conditions, with ARIA positioned out of sight in an area not accessed during the public tours. We conclude that infrasound (at that

frequency) is a factor in haunting experiences - this experience has to happen anyway, either due to some psychological or other environmental factor, but we think that infrasound increases intensity and frequency of those experiences.'