

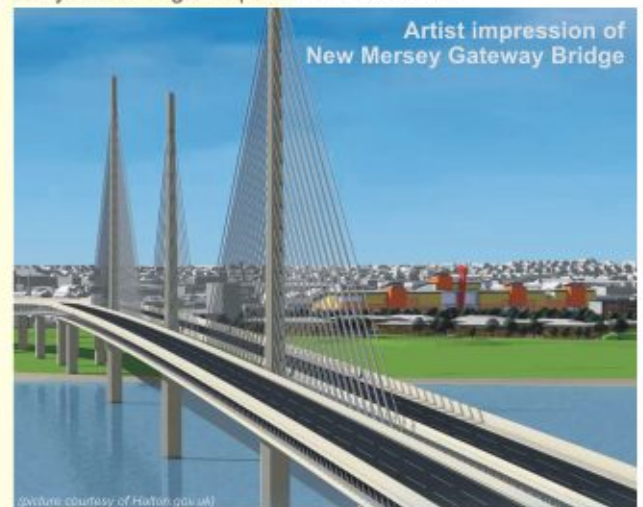
Ventcroft stand in way of New £390 million Bridge

As you are all aware, the board of directors have been holding meetings with local Council Officers and writing to local Councillors and MP's since 2002, in an effort to help us with the problem we have here at Ventcroft Ltd. The problems are as a result of the blight caused to us because of the proposed route for the New Mersey Crossing affecting our premises. We have faced an impossible task of trying to get them to understand that, as we became more and more successful with growth running at 37% year on year, we are in fact a special case, and require a number of years to plan and execute a move to new premises successfully.

By 2005, we had outgrown our existing sites at Unit 18, the Head Office and factories on Goddard Road, and began to look for an alternative site for a new factory. We found a suitable site on Astmoor that used to be the old HK Plastics site. We held a meeting with our Bank Manager and the Sales Agent at the HK site and were given, in principle and subject to contract, an agreement by the bank to fund the purchase of the HK site at an agreed price of £2.4 Million. We then had a meeting with a local Estate Agent about the sale of our existing premises but were told that they would be impossible to sell because of the plans for the new bridge. As a result of this, we called another meeting with Council Officers to try to get them to help, but we were told again that they would not help. This caused us to have to drop out of the deal with HK Plastics and make the decision to go ahead and add the extension to our Head Office site. The extension was completed in 2007 and, together with the purchase of Units 15, 16 and 17, gave us increased floor space. Units 15, 16 and 17 had become available because both companies that owned the properties had got into financial difficulties. One closed with the loss of 15 jobs and the other was forced to downsize. The increased floor space helped us to achieve a record year in both UK and Export sales, and this performance helped us to win the Daily Post Small Business of the year for 2007, also coming runners up in the Investor of the year category to Jaguar Landrover.

However, when you compare the turnover of Jaguar Landrover to that of Ventcroft Ltd, our investment was a far larger proportion of our turnover and in fact, was all of our net profits and depreciation added together. Now we learn that Jaguar Landrover has been sold to a company from India (how long will the jobs stay in England now I wonder?)

As you are no doubt aware, the board of directors are continuing to have meetings with the Council Officers to try to resolve our problems, and we have requested that the Chief Executive from Halton Borough Council, Mr David Parr, visits Ventcroft Ltd. to see for himself the problems that we are facing. It is hoped that this will enable him and his colleagues to understand all of our concerns, and to see ahead the practical problems we will all face over the next few years during the upheaval of the move.



Lesley and I are the major share holders of Ventcroft Ltd. and are both at retirement age. It would be possible for us to argue for final extinguishment of Ventcroft Ltd. if we cannot successfully move in the time scale that a compulsory purchase order would allow. This would mean that the Council would have to pay Lesley and I many millions of pounds in compensation and leave you all out of a job.

Please be assured that this is not what we want, and we will do all we possibly can to ensure that we get the Council Officers and the Councillors to help, and get the support we need within the time scale that it's needed. I have already made myself very unpopular with the Council Officers because of my stance regarding the possible CPO but I am determined that this business will continue to grow and prosper.

Frank.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Mike Hall MP for his help and support in recent years.



(Steve Berka, Mike Hall, Frank Rotherham, Andy Groves)

Mike has offered encouragement, not only to employees and the business during our challenging and problematical situation with the planned Mersey Crossing, but was also instrumental in support of a member of staff experiencing problems of a personal nature.

Sales Continue to Grow

With the first 6 months of our financial year (Oct 07 – March 08) now complete we are pleased to report not only are we almost 10% up on an aggressive budget, but also that sales are continuing to grow at the same rate as they have for the previous 4 years.

Year on year increases in sales over the last 5 years have shown compound growth of 30%, taking the company's turnover to more than 5 times that which it was in 2003.

It has of course been the success of our Fire Cable which has enabled such rapid growth, but our continued success would not have been possible without our investment in world class manufacturing plant, combined with everyone's willingness to improve their work ethic, skill levels and adoption of professional state of the art production methods – oh and did I forget bloody hard work from everyone.

Ventcroft are now a leading player in the fire & security market, particularly for the supply of cable. We are not only the fastest growing but largest independent fire & security manufacturer in the UK.

Everyone should be proud of the contribution they have made; a little known factor to most customers is 'attitude'. From a sales perspective the team work, together with the confident and positive attitude of every member of staff and every department to get our products and service just right for the customers, is of vital importance to ensure we continue to grow.

Gruesome but truesome

BERLIN - A thief in Germany was charred beyond recognition by a 10,000 volt electric shock when he tried to steal a live copper cable.

Police in the western city of Duisburg found the 32-year-old man's blackened remains by a set of cable cutters and pile of non-live cables he had already stolen.

Only because one of his hands survived incineration were officers able to identify the man as German of Kazakh origin.

"His fingerprints were already logged on police files," a local police spokesman said.

Ventcroft's Commitment to the Environment

Each year Ventcroft use over a ¼ million plastic reels to provide our market beating fire performance cable in a format which is welcomed by our customers

Our plastic reels overcome many customers' complaints about the difficulty cardboard reels present, such as the loss of time and cost when reels get damaged or burst open. Customers also complain of the difficulty handling plywood reels, with both cardboard and plywood reels more likely to suffer and cause problems through exposure to moisture.

Now Ventcroft, as a commitment to and in line with our policy to manufacture and present our products as environmentally friendly as possible, are to offer an opportunity to recycle our fire cable plastic reels.



From the end of April a trial scheme will commence where Ventcroft will pay to collect empty used reels back from customers (minimum 96 on a pallet) from anywhere in the UK. In addition, we will encourage the return of our reels by giving customers £50.00 for each full pallet of reels returned.

Installers are often charged to dispose of their waste material so we hope the return facilities will not only save them this cost, but some of our customers will use the £50.00 to encourage their larger customers to bring back the empty reels to all our benefit.

Hail and farewell

January saw the return of two members of staff, Karol Rosinski to the fire cable manufacturing team and Marek Panufnik to the security cable manufacturing teams. Both were forced to leave Ventcroft last year but changing circumstances have enabled them to return. Welcome Back!

Daniel McMahon joined the Sales office team in March as a Sales Administration Clerk. His contribution will offer much needed support in the Sales Office as customer services backup and administrative support.

Farewell to Driver Francis Jones who decided to leave Ventcroft to work with a friend.

The Basics of BASEC Approval

Jeremy Hodge, Chief Executive of BASEC, the British Approval Service for Cables, highlights its work and the importance of making the right choice in a market currently under siege from faulty products.

Established more than 35 years ago by an association of cable manufacturers, the British Standards Institution (BSI), electrical contractors' organisations and end users, BASEC's remit it to ensure that cable products meet appropriate national, European and international standards.

This role has evolved over the years. As a non-profit making, independent, Government-nominated body, BASEC is today not just recognised as a leader in product certification services but also for providing system assessment and certification for quality, environmental and health and safety management systems.

Unlike BSI which co-ordinates the writing of standards for cables in the UK, it is BASEC's job to ensure that the cables which manufacturers submit for approval achieve the standards' criteria by testing the product and the manufacturing process.



And the winner is...

Ventcroft Ltd. announced Steve Berka as the winner of the company's annual employee of the year competition.



The prize means Steve and his partner are off for a luxury 10 day Caribbean cruise with £1,000 to spend as he laps up the sun.

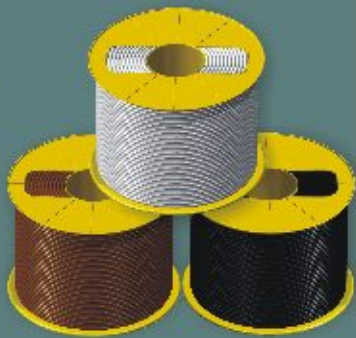
Jim Malone pictured presenting the award commented "it is our staff at Ventcroft who make the company different and sets us apart from the competition, Steve is a leading example of all our staff, committed to on going personal, product and company improvement".

Runner up prizes of £500 were awarded to Claire Stopford, Gail Molyneux, George Tracey, Sid Knapper, Geoff Crimes, Carl Morris and John Willcox.

Things are Reely changing

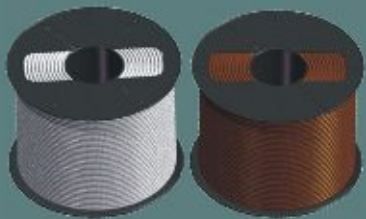
Ventcroft intruder cable is soon to return to the popular format of supplied on plastic reels.

Plastic reels have always been a favourite with installers due to their robust, easy to handle and weather resistant benefits.



Following our introduction of the only fully automated intruder cable manufacturing line in the UK, a new plastic reel design and moulding tool had to be made to enable the intruder cable reels to be processed on our new manufacturing plant.

Ventcroft premium brand intruder cable will once again be on our industry recognised yellow plastic reels with Union brand standard cable supplied on black reels for easy warehousing and stock identification.



Where would we be without Plastics?

These days life without plastics would be incomprehensible. Plastics contribute to our health, safety and peace of mind, and manufacturing a softskin Fire Performance Cable would be impossible without this material. Here is a brief history on plastics - how and when they were invented and discovered.

First Man Made Plastic

The first man-made plastic was developed by Alexander Parkes and displayed for the first time at the 1862 Great International Exhibition in London. He called this material Parkesine, it was an organic material derived from cellulose that once heated could be moulded and retained its shape when cooled. Parkesine soon lost its favour, however when investors pulled the plug on the product due to the high cost of the raw materials needed in its production.

A Load of Balls

In the late 19th century, a rush was on to find a replacement for ivory in billiards balls. Billiards became so popular that thousands of elephants were killed so their valuable ivory could be obtained. John Wesley Hyatt, finally came upon the solution in 1869 with celluloid. Hyatt spilled a bottle of collodion in his workshop and discovered the material congealed into a tough but flexible film. He then produced billiard balls from the material as a substitute for ivory, however due to its highly brittle nature, his billiard balls shattered once they hit each other.

The solution was to add camphor - a derivative of the laurel tree. This addition made celluloid the first thermoplastic: a substance moulded under heat and pressure into a shape it retains even after the heat and pressure have been removed. Celluloid went on to be used in the first flexible photographic film for still and motion pictures.



Then came Bakelite



The first completely synthetic man-made substance was discovered in 1907. Leo Baekeland, developed a liquid resin he named Bakelite. His new liquid (bakelite resin) under heat and pressure rapidly hardened and took the shape of its container. Once hardened, the resin would form an exact replica of any vessel that contained it. This new material would not burn, boil, melt, or dissolve in any commonly available acid or solvent. This benefit made it stand out from previous "plastics." Bakelite was the first thermoset plastic which would retain

its shape and form under any circumstances; numerous products began to be manufactured based on this new material. Thermoset is the term for how Ventcroft process the Silicone Rubber insulation on the fire cable conductors, however unlike Bakelite, the material retains its flexibility.

Cellophane

Rayon, a modified cellulose - was first developed in 1891. It was Dr. Jacques Edwin Brandenberger, who came upon the idea for a clear, protective, packaging layer in 1900. He swore that he would discover some way to apply a clear flexible film to cloth. Brandenberger added viscose (now known as Rayon) to cloth which he marketed as Cellophane. With a few more improvements, Cellophane allowed for a clear layer of packaging for any product - the first fully flexible, water-proof wrap.

The Discovery of Nylon

The 1920s witnessed a "plastics craze", as the use of cellophane spread throughout the world. DuPont were well on their way to developing Nylon which, at the time, they named Fibre 66. The fibre replaced animal hair in toothbrushes and silk stockings. Stockings were unveiled in 1939, to great public acceptance. By substituting and inserting elements into the chemical chain, new materials and uses were developed over the next few decades and continue to be developed today.



PVC and Teflon

Another important plastic innovation of the time was the development of polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Waldo Semon, a B.F. Goodrich organic chemist, was attempting to bind rubber to metal when he stumbled across PVC. Semon later discovered that this material was inexpensive, durable, fire-resistant, and easily moulded.

A DuPont chemist named Roy Plunkett discovered Teflon®, in 1938. Teflon® today is widely used in kitchenware. Plunkett discovered the material accidentally by pumping freon gas into a cylinder left in cold storage overnight. Teflon® is unique because it is impervious to acids and to both cold and heat. Teflon® is now best-known for its slipperiness - which makes it highly effective in pots and pans for easy cooking and cleaning.

Polyethylene

In 1933, two researchers, E.W. Fawcett and R.O. Gibson, had no idea that the revolutionary substance they would come across or the impact it would have on the world – polyethylene, a type of thermoplastic. These days polyethylene is used to make common items such as drink bottles, milk jugs and plastic food storage containers. However during World War II, it made history first as an underwater cable coating and then as a critical insulating material for military radar. This is because it was so light and thin that it made placing radar onto airplanes possible. It was these lightweight radar systems that allowed the out-numbered Allied aircraft to detect German bombers under difficult conditions. The low smoke zero halogen material used for the outer sheath of NoBurn fire cable is also a type of thermoplastic.

Plastics in the Modern World

Since the 1950s, plastics have grown into a major industry that affects all of our lives - from providing improved packaging to giving us new textiles, to permitting the production of wondrous new products and cutting edge technologies in such things as televisions, cars and computers. In fact, since 1976, plastic has been the most used material in the world. None of the applications and innovations we take for granted would have been possible if it weren't for the early scientists who developed and refined the material.

The chemistry and research behind the formulation of the two types of plastics used for NoBurn fire cable is considerable, however it is those early pioneers who made it possible for us to enjoy the quality and safety of life we do today.



Sales Expand in Southern Ireland

It is Connor Margetson and his team at Marlin Enterprises Dublin who act as sole agents for the sale of Ventcroft products to electrical wholesalers in Southern Ireland.



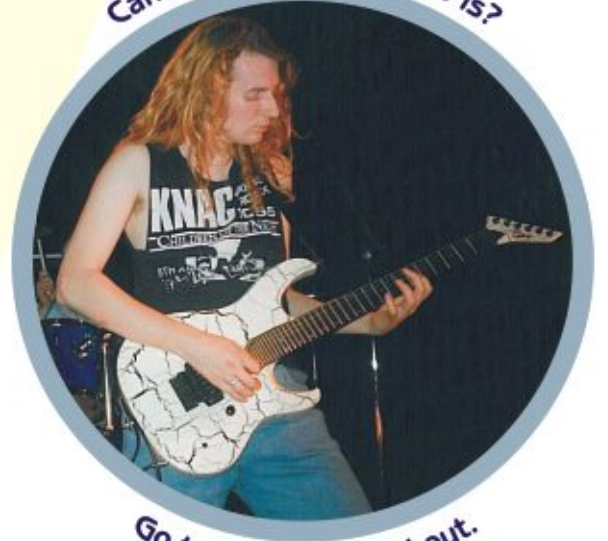
Connor first started selling Ventcroft products around 3 years ago and has been acting as an agent for Cable manufacturers in Ireland for over 20 years.

In Ireland there are the usual UK fire cable brands but also considerable penetration of the market by main land European brands, however due to Connor and his team with a little assistance from the Euro/£ exchange rate, sales so far this year have risen by a massive 60%, and each month more and more new customers are changing to Ventcroft cables.

Connor says customers, both wholesaler and installer are delighted with Ventcroft fire and intruder cable. They appreciate the competitive prices, quality and ease of installation the cables provide.

Connor is a keen football supporter so it is curious why he has supported Leeds United all his life.

Can you guess who this is?



Go to page 6 to find out.

Specification and Installation

It is always interesting to see the PR claims of other Fire Cable manufacturing companies about where their cable has been specified.

It is clear that a great deal of time and effort (not to mention lunches) has gone into getting their cable specified, however of particular interest is the number of projects we know where NoBurn cable has been used but where the PR claimed an alternative brand had been specified.

These days it is not possible to simply specify just one brand of cable or for a cable approval to be by just one authorised body, the specification has to carry the words to mean 'or equivalent'. In other words to meet the requirements of both industry best practise and the laws governing such matters. You cannot specify that cable to be used is 'BASEC' approved only, the specification has to allow for the cable used to be approved by other similar bodies, for example in the case of BASEC, LPCB or vice versa.

Similarly this is the case with the brand of cable specified, so long as a cable carries an approval from a recognised body to the same standard as required, the choice of the cable actually installed is often down to the contractor selected to do the installation.

Here is a list of major projects where NoBurn fire cable has been used, some of them where other manufacturers PR has claimed their cable was specified – it's just a shame they didn't check with installers about which cable they preferred to install or the wholesaler about which cable they prefer to sell!

◆ New Wembley & Arsenal Emirates Stadiums



◆ Lord Sefton & Earl of Derby Stands Aintree



◆ Trafford Centre & Hilton Hotel Manchester

◆ Doncaster Rover's New Stadium

◆ Warrington Hospital

◆ Heathrow & Gatwick Airports

◆ Merseyside Maritime Museum

◆ And many more!

Martin Freeman Internal Sales



No longer the long hair rebel, as the picture shows, Martin is now a key member of Ventcroft's sales team. Aged 37, Martin has been on call with our internal sales team to answer customer queries for almost 4 years.

When Martin joined Ventcroft he came with 8 years technical and customer service experience in the Security Market and is qualified in electronics and customer service. Over the years Martin has developed an extensive knowledge of our range of fire cable and fire electronic products in order to provide accurate information and assistance across the full Ventcroft range.

In June next year Martin is getting married to Jennie. He intends to continue with his hobbies of Motorbikes, playing guitar and supporting Liverpool FC but then who knows what Jennie's intentions are for him?

Health and Safety Update

The Company Health and Safety Manual has been rewritten incorporating changes to all procedures and processes, including 5S philosophy/Lean Manufacturing techniques, and is available for the use of all employees.

Carl Morris, as a dedicated Health and Safety Representative, is working closely with Natwest Mentor and the manufacturing teams to gradually integrate the principles contained in the manual into our Manufacturing and Quality Systems. But remember, as an employee you are also responsible for the safety of yourself and those around you.

Installers in Danger of Using Wrong Fire Cable

Until recently 'Standard' fire performance cable was suitable for use with Emergency Lighting Systems.

In 2006 the previous Emergency Lighting Systems standard BS5266-1 1999 was replaced with a new version. It called for the fire performance cable to meet a fire performance test as detailed in BS50200:2006 to PH60 – 1 hour duration, whereas fire system cable is only required to meet PH30 – 30 minute duration of BS50200:2006.

Installers should beware of assuming the fire cable they use is automatically compliant to the new Emergency Lighting cable standard!

Ventcroft Standard Fire cable has been tested and approved by LCPB to meet twice the requirement of BS50200:2006 PH60 and is certified to PH120 – a 2 hour duration.



Installers should ask their cable supplier for certification to a minimum of PH60 or risk their Emergency Lighting System installation being non compliant.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE ECO BABES IN THE WOOD MARCH 2008

Who would have thought of staging a Pantomime at any time other than Christmas? The Kinoulton Players, of whom Jim Malone is a member, did.

A Spring pantomime in aid of local charities is a tradition for this happy band of enthusiastic amateurs from a village on the outskirts of Nottingham. This year they chose to tell the tale of Robin Hood and the Eco Babes, and their fight to prevent a road being built through Sherwood Forest. The theme of the show was somewhat adult, (which is possibly why it is not on at Christmas when the audience would have been much younger), and more in the style of Benny Hill than old Dames and Panto Horses!



"The Eco Babes", as the name suggests, are at the forefront of Robin Hood and his merry men's fight to prevent the road being built. These four young girls get themselves in one or two scrapes and are eventually captured by the Sheriff and imprisoned in his castle where they are interrogated to reveal Robin's plans. The girls remain silent even when the Cat-o-Nine tails comes out, but I will leave that up to your own imagination.

Robin and his men hatch a plot to free the girls from the castle during a ball. This gives the girls and the rest of the cast an opportunity to show off amongst other things, their dancing talents!

The whole cast were excellent with notable performances from Bill & Phil Smith as John Little & Little John (we could all see someone we knew in their characters), The Eco Babes themselves (and beautiful babes they were), and not forgetting Ventcroft's very own Jim Malone as the Sheriff of Nottingham (A part made just for him, believe me!). Tom Jones can look out as Jim's rendition of "Sex Bomb", complete with shaky hips will leave a lasting memory in our minds and hopefully yours too when you watch the Video.

The whole thing was a must see performance and with a few drinks from the bar, a good night was had by all.

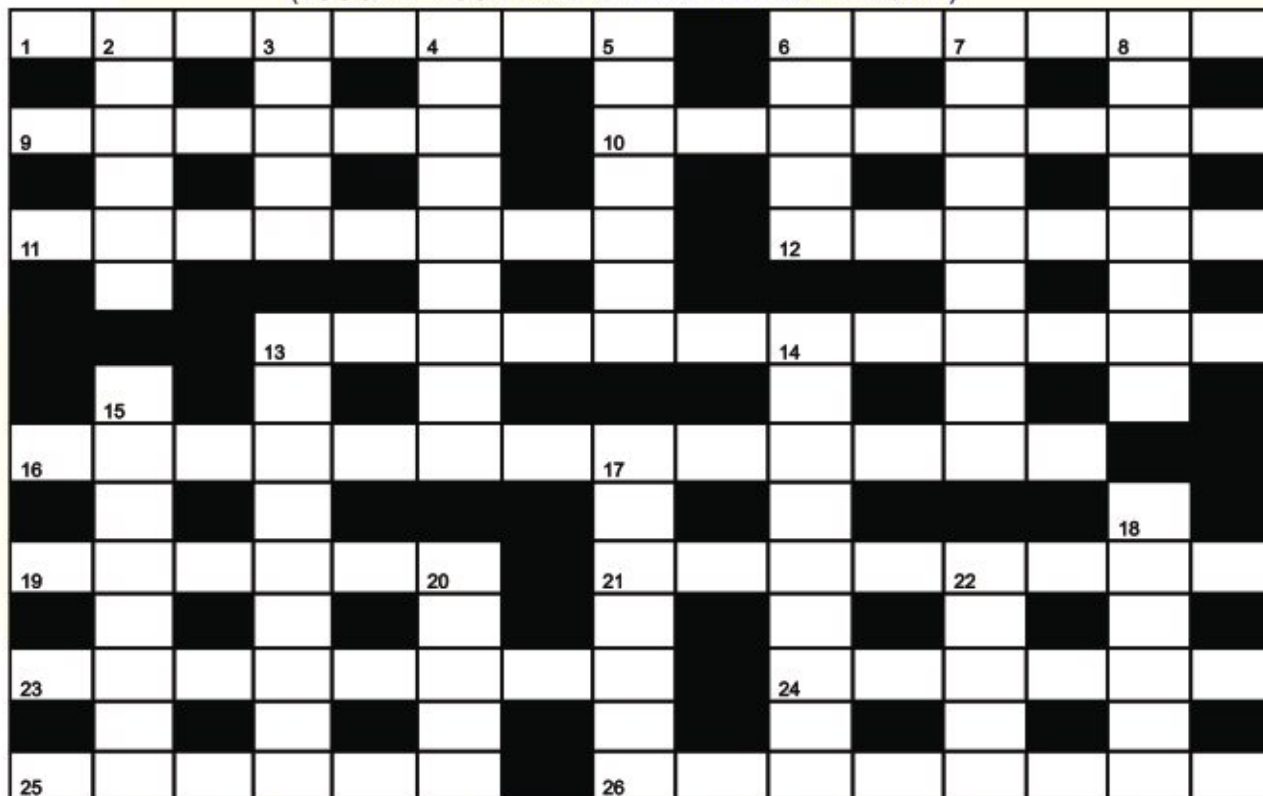
The three night performance raised around £3000 for the Local Village Church Charity and the Rainbow Childrens Hospice. Well done Kinoulton Players!

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

WIN VIP TICKETS TO A PREMIERSHIP MATCH

LIVERPOOL OR MAN U v YOUR TEAM - SEASON 2008/09

(TOUGH IF YOUR TEAM AIN'T IN THE PREMIERSHIP)



Crossword does not have to be completed to win - points will be given to most and closest answers.

Name

Return completed crossword to Karen by 9th May 2008.

Two Sets of Questions – Same Answers

Across Letters Cryptic			Across Letters Quick Clues		
1	8	Was made better and better and better and better and better	1	8	This fire cable is rated for 120 minutes instead of 30 minutes
6	2 & 4	This type of Anaerobic Sludge Blanket is normally used to treat waste water	6	2 & 4	A term used to describe making a fluid run in the opposite way to normal
9	6	Capital idea Adam and Bert had about taking it easy	9	6	Describes a fire when fully ignited
10	1, 3 & 4	Might need one of these to catch a Whale	10	1, 3 & 4	Needed to hold 4000 metres of fire cable
11	4 & 4	Put simply the point after which a Negative becomes Positive or Vice-versa	11	4 & 4	NoBurn went _____ to one of the biggest selling fire cable brands on the market in 4&1/2 years
12	6	It does it like this	12	6	How we ask customers for their order
13	5 & 7	Promises to be Sea Sick several times, well sounds like it anyway	13	5 & 7	The UN _____ to reduce _____ at a conference in Bali recently
16	6, 2 & 5	To avoid this, type no muffles (anagram) is why fire cable is low smoke zero halogen	16	6, 2 & 5	What you get when a fire breaks out
19	6	With these and shares you could be laughing all the way to the bank	19	6	We keep plenty of this to enable us to make our products
21	8	You are so near this small lead singer with Ultravox	21	8	Just a little bit more
23	8	Make a note I'm critical of his last book	23	8	Write this to explain what is wrong or needs to be changed
24	6	There used to be 100 Red Balloons until one did this	24	6	To burst suddenly or violently
25	6	They might hurt you when they do this	25	6	To hit something or someone forcefully
26	4 & 4	When asked, Police were certain of it	26	4 & 4	What LPCB confirm when they burn test our fire cable
Down Letters Cryptic			Down Letters Quick Clues		
2	6	It wouldn't be him that wrote A Man's A Man for A' That.	2	6	The fastest growing fire cable brand in the UK
3	5	What customers may show at the prices of our competitors fire cable	3	5	NoBurn & Union Cable is made for these systems
4	6 & 3	A high IQ is a small weight off your mind?	4	6 & 3	NoBurn Diamond's Firelok is the _____ to make and Enhanced cable instead of Fibre and Mica wraps
5	7	The band is 6 Trombones short to play for this Wedding Anniversary	5	7	The Fastest to terminate 'Enhanced' fire cable available and a girls best friend
6	5	You won't get me, I'm part of this organisation	6	5	Brand name of Ventcroft's standard intruder cable
7	9	Been dismissed accordingly for leaving you stranded or solid	7	9	NoBurn Platinum and Diamond are Softskin types of this
8	8	Instead of hanging around on terafirma, H is missing this way to travel	8	8	A way of travel which isn't by boat or plane
13	9	An opening in the wall on a small house in the highlands?	13	9	Recent Post and Echo Business of the Year winner of award for companies with less than 50 staff
14	9	Alan uses this ductile and malleable material which is not readily corroded or tarnished	14	9	Material used as foil wrap in NoBurn Standard fire cable
15	8	What it goes when you record a million sales	15	8	Ventcroft's NoBurn 'standard' fire cable
17	7	He's eaten the least at speed during this religious period	17	7	Our fire cables are this to prepare for termination
18	6	It's Politically Correct to use this on average	18	6	We manufacture stranded and solid cable cores with this
20	5	Picture this, Sarah has a quick sleep	20	5	A way to remove the tag on non Polycarbonate external sounders
22	5	Sign off to go and collect these	22	5	Away fans sing about the thanking of the signing of these

The competition is open to Ventcroft personnel only (excluding Directors). If more than one winner, a raffle will decide the winner.