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## NEWS RELEASE

### *Queen's Award for A.J Wells & Sons Ltd*

AJ Wells & Sons Ltd, the designers and manufacturers of Charnwood® wood burning stoves and vitreous enamel signage has been granted the honour of The Queen's Award for Enterprise. The Queen's Awards are the UK's most prestigious awards for business performance, recognising exceptional achievement by UK companies.

Awarded in the International Trade category AJ Wells & Sons Ltd have seen their exports of Charnwood stoves increase eight-fold over the past six years and now over £2 million of product is exported across Europe, Japan and South Africa.

Located on the Isle of Wight, AJ Wells & Sons Ltd is a family business founded in 1972 by Alfred Wells and his sons Alistair and John. It now employs 164 people and is proud to support the local community. Wherever possible it sources its raw materials locally in the UK. The family is still very much part of the business with currently 10 family members employed throughout the company.

Charnwood is the company's largest division, which designs and manufactures the UK's leading brand of high quality wood burning stoves, which are both highly efficient and give low emissions. The past 18 months has seen large growth in sales as consumers have turned to wood burning stoves as a renewable heating source independent of the economic and political factors which affect oil and gas supplies.

The company's other major division manufactures Vitreous Enamel signage and panels which are widely used on the London underground. Recently they have been involved in the manufacture of art panels for the Aylesbury bus station redevelopment which is the world's largest art work installation using Vitreous Enamel.



Commenting on the award, Sales Director Hugh Wells said:

*'We are delighted and honoured to receive The Queen's Award. Over the last few years we have seen great success in our overseas sales due to the innovative nature of our products; one example of this was with our Japanese customer who came over to Europe to find the very best fireplace products to sell in Japan. It was the technology in our products which so impressed them that they chose Charnwood over the rest of the competition. We find there is a general appreciation of British workmanship and quality and this has driven forward our business in France where we now have over 100 dealers and a full-time sales force of 3 people.'*

Managing Director, John Wells commented:

*'The Queen's award recognises the contribution of the whole workforce to the business. We are immensely proud of our workforce and their commitment to the company. In these times of economic uncertainty it has been vital that we all worked together to be successful and The Queen's Award is recognition of this team spirit.'*

#### NOTES FOR EDITORS

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