



# FACE2FACE

THE MAGAZINE OF AVK UK GROUP FOR STAFF AND CUSTOMERS

## "Not easy, but it has to be done"

This year the market for our products in the water industry has been slow and that has inevitably affected our trading performance, but fortunately the indications are that we can expect to see recovery and growth from November onwards.

Our cost base has also been under pressure, from less favourable exchange rates as well as rises in freight and material costs, and it is our ideas for innovation and awareness of the need to contain costs that have helped us to minimise the impact on our customers - a great effort on the part of everyone.

Now we have another tough challenge on our hands - implementing price increases comprehensively, across our customer base as well as our product range. Not easy, but we know it has to be done.

And let us not forget that our customers have also been suffering as the general economy and market conditions have become more challenging over the past 12-18 months. They have given us great support nonetheless, and we thank them for that.

In the current environment we have to further differentiate what AVK has to offer from the competition, which must include showing why the product standards that we meet (and usually exceed) are essential to our customers' success. They are not optional extras that they can easily do without, and that has been a big theme in our marketing and communication drive this year (see page 2).

Finally, we all have a part to play in our Vision 4 initiative, which was launched internally at our recent road show under the banner 'Our Vision Is Your Advantage'. It is built around the benefits that AVK offers its customers - Quality, Reliability, Innovation and Environment - which we are also featuring consistently in our advertising.

And all these things feed into our newly published Customer Charter (see below), which is key to our success. It is a clear commitment to our customers, and the outcome of three years' hard work on the part of production, supply chain, IT, distribution (in fact all our people) to deliver

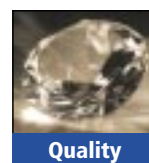
a market-leading efficient service with a personalised approach.

The bullet points speak for themselves:

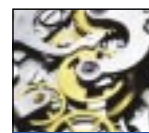
- Reliability
- Ease of contact
- Respect and courtesy
- Product application and support
- Measurable performance and transparent review
- Proactive feedback and points of contact

With all of that, the outlook is promising. So let's walk the talk and make our vision a reality!

**Paul Hubbard**  
AVK UK Group Chairman



Quality



Reliability



Innovation



Environment

*"A proactive supplier who is easy to work with and can be relied on to deliver appropriate, cost-effective solutions every time."*

That comment from AVK UK service delivery director Martin Brody is a good summary of the company's commitment to excellence in service delivery, as set out in its recently launched Customer Service Charter.

Part of the Vision 4 'Our vision is your advantage' programme, the six-page Charter embraces all aspects of the company's service and states clearly in each case the standard of service that customers can expect, and what they can do if they are not satisfied. "The Charter has been two years in the making and has its roots in our



### For service excellence

company conference, at which we made a commitment to review our service performance and challenged ourselves to do better," says Martin.

"Using the ideas generated at the conference as a spring-board, we have gone on to change and strengthen our organisation in a whole host of ways.

"To give just three examples, we have implemented a state of the art bar coding system at our National Distribution Centre to improve the accuracy of stock handling; invested in customer demand forecasting

technology; and expanded the depth and breadth of locally stocked product. All of these are having an on-going positive impact on our service performance. "The advantages of all the initiatives for

our customers are captured in the

commitments we have been prepared to make in the Charter. We have set out what they can expect from us; now we invite them to put us to the test."



# Directors warn of 'buy cheap' dangers

AVK UK directors have been expressing some forceful opinions in water industry magazines recently, warning of the dangers of buying essential equipment such as valves on price alone.

In the June 2010 issue of Water Active under the provocative headline 'Buy cheaply now, buy dearly later', chairman Paul Hubbard drew attention to the role that reputable suppliers such as AVK play in helping the industry to meet the standards that are essential to its effective operation.

He went on to point out that the value that this adds to the viability of the industry comes at a cost to the manufacturer - a cost which some utilities seem reluctant to acknowledge today through the prices that they are willing to pay for products (not to mention the considerable investment of time and money that creates those products in the first place).

"There are water infrastructure products going into the ground that will fail prematurely because, contrary to the claims made for them by suppliers, they do not meet mandatory standards and specifications," Paul said.

The point was taken up again by business development director Kieran Fitzpatrick in the Summer 2010 of the Institute of Water Journal.

Kieran cited instances of suppliers being allowed to 'self-certify' without even

declaring the product name or manufacturer, and companies adopting gate valve type tests inadequate for their application.

He ended with an offer not to be refused: "If you're thinking of installing a cheaper gate valve that is not designed for the purpose you want it for, come to us instead and we will supply one that is WRAS-approved, fully tested, considerably more reliable than the unregulated rubbish that is being installed in parts of the UK infrastructure - and better than the cheaper product you are considering. Go on, call our bluff..." There speaks a confident man.

**Does what it says on the tin? Not in this case; the valve failed after less than a year, costing the purchaser £3,000 to replace – not to mention the loss of reputation caused by inadequate water quality and disruption of the service.**



## Air manager

The latest addition to the AVK range of air valves makes it easier for design engineers to manage air accumulating in pipelines in a number of different circumstances.

The new Series 701/60 developed by AVK's strategic partners ARI, is high-flow and non-slam and combines the benefits of two types - air-release and air and vacuum.

The air-release component automatically discharges to the atmosphere small pockets of air as they accumulate along a pipeline when the pipeline or piping system is full and operating under pressure.

For the air and vacuum component, the role is wider: automatically discharging or admitting large volumes of air during the filling or draining of a pipeline or piping system - so it will open to relieve negative pressures whenever water column separation occurs.

"The result is less risk of the wear and tear that air can cause," commented Graham Charnley, market sector manager - clean water.

# Gas riser valve engineered for safety



AVK Donkin developed a safe, tamper-proof version of the gas riser valve which, although not used in the UK, is a common sight on multi-storey residential buildings in many countries.

The valve connects the PE service supply to the metal riser pipe that takes the gas into the building and the flow is controlled by an internal threaded plug.

The product was developed to overcome a potential leaking issue with some existing products in the market as Mike Skeemer, gas market sector manager, explains: "When the plug is turned to open the valve, there is nothing to prevent gas escaping between the threads of the plug and the valve body," he says. "It's only a small amount, but enough to become an explosion hazard if it builds up over time in a confined space. Even worse, if the plug is opened too far it can drop out completely."

Hence the development of the new Series 456 pictured here, which has a circlip above the internal threads to prevent the plug being removed in the fully open position; an integral o-ring on the plug which prevents gas leakage when it is being operated; and – to finish the job in true AVK style - a tamper-proof cap that can be operated only by a bespoke key.

The re-engineering has been at a competitive cost which should attract attention (and orders) from overseas markets where there are long-running programmes to introduce gas to many major cities.

Meet the delegation of people from Wolseley UK Drain Center who got together with AVK colleagues for a day's product training in the spring of this year. Headed by national utilities manager Andrew Kenny, the group included all the key account managers that cover utilities nationwide on behalf of the Center's 80 and more branches, which have been distributing AVK's products in the UK for almost 15 years. Sales director Richard Stone and national accounts manager – water Huw Jones

## Getting together

advantages and the latest innovations that are contributing to AVK's status as the manufacturer of choice for the UK water industry, all delivered by the key account manager line-up including Tom Stevens, Mick



hosted the event, which was managed by Graham Charnley and Stuart Montgomery, market section managers for clean and waste water respectively, and key account manager Mick Dilley.

Product awareness was the key topic, alongside customer benefits, commercial

Dilley, Tony Howard.

As well as the training sessions at the company's Northampton offices, there were visits to AVK Manufacturing and the National Distribution Centre in Corby to see the latest in product manufacturing and logistics. A busy day indeed!

## Arrivals and departures

### AVK UK New Starters

Nicholas Tew – Accounts Assistant,  
Prad Patel – Accounts Manager,  
Tony Howard – Key Account Manager Midlands,  
Tom Stevens – Key Account Manager North,  
Tim Plumb – Customer Service Manager UK Sewage,  
Water & Fire, David Gretton – Customer Service  
Manager UK Gas, Alex Widdowson – Sales  
Co-ordinator UK Gas, Stuart Montgomery – Market  
Sector Manager Waste Water

**AVK Service Awards** Sandra Baker – 20 years,  
Kieran Fitzpatrick – 20 years,  
Graham Charnley – 10 years  
Phil Morgan – 10 years, John Ostheimer – 10 years,  
Paul Beresford – 10 years, Gareth Parry – 10 years,  
Ken Buckley – 10 years, Michael Winkley – 10 years

**Retirements** Pat Howarth (28 years),  
Dave Allen (48 years)

### AVK Donkin New Starters

Oliver Gambling – Design Engineer, Vicki Ray –  
Accounts Assistant, Warren Vayro – Design Engineer  
**Retirements** Pauline Pember, Accounts Assistant (24  
years) **Births** Paul and Donna Oscroft – Baby girl Ellie

### AVK Manufacturing New Starters

Stefan Pochodaj – Production Supervisor

**Births** Steven Rose and partner Karen  
– baby girl Ayesha-Faith

**Marriages** Emma Simpson married Mark McMinn on  
3rd July 2010, honeymooned in Thailand.

**Retirements** Terry Troughton – 22 years, Graham  
Kirkham – 8 years, John Ostheimer – 11 years

### Aqua-Gas Manufacturing Corby New Starters

Ian Bell, Robert McCart – Production Manager

**AVK Service Award** Alan Hamilton – 10 years

### Glenfield Valves New Starters

Kenny O'Shea – Sales Engineer, Alan McNiven – Sales  
Support Manager (transferred from AVK UK)

**Retirement** Andy Neil early retirement after 19 years

**Births** Jane O'Hagen and husband Andy  
– baby girl Anna

### Invicta – Maidstone

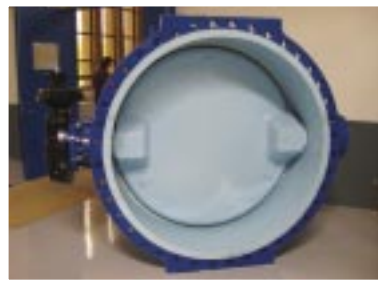
**New Starter** Jane Hammond – Sales Administrator

### Invicta – Telford New Starters

Jacqueline Horton-Darby – Administrator,

Oliver White – Storeman/Works Engineer

**Retirement** John Warner – 5 years



## Valve design improved

The new Series 756 double eccentric butterfly valve from Glenfield Valves incorporates an improved seal arrangement allowing full bi-directional functionality as standard, together with optimised operating torques.

The design is also lighter than the previous version; an average reduction in mass of 30% for the PN16 design, and 50% in the case of the PN10 design for lower pressure applications. The size range offered is DN1400 – 2200mm.

Although all aspects of the operation and maintenance of the valve remain the same, modern and efficient design and manufacturing processes will give customers added value in terms of ease of installation and reduced true life cost.

The new Series 756 butterfly valve is designed according to BS EN 593 and, like the previous version, is coated using 2-pack epoxy: blue RAL5017 externally and ribbon blue to BS4800 internally (WRAS approved).

It will now be offered as standard on all quotations for the PN10 and PN16 designs, but PN25 valves will continue to be manufactured to the existing, proven design. Datasheets are available for download from [www.glenfield.co.uk](http://www.glenfield.co.uk).

## New limiter pre-fitted

Another product has been added to the AVK Donkin range of gas flow limitors, the ingenious spring-loaded device that sits inside a gas service pipe and uses a drop in pressure resulting from a gas escape to shut off the supply instantly.

New this time round, following on from the DN25mm and DN32mm sizes launched last year, is the 310/8 flow limiter, which is pictured here in its 'natural habitat' - inside an electrofusion coupler or reducer used to join PE service pipes.

In fact that's exactly how the product is supplied, because Donkin has teamed up with the Fusion Group (also featured on page 4) to insert its flow limiter inside Fusion's coupler/reducer before it is tested and delivered to the customer.

The one-piece unit is easier to install than combining limiter and coupler in the trench, and it even has a red 'flag' on top to make it obvious to anyone uncovering the pipe at a later date that a flow limiter has already been fitted.



The 310/8 was developed at the request of Phoenix Natural Gas, which supplies and distributes natural gas in Northern Ireland. Sizes currently available are 32x32, 32x25 and 32x20mm.

# New Clearway hydrant has highest flow rate

The BS750 standard for fire hydrants requires them to deliver a statutory minimum flow of 2000 litres / minute at 1.7 bar.

This is a market sector where AVK UK has been the leader and main innovator for more than two decades, so it is no surprise that all its hydrants satisfy that requirement.

But what if the main is operating below that 1.7 bar pressure - because of difficult topography or leakage, for example? It means, of course, that the hydrant's flow capability will be below the legal requirement; a deficiency that is likely to cause friction between the water utility (which provides the hydrant) and the fire service (which uses it), and could even result in loss of life.

That's why AVK's new Clearway hydrant has been designed to deliver the statutory flow at just 0.5 bar. And at the required 1.7 bar, delivery has been measured at over 4500 litres/ minute – an unprecedented delivery more than twice the statutory minimum, the full strategic potential of which is already being discussed with the fire and water authorities.

The performance of the Clearway is so exceptional because it has a full, straight bore from inlet to outlet, which has the added advantage

of making it easy to introduce and retrieve

in-main equipment for activities such as measuring, monitoring, pipe repairs and flow stopping.

The dimensional and operational equivalent of a BS750 Type 2 fire hydrant, the Clearway is the only design of its type to carry full Kite Mark and WRAS approval and has been launched in parallel with a security device to prevent tampering and theft. The Phase 2 version is being designed as a backflow preventer equivalent to the traditional loose stopper hydrant.

Clearway is the outcome of an exceptional amount of market research (even by AVK's famously thorough standards) that began with a comprehensive and searching questionnaire sent to key stakeholders within the water utilities and fire and rescue services which demonstrated the need for a seminar to discuss the future of the fire hydrant.

This took place at Aqua-Gas Manufacturing in Corby, the AVK Group's Competence Centre for small gate valves and hydrants, and included a brainstorming session that identified the key issues and drew up a 'wish list' that the Clearway hydrant has been designed to satisfy.

In addition to the benefits described above, Clearway is safe to install and operates in the same way as the existing product to reduce the need for major staff retraining. It is similar in dimensions to traditional products for ease of installation, cost effective in terms of use and true-life cost and designed with the protection of the network and the asset in mind.

The last word goes to AVK business development director Kieran Fitzpatrick, who hosted the seminar that gave rise to the product and has overseen all the stages of its development: "We are absolutely sure that Clearway fully meets the requirements of the people who use it every day because we involved them right from the start," he says. "In fact, I don't know a better way to deliver the products that the market wants."



## Huw knows water well

Huw Jones, who joined AVK UK as new national accounts manager – water in March, has been in the business since leaving Swansea University with a degree in economics.

Starting with five years at engineering distributor FWB in Wrexham, he added another three focused on pipelines specifically as sales manager at Saville Gordon in Neath. He then took up the same role with Capper Plastics and ultimately stayed for eighteen years (during which time it was acquired by Wolseley), variously as key account manager for civils and utilities, national sales manager for Ireland and regional sales manager for Wolseley's South West Pipe and Climate Center.

## Gas training

Training has been more than usually to the fore at AVK Donkin following the success of fellow Chesterfield-based company - Fusion Provida in capturing a major contract from Fulcrum Connections (formerly the connections business of National Grid), which is now responsible for installing services from NG's mains into the premises of gas users.

"We previously supplied National Grid directly, but under the new arrangements we are working with Fusion, so it's important that their staff are well-versed in our products – what they are, what they do and how they can be used to best effect," explains gas market sector manager Mike Skeemer.

More than 30 people from Fusion's internal and external project teams have already been trained at the Staveley factory, including seeing the state-of-the-art conditions under which the products they put to use are manufactured.

"The next stage is for Fusion and ourselves to join forces and deliver training to Fulcrum's own people," says Mike. "That's important, because the better the end users understand AVK Donkin products the greater will be our success in persuading them that they will give them the results they need."



# Invicta joins AVK – and stays busy



Invicta Valves figured in the last Face To Face as an AVK UK distributor, but this time it does so as part of the business following the purchase of a majority shareholding in February 2010.

Despite the change of ownership Invicta is continuing to operate under its own brand with John Sutcliffe as managing director as before, and all business contacts remain the same.

The association of the two companies stretches back over 20 years, and Invicta is a well respected and recognised service provider whose specialisms include valve and actuation packages, supply and installation, technical on-site service and support, and provision of ancillary equipment.

AVK UK group chairman Paul Hubbard said: "Invicta's expertise will complement our product and service offer particularly through the water utility AMP5 programme, where we anticipate major changes in expenditure and an increasing need for specialised technical support in the supply chain.

"For Invicta Valves, the acquisition extends the opportunity to promote services to a broader base of customers, as well as providing the necessary funding for future expansion." On this page, we take a look at a few of Invicta's recent projects, both here and overseas.....

Invicta's ability to put together packages of water flow control equipment for strategically important schemes from a wide range of sources, very often complete with actuation systems, is one of its greatest strengths, as this glance at the company's recent order book shows.

A typical example is the hundreds of products the company is supplying to contractor Carillion for Essex & Suffolk Water's Abberton Reservoir near **Colchester** – a £750,000 collection of

AVK Series 54 and 21 gate valves in diameters up to DN1200mm and some with actuators, EVUS butterfly valves from Netherlands-based AVK company Wouter Witzel, air valves and Busch penstocks.

The £150m Abberton Scheme will raise the reservoir's top water level and increase its area to increase storage capacity by almost 60% (desperately needed in the UK's driest county).

Travel a few miles to the East and you'll find yourself in the territory of Veolia Water

Central (Three Valleys Water until recently), which keeps the taps flowing in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire North London and parts of Surrey.

Here, an Invicta package is going into the water treatment works in **Chertsey** this summer - AVK gate and Wouter Witzel butterfly valves and Busch penstocks again, but also stop logs for flexible flow control. The equipment will contribute to a £3m programme to increase the works' output capacity to a reliable and efficient 60 mega litres per day.

The main contractor at Chertsey is MWH, with whom Invicta has a well-established relationship in the UK. "When MWH secures a contract where our expertise is needed, AVK UK's technical people work with their proposals team to ensure the best result," says, Invicta Midlands branch manager Dave Warner.

Sometimes an opportunity with a local company takes Invicta further afield. Take, for example, the £50,000-worth of Witzel butterfly valves with AUMA actuators needed for a clean water project in **Baghdad** – or the 70 actuated AVK and Witzel valves that were assembled, tested and passed in just one and a half days when the deadline for the order was unexpectedly brought forward.

Ordered from Smethwick by the fire protection division of Tyco International - which has a presence in more than 60 countries including the Middle East – they were dispatched on schedule to Sulaibiya in **Kuwait**, home to the world's biggest plant for reclaiming and purifying wastewater to potable water standards.

Below: Installing the actuator on one of the valves for Kuwait - and Wouter Witzel butterfly valves ready for packing and dispatch to Baghdad.



## Better all round

Lighter, longer and easier to fit are the words that sum up the Series 248/32 Supacap, the Mark 2 version of AVK's ductile iron end cap for blanking off ferrous gas pipelines at pressures up to 2 bar.

'Lighter' because of a reduction in the amount of metal used to make the product without compromising on performance - just one example of the 'back to the drawing board' re-engineering exercise to reduce AVK's carbon footprint for all of its products. 'Longer' because the end cap has deeper side walls that cover a larger

area of the pipe, giving it a better fit when pipe ends are not cut exactly straight - a Donkin-led response to requests from gas engineers in the field.

And 'easier to fit' because a lighter design means lighter fixings - smaller diameter bolts that need less torque to tighten them.

# Glenfield gets a new look



Major investments have been made at Glenfield Valves since it became part of the AVK Group in 2001 to update and develop the infrastructure of the business, improve product and processes and management information systems.

2009 saw the commissioning of the new Blast and Paint Line, to be followed this year by a 'facelift' for the main factory along with internal and external improvements to the offices, including new cladding to the interior of Factory 1, a new factory heating system and refurbishment of machinery, plant and the main floor area.

Concurrently with all this, the offices have been renovated inside and out along with a sprucing up of the main car park, the product test area has been re-designed

and new work instructions and procedures have been introduced.

"These initiatives are all aimed at improving the performance of the Glenfield Valves business and raising standards," says managing director Jon Badrock. "They demonstrate that the company is improving and is capable of competing in tough global markets. There is still much more that can - and will - be done."

Part of the refurbished factory is shown here – along with a further consignment of valves for the Entrepouse project described on page 7.

\* This year Glenfield has also launched its re-designed, bi-directional butterfly valve (Series 756) – see page 3.



## The case for AVK

Showing the name of your company wherever and whenever you can is one of the fundamental rules of marketing, but here's an example that surely breaks new ground. Meet fifteen-year-old Stephanie McNiven and her AVK UK-branded pencil case – a world first (as far as we know).

She made the case - and personalised it with the name of her dad Alan, formerly key account manager for AVK UK and now sales support manager at Glenfield Valves - for her practical craft skills course at James Hamilton Academy in Kilmarnock.

Well done Stephanie – and watch out Nike!



Meet AVK's latest graduates - technical manager Robin Morewood and environmental & quality manager Donna O'Brien, who this year completed a postgraduate operational management programme at the University of Derby.

Robin described the course, which was run on behalf of the university by Awbery Management, as "very intensive – days often lasting for eight to ten hours at a number of different locations around the Midlands".

It was the second stage of a training programme that a number of AVK management staff benefited from.



## Golden frame

Janet Turner, HR Support for the AVK UK Group, is pictured with the Gold Award for Excellence presented by Peninsula Business Services - recognition of the company's outstanding efforts and commitment to achieving a successful and proactive Health and Safety culture amongst employees.

## Thinking ahead

Two key enhancements that will improve response to demand and replace paper transaction documents with electronic equivalents have been introduced into AVK's Microsoft Navision IT platform.

Planning for expected future demand has been improved by the new Stratum forecasting tool, which is based on the units to be reviewed, approved and released each month to the manufacturing companies so that they can plan their capacity accordingly.

All documents relating to customer sales - orders, order confirmations, invoices and so on - can now be transmitted electronically, thanks to the new E-trade system. It can also be integrated with Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems operated by customers - and suppliers too.

# Highlights from the order book

AVK valves are contributing to the up-grading of a water treatment works that is part of the UK's first Public / Private Partnership (PPP) for domestic water supplies.

Around £150,000-worth of DN400 -700mm metal seated gate valves with DN80mm by-passes are being installed for isolation purposes on the start, intermediate and finish of pipelines at Castor Bay WTW in Lurgan, Northern Ireland.

AVK's customer APP is supplying Farrans Construction & Dawson WAM, which is responsible for civil construction at Castor Bay – one of four works whose capacity is being increased by the PPP Project Alpha commissioned by the government-owned Northern Ireland Water.



AVK Donkin valves that meet the latest-standards are helping to assure more than 100,000 gas users in the centre of **Birmingham** of a trouble-free supply. National Grid's Lord Street / Windsor Street gas rationalisation project, which is being implemented by a trio of contractors (N Grid, Willows Construction and Enterprise), will improve distribution from the area's three large gas holders, which deliver 100,000m<sup>3</sup>/hr through DN900mm supply lines operated by weight loaded butterfly valves. Some parts of the system are over 70 years old.

The out-dated butterfly valves are being replaced, and the DN900mm lines discontinued. Instead, there will be two new pressure reducing stations built by Honeywell/RMG delivering a 30mbar supply into four DN600mm steel pipelines and then into DN630mm PE mains via DN600mm steel gate valves.



AVK UK's ability to supply a complete range of valves to meet customers' needs – and to manufacture 'specials' when



required – has helped the company win a six-figure order for flood alleviation measures in Gloucestershire.

Severn Trent is investing £9.5m in a 17km pipeline that will by-pass a water treatment works in **Tewkesbury** put out of action by the exceptional rain-fall of 2007 and pick up supplies elsewhere in the network.

AVK gate valves will allow sections to be isolated as required, and air valves complete with isolating gate valves will ensure that issues caused by trapped air do not occur. More than 80 valves were required in total.



Significant quantities of valves and fittings from AVK UK are being dispatched to **Nigeria** during 2010 in response to orders from two distributor partners

In addition to the expected gate valves, the list of products required includes several different types of flange adaptors, flanged spigots and couplings (straight and stepped, cast and fabricated). Sizes supplied range from DN80mm to 1400mm and the combined value is in excess of £125,000.



Glenfield Valves and AVK France are fast approaching completion of the contract to supply 212 gate valves to the Vinci Construction Grand Projects/ QDVC/ Entrepose Joint Venture for the prestigious Doha North – Pumping Station 70 project in **Qatar**.

This is truly a Global AVK effort, with no less than five other AVK Group sources helping to secure the 3.5M + project - AVK Middle East, AVK Anhui, AVK Malaysia, AVK

**IGEM President Jeremy Bending (right) gets the low-down on the access system for the new Donkin Certus PE service isolation valve from AVK UK sales director Richard Stone at the Institution's 2010 Conference in Loughborough.**



Purchasing and AVK Holding – Legal.

The company's Robina Williams and project manager Jim McAllister (pictured here with some of the valves) have worked closely with the contractor to produce an extensive, painstakingly compiled QA package that Entrepose inspectors have commended as superior to documentation from all other suppliers.



Severn Trent Water recently gave AVK UK an order for thirteen DN1200mm Series 54 metal-faced gate valves.

Supplied complete with actuators, the valves were delivered during the course of this summer to **Bamford** water treatment works in North Derbyshire, which treats water from the mighty trio of Pennine reservoirs - Howden, Derwent and Ladybower – before it is distributed Southwards to the populations of the East Midlands and Birmingham.

## Go for it!

Two teams from AVK UK joined Anglian Water colleagues and fellow suppliers at WaterAid's fund-raising Rutland Regatta, where the objective is to build and race a raft with just a few barrels, planks and lengths of rope.

"The idea is to beat the other teams around an 800-metre course, and the hardest part is paddling in a straight line," says Midlands key account manager Tony Howard.

AVK's gallant crews were Corby's Donna O'Brien, Louise Menzies and Rob McCart, and key account managers Tony Howard, Mick Dillely and Tom Stevens. The Regatta raised around £40,000 altogether.



## Geoff's Golf Day went with a swing in the sun

The AVK UK Geoff Baggaley Memorial Golf Day was held on 20th May 2010, honouring the popular industry figure and the company's MD for eight and a half years who died in January 2009.

Geoff's own Marriott Breadsall Priory Golf Club was the fitting venue, and delegating the weather to The Man Himself paid off in fine style with glorious weather, defying the cold, rain and winds of early May.

Mingling with the full complement of 11 teams was golf professional David Edwards, who spent the day videoing their golfing prowess and ended the day by demonstrating his own with a trick shot demonstration.

Apart from enjoyment, the main focus was on raising funds for WaterAid, the charity chosen by Geoff's widow Vicky, with a putting competition, raffle and auction but mainly through sponsorship from ten AVK suppliers – Busch, ARI, Rotork, Lombards, WH Rowe, Invicta, Singer, Dunbards, Wouter Witzel and Glenfield.

Dinner was in an 18th century wooden panelled room complete with minstrels'

gallery, perfect for the evening entertainment and presentations. Overall winner James Turner of Laing O'Rourke received a crystal trophy, an original painting of Breadsall Priory and a champagne and wine hamper, and other prizes were for second and third overall places (Bill Sharkey and Chris Sykes respectively), first and second teams, nearest the pin, longest drive, 'pink' ball team competition and the putting.

Then David Edwards was back to make a room full of grown men cry (with laughter) by playing back the day's play, complete with commentary - how does he get away with it? The evening gradually wound down, but for some the celebrations and commiserations continued on the warm terraces overlooking the illuminated fountains and shadowy rolling fairways.

The event raised over £3000 for Water Aid - a truly glorious day. Roll on next year!

**ABOVE: Laing O'Rourke's James Turner receives the winner's crystal trophy from Midlands key account manager Tony Howard.**

## "One of the best," says Achilles

AVK UK has received renewal of its Category A status with utilities supplier management organisation Achilles, and outstanding ratings into the bargain.

The company's Health and Safety was evaluated at 94.0%, Environment at 96.8% and Quality at 100.0% - "scores well above the industry average," according to commercial manager Tony Bedford. "That's very satisfying,

but more important is the way that being part of Achilles helps ensure we have the opportunity to tender for major contracts," Tony continues. "Achilles does the 'qualifying' work just once on behalf of all its potential buyers and sellers by implementing a common industry approach, which means that everyone can get down to business straight away when an opportunity arises."

## Room for manoeuvre

Removing or fitting valves and similar equipment on an established flanged water main is a tricky business, and every bit of manoeuvring space helps to make the job easier.

That's the idea behind the dismantling joint, which is a telescopic distance piece that can be adjusted to give those valuable additional millimetres of axial adjustment when constructing pipe work.

Confined space is often a problem on infrastructure applications such as water treatment works - especially where butterfly valves are involved, for which AVK is especially noted, so it's no surprise that the dismantling joint has always figured in the company's portfolio under the name of the Series 265.

Now the company is staking its claim to a bigger share of the international market for the product by expanding its size range - from DN300-1200mm up (and down) to DN50-2200mm.



## They know how

Knowing your product and how it should be used is essential for anyone in a sales role, which is why AVK is running training sessions with internal and external sales staff to raise their technical and application knowledge.

Every topic ends with a test, and everyone taking part is given a plan to revisit it for on-going improvement.

Products covered to date are Series 712 ductile iron fittings, Series 700 water air valves, Series 600 mechanical fittings, Series 772 penstock valves, Series 771 pressure management valves and Series 756 butterfly valves.