

Capital gains

The Carmine Building, courtesy of mossessian & partners

The London skyline is evolving before our eyes as exciting new developments take shape, and Fire Defence is picking up contracts right across the city to protect these breath-taking new builds and dynamic redesigns.

Inside

- Innovative installations for high street giants Tesco and M&S
- Celebrating 100 years of Wrigley's gum
- Fire Defence welcomes some fresh new faces

What's hot?

So, there's still turmoil in the markets. But, while it's difficult to assess what the correlation is between the international crisis and our industry, the simple fact is that our sales are storming ahead!

It appears that the work we are putting in to developing our mantra 'Plan the Work, Work the Plan' is paying dividends. Our 'Three-Weekly View' – a regular report that looks both back and to the future – is being well received by our preferred contractors. We are also really beginning to encourage site supervisors to make the most of their responsibilities, an initiative that has led to our monthly 'Most Confident Site Supervisor' award.

And, thanks to our IT technicians and design department, we now have intuitive software that allows us to ensure that the checks and reviews required by design are completed across all our regional offices. This is proving to be an invaluable resource, making engineering cost savings, training and professional development a part of day-to-day routines.

Outside the office, we've also been involved in the successful retrofit installation of sprinklers into a residential block of flats in Sheffield, organised by BAFSA. Fire Defence was the first contributor to the project – one that will highlight the fact that fire sprinkler systems are so much more than just a warning device or a passive delayer of the spread of fire. They are key in fighting fire quickly

and effectively and, as the Sheffield installation proves, can be fitted economically into all buildings, even those with permanent residents.

So all in all, an exciting six months. I'm looking forward to my Hot News next year!



By Bill Johns
Fire Defence Chairman

Satisfaction guaranteed

Fire Defence has been an LPCB-approved company since 1994. LPCB stands for Loss Prevention Certification Board. LPCB is part of BRE Global Limited, and is an essential reference for anyone looking for a contractor in the fire protection industry.

If you've been assessed and approved by LPCB, your name appears in The Red Book – more formally named the List of Approved Fire and Security Products and Services, and the ultimate list of trusted fire industry suppliers and specialists.

As Simon Billis from LPCB explains, 'We are the main installer approval organisation in the UK and Ireland, with 89 companies now officially approved by the scheme.'

The certification used for the fire sprinkler industry is called the Loss Prevention Standard 1048, or LPS 1048. Put together by an expert team including installers, local government, insurers and clients, it's based around four levels of approval, and companies can move up through the levels with a combination of assessments, reviews and exams.

A minimum number of installations and projects need to be completed in order that LPCB can carry out its assessments at each level. No stone is left unturned, from the staff, training provision, design processes and all engineering, installation and maintenance.

And it works for everyone. 'All the stake holders benefit from the scheme,' says Simon. 'The clients, the insurers and the various building control bodies involved in a project can get a genuine third-party certification for their installation. And from the installers point of view, it means they can promote their services with our logo and the guarantee of fully-approved work.'

Find Fire Defence in the LPCB Red Book at www.redbooklive.com



The Wild West... Berkshire

'Project Cactus' might sound like a Hollywood blockbuster where a computer geek partners with a John-Wayne style hero to save humanity from hidden evil in the dusty plains of Arizona.

In fact it's the name of Tesco's new dry storage warehouse just off the M4 in Reading. But doesn't mean there isn't an impressive list of credits to its name.

For a start, when it's completed, the warehouse will be big. Very big. 86,000m² and 12m from floor to eaves. It's being built on the site of the old Scottish and Newcastle brewery – at a cost of around £60 million – and it will serve the whole of the London and M4 corridor region.

And it's Fire Defence who has been charged with protecting this impressive development. The work involves fitting 11,000 sprinkler heads in the roof and a further 25,000 in the racking. There will be three half-capacity diesel-driven fire pumps, two 650m³ sprinkler tanks and 26 valve sets in place.

The warehouse will be fully operational by September 2012, but as yet there's no word of an opening night premier.



Great expectations

M&S is opening its biggest out-of-town stand-alone store in Europe next spring, and as you'd expect it's all being done in the most eco-friendly way. In an age where sustainability is the key concern in all new developments, M&S Cheshire Oaks will be the company's flagship Eco Store.

Fire Defence has won the contract for installing a full sprinkler protection system throughout the store – a contract that comes with some exacting requirements. Firstly it's a fast-track project, so 90% of the work has to be completed in

just eight weeks. This means having no less than 30 engineers on site to get the work done by April.

Secondly, everything has to be approved and tested in line with M&S's strict fire-engineering specifications in addition to Fire Defence's own high standards of quality control. And, just to add to the fun, there are 5,000 sprinkler heads being installed in the 150,000 sq ft space, in an electronic package that also has to be approved by the local building controls team due to the depths of the voids in the building's construction.

This is not just any sprinkler installation. This is an M&S installation.

The Marks & Spencer logo, with "MARKS & SPENCER" in a black serif font, where the ampersand is yellow.

MARKS &
SPENCER

For more information about these major installations, and other exciting FD projects, go to www.fire-defence.com/news

London calling

The London market is more buoyant than ever. Around half of the value of all Fire Defence's work has come from the capital this year, from head-turning projects at the Olympic sites and industry firsts at the Excel centre to hundreds of smaller installations across the West End. They might not be the traditional London landmarks, but we think they're well worth celebrating!



St George's Tower

A luxury residential development in Vauxhall, opposite the mystery and intrigue of MI5. With prices starting from £800,000 for a Manhattan apartment, it's comforting to know that her Majesty's best are on your doorstep and a state-of-the-art fire sprinkler system is protecting your investment.

Fire Defence is installing the system on each of the 50 storeys as they're built in a shell and core and fit-out contract, with work starting mid-October and ongoing for the next two years.



The Ark

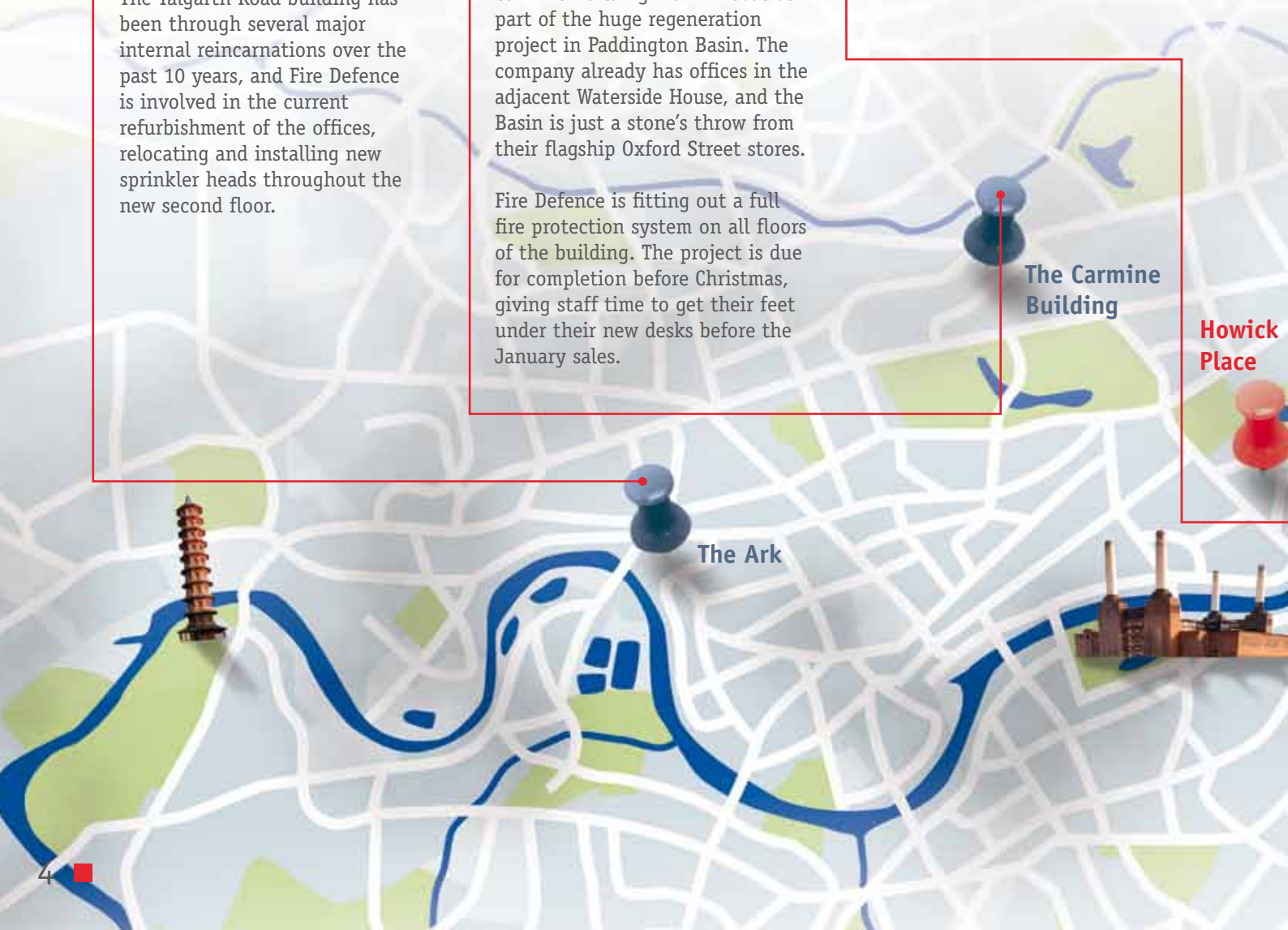
First opened in 1992, The Ark was designed by architect Ralph Erskine and has been an impressive landmark on the west London skyline ever since. The Talgarth Road building has been through several major internal reincarnations over the past 10 years, and Fire Defence is involved in the current refurbishment of the offices, relocating and installing new sprinkler heads throughout the new second floor.



The Carmine Building

A new HQ for the nation's favourite store. M&S is moving a large part of its head office operations to the Carmine Building – an innovative part of the huge regeneration project in Paddington Basin. The company already has offices in the adjacent Waterside House, and the Basin is just a stone's throw from their flagship Oxford Street stores.

Fire Defence is fitting out a full fire protection system on all floors of the building. The project is due for completion before Christmas, giving staff time to get their feet under their new desks before the January sales.



The Carmine Building

Howick Place

The Ark



The Heron

A really exciting two-part new-build project near the Barbican. The Guildhall School of Music is getting a brand-new home, taking up the entire first six floors of the development. Then there will be 30 floors of luxury residential apartments above.

Fire Defence is installing protection for the entire building – the team is on site now and completion is due by the end of next summer.



Aloft Hotel, Excel Centre

As we reported in the last issue of Red, the mist-system installation at the Aloft Hotel in London's Docklands is a genuine industry first. The installation was a key part of the FIRAS mist-system accreditation awarded to Fire Defence this summer – the hotel is the first building to have a full mist system installed, and the project is certainly full, covering every floor from basement to penthouse.



Westfield Stratford

We've got a few months to wait before the Olympics kick off, but the doors to the shops are well and truly open! Westfield Stratford is one of Europe's largest retail destinations, and Fire Defence has been involved in several installations, including the New Look store and the recently re-branded Everything Everywhere.



Africa House

The Heron

East Road

Wagamama

New Fetter Lane

Hugo Boss Black

Rathbone Market

Aloft Hotel, Excel Centre

St George's Tower

Croydon Curves

100 years of memories

Wrigley's is a childhood memory, a national institution, and one of the most innovative confectioners all rolled up into one thin strip of flavoured gum. And this year sees the company celebrating its 100th birthday – with Fire Defence on hand to make sure the candles don't stop production!

The names Juicy Fruit, Starburst and Skittles will always conjure up the excitement of Friday afternoon pocket-money trips to the corner shop after school.

Who can't sing the theme song to Orbit Sugar-Free gum, or remember their greatest victory in the playground Hubba Bubba bubble-blowing competitions?

And Wrigley's Extra Peppermint gum is still the number one profit-earning confectionary in the UK. Lets face it, we all love Wrigley's, and we always will.

It's 100 years since Wrigley's Spearmint gum came to the UK. But in fact, for all the nostalgia surrounding the brand, Wrigley's is a company based very much on innovation. No less than 45% of Wrigley's UK sales come from products that are less than five years old.

And while the brand might be 100 years old, the factory is the scene of some very modern creativity. Set on a hilltop outside Plymouth, the operation employs around 500 people, and plays a key role in Wrigley's business across Europe.

The heart of the Wrigley's empire is perhaps not as magical as Mr Wonka's chocolate factory, but it still has doors labeled Flavour Stores. And without Umpa Lumpas to keep an eye on things, a specially-designed fire protection system is an essential ingredient.

In a room full of gum and chewy confectionary, glass-shattering fire sprinkler heads are a potential disaster, so instead all the heads are soldered links – temperature controlled but with no glass. Fire Defence has been maintaining and upgrading the systems for more than 10 years, and the 12 valve sets and numerous pumps and tanks now protect the entire building.

So everything is set for more happy years of Friday sweetie treats. Happy birthday Wrigley's!

WRIGLEY'S
SPEARMINT
THE PERFECT GUM

The mist is cleared

In the spring issue of Red we reported that Fire Defence was set to become the second UK company, and first LPCB 1048 company, to be awarded the FIRAS certification for installing mist fire protection systems. Well, it all became official on 15 August, thanks to the first installation at the Aloft Hotel at London's Excel Centre (see page 5).

Along with a site inspection at the hotel, FIRAS undertook two pre-certification office visits and took a close look at Fire Defence's management systems. There are now nine qualified mist system staff at Fire Defence, and the number of installations is expected to increase steadily over coming months.



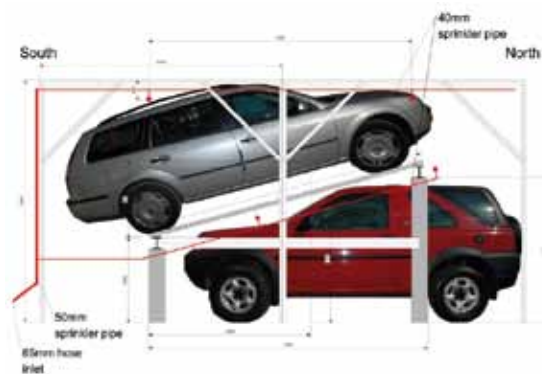
Industry news

Safe parking

Back in 2006, the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Sustainable Buildings Division carried out a research programme to record what happens when a fire breaks out in the confined space of a car park. The test results were fascinating, and challenge the advice currently given in the official guidance published in support of Building Regulations.* With more combustible plastics and an increase in unpredictable alternative fuels, cars can burn faster producing much more heat and smoke than ever before.

There's also an emergence of new forms of car storage such as 'car stackers', so a simple two-vehicle car stacker test was included.

But for BASFA a crucial element of the tests was missing. How much could the damage have been limited if a fire sprinkler system had been activated? So they funded BRE Global to copy the tests, using CLG's Car Stacker Rig, but this time with a full sprinkler system in place.



And what happened? In the BRE test the fire temperatures and size of the fire were reduced, and the upper car didn't become fully involved in the fire – implying that the sprinklers significantly reduced the spread of the fire. In short, the results speak for themselves – always fit sprinklers!

* In England & Wales the Approved Document B and in Scotland the Technical Handbook for Non Domestic premises.

The green case for sprinklers

BAFSA has published an enlightening report by international assessment group Bureau Veritas, which shows that sprinklers are good for the environment as well as being life-saving.

- Buildings fitted with sprinklers often use only 0.2% of the water used to extinguish an un-sprinklered building.
- Fitting sprinklers in all commercial and industrial buildings in England and Wales would save over 9 billion litres of water a year.
- When a fire breaks out, commercial buildings fitted with sprinklers emit a massive 22% less carbon dioxide than those without.

Going retro in Sheffield

The best way to prove a theory is to just try it. Department of Communities and Local Government officials have expressed the view that it's not practical or cost effective to retrofit sprinkler systems into residential tower blocks. But the Sprinkler Coordination Group (SCG) believed differently, and with the help of BASFA and a number of its members, including Fire Defence, they're set to prove their point – with a complete high-rise retrofit.

The project is a true meeting of minds. BASFA came on board to appoint a project manager and encourage its members to supply the materials and installation expertise. FIRAS agreed to verify and approve the work and Warrington Certification is reviewing each stage of design and installation. The tower block chosen is owned by Sheffield Homes – the 38-year-old social housing block is in the Gleadless area of the city. The installation also has the approval of Zurich Insurance and Yorkshire Water, who provide the all important water supplies.

The initiative will cost around £80,000, which will be fully covered by BASFA and its members.

Project manager, Steve Seaber said, 'The project has proved conclusively that it is practical, economically viable and cost effective to retrofit fire sprinklers into occupied blocks. The success is very much due to the support provided by BASFA members.'



BAFSA is the UK's oldest and biggest fire sprinkler association. Its members install more than 86% of all sprinkler systems in the UK. For more info and to register for future BASFA newsletters go to www.firesprinklerevents.com



Nigel MacKenzie

The fact that Fire Defence has taken on Nigel as Group Technical Support is a good indication of just how big the company has grown in the past months, and how promising the future is looking. The fact that Nigel travels 190 miles in order to work in the South Molton office every week is a good indication of how highly he regards what Fire Defence has to offer!

"I've known Bill for many years," he says of Chairman Bill Johns, "and he's definitely the most progressive person in the fire protection industry."

Nigel himself has been working with fire systems for nearly 30 years, and has been brought in to use his immense experience to support all areas of the business, from design and service and maintenance to internal training and third-party certification.

Trained as an incorporate engineer, he now offers technical backup across the company to make systems more adept and working practices more efficient. He's also overseeing the company's third-party accreditations, so watch out for even more logos of approval in coming months.

New faces at

The freshest new face on the block, Ian joins Fire Defence this month as Sales Executive. But with what he describes as his 'broad brush-stroke experience' he's looking forward to playing an active part in developing all areas of the business.

Ian started in the fire protection industry at 16, and completed a five-year mechanical engineering course in his home town of Worcester.

After 13 years working as a design engineer, Ian became small works and service manager at a number of sprinkler companies. It's from his latest role as national accounts manager that he's

coming to Fire Defence. And he's very clear about his reasons for the move.

"I think genuine appreciation and respect for the client is essential," Ian explains. "Our business has got to be about making sure our clients are satisfied, and working hard to build relationships and repeat business. This is something I think is a real strength at Fire Defence."

Ian's going to be travelling between his home office in Worcester and the South Molton HQ in the short term – making him ideally placed to launch a Midlands office in the future. Watch this space...!



Ian Heron

Fire Defence



Lee Corbett

Lee joined Fire Defence in April as Operations Manager for London and the South East. And his team is living proof that it's an exciting time to working in the fire protection industry in the capital. The London office has doubled over the past 18 months, and Lee has four project managers and three designers working on a wide variety of projects, from huge new residential developments to schools to small shop units.

And it was the wide remit that brought Lee to Fire Defence.

"I was working as head of a project sprinkler division – and most of my time was spent working with London Underground, which was very limiting in the end."

A trained design engineer, Lee has been in the industry for 12 years before taking control at the Fire Defence office in Crayford. "It's a great time to join the company," he says. "Things are changing and growing, and the diversity of the work here in London is really exciting."

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