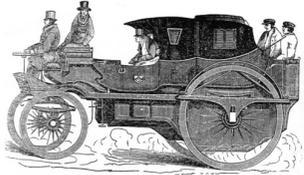


**From gunpowder to steam cars: what else happened here at Enderby Wharf?**

The Enderby Wharf site in Greenwich has been used by many people over the centuries for a variety of uses.

At one time the site was just fields and drainage ditches. One such Tudor ditch, called the Bendish sluice, runs through the site.

In the 17th century the government built its official gunpowder testing department here — pictured above. Gunpowder was made in private factories, brought here by boat, tested and then distributed to the army and navy as necessary.



Greenwich people eventually petitioned to have it removed because they thought it was dangerous.

In the 19th century part of the site was used by Joshua Beale. He developed there an important type of steam driven pump used in the manufacture of coal gas called an Exhauster —but also in the 1840s built a number of steam propelled private cars: see picture above.

More recently, Telcon used the Enderby Wharf factory during the Second World War to make PLUTO, the ‘pipeline under the ocean’ that was used to deliver fuel to the troops in Normandy after D-Day in 1944.

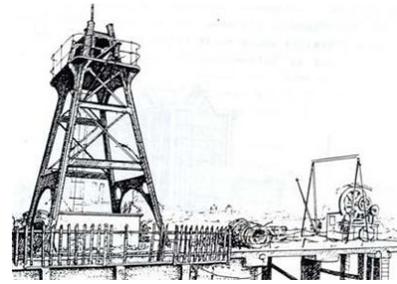
### How to find out more about what’s going on at Enderby Wharf

A group of local people have watched the sad decline of this listed — and hugely significant — building, Enderby House, with dismay.

We’ve already started talking to the representatives of Barratt, the development company, about possible uses for the building.

And we’re talking to Alcatel-Lucent, which still employs skilled people in Greenwich, 164 years after the first subsea cables were made here, to develop and make submarine repeater equipment in its labs and factory behind Enderby House.

The winding gear — used until the 1970s to load cable onto the cable-laying ships — is still there on the riverbank, but its future is even more uncertain than that of Enderby House. We believe Alcatel-Lucent still owns this



historic cable loading equipment and the jetty on the riverside — see picture, left.

But we want to work with everyone in the community to find out what can be done to save Enderby House and the riverbank equipment and to turn them into a secure, long-lasting tribute to the astonishing work that the people of Greenwich have done to create the information revolution over the past 164 years.

**If you’re interested** in finding out more about the contribution Greenwich made to the communications revolution, here are some more sources of information: [www.porthcurno.org.uk](http://www.porthcurno.org.uk) — museum in Cornwall where many of the early cables entered the sea, and where the Telcon archives from Enderby Wharf are kept [atlantic-cable.com](http://atlantic-cable.com) — detailed history of the early cables and the people who built them [thetelegraphfield.com](http://thetelegraphfield.com) — history of the site in Ireland where the first Atlantic cable landed [www.seethesites.ca/the-sites/heart's-content-cable-station.aspx](http://www.seethesites.ca/the-sites/heart's-content-cable-station.aspx) — where the cable landed in Newfoundland [greenwichpeninsulahistory.wordpress.com](http://greenwichpeninsulahistory.wordpress.com) — the history of the Greenwich Peninsula, including Enderby [greenwichindustrialhistory.blogspot.co.uk](http://greenwichindustrialhistory.blogspot.co.uk) — Greenwich’s huge contribution to our technological history **The Victorian Internet** — a book by Greenwich-born Tom Standage, digital editor of *The Economist*

### What you can do to help save Enderby Wharf

First, see our website [www.enderby.org.uk](http://www.enderby.org.uk). You’ll find contact details for the group there. Or like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter. We’ll be keeping you in touch with developments there.

 [facebook.com/groups/enderby/](https://facebook.com/groups/enderby/)

 [twitter.com/EnderbyWharf](https://twitter.com/EnderbyWharf)

Contact the local councillors for the Peninsula Ward of the Royal Borough of Greenwich: Steve Brain, Denise Scott-McDonald and Chris Lloyd, at the Town Hall, Wellington Street, London SE18 6PW

**Keep in touch with us on [www.enderby.org.uk](http://www.enderby.org.uk)**



**Greenwich** is the centre of the world communications revolution, on a site that’s as important as Bletchley Park, and a **Nobel Prize** was won for work that began here in the borough

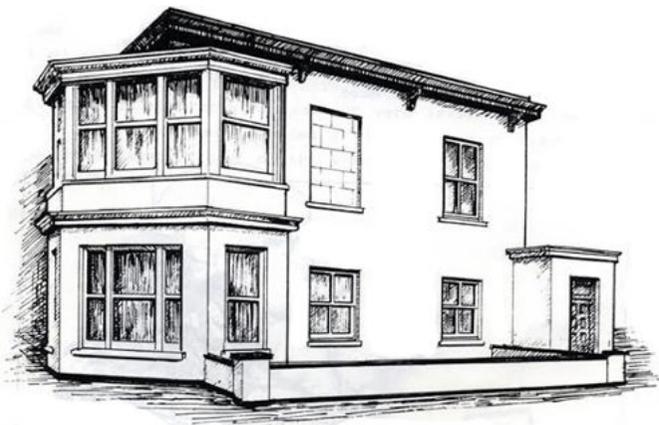
**ENDERBY HOUSE, ON THE GREENWICH** riverside, pictured above, is where the information revolution started — and it’s under threat.

Alcatel-Lucent, the successor to the company that pioneered international communications here in Greenwich, still makes advanced equipment for submarine cables in its factory behind Enderby House, but the cable itself is made elsewhere. The company has sold off most of its site — including Enderby House — to Barratt, the house-building company.

So far there are no clear plans for Enderby House. The listed building has already suffered from vandalism — see the picture above, taken in late May 2014.

But a group of locals believes that it should be preserved to show the contribution the people of Greenwich have made to the information revolution. That’s why we have produced this leaflet.

**Find out more about what we can do on [www.enderby.org.uk](http://www.enderby.org.uk)**



**M**ILLIONS OF US EVERY DAY TAKE IT for granted that we can share pictures and videos across the world. We can chat to, or share pictures with, friends in New York, Hong Kong, Mumbai or Sydney.

You may be surprised to know that a place on the Greenwich riverside is where it all started: Enderby House, a short walk along the riverside path from the Cutty Sark pub in the direction of the O2. There's a picture of it as it used to be above, and as it is today at the front of this leaflet.

A technical revolution here in Greenwich 160 years ago allowed people around the world able to communicate in real time.

### Why is Enderby Wharf so important?

From the 1850s to the 1970s Enderby Wharf in Greenwich is where people made most of the undersea cables that connect the world's telegraph, telephone and now internet networks. More than 160 years after the first cables were made there, a factory behind Enderby Wharf still makes vital equipment for subsea cables to connect the world's internet services.

It was where the world's first telegraph cables were made in the 1850s, pioneering technologies that for the first time allowed people to send and receive messages in minutes rather than days or weeks.

The people who worked at Enderby Wharf have had a leading role in building the technologies that connected the world — from the 19th century telegraph networks to the international phone networks of the 1970s to the internet today. In its first 100 years the Enderby Wharf factory made 82% of the world's subsea cables, 713,000 km of cable.

### The information revolution

The owners of Enderby and the site alongside have had a series of names through the years, from TCM — or Telcon — to STC to Alcatel to Alcatel-Lucent, but this is the oldest

continuously operating telecommunications factory in the world, the place which has built the information revolution we're still living through. It's as important to the UK's industrial history as Ironbridge Gorge or Bletchley Park — and as important to the history of Royal Greenwich as the Royal Observatory, the Old Royal Naval College, the Maritime Museum and the Woolwich Arsenal.

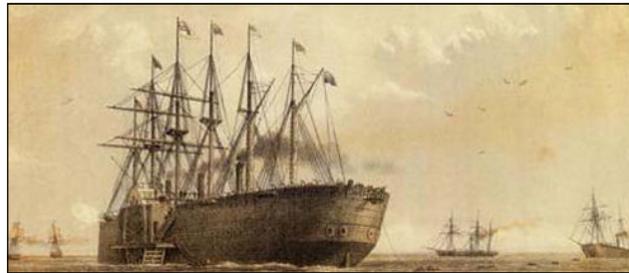
### First cable to France — and then across the Atlantic

The first telegraph cable to France was laid in 1850 after tremendous efforts to find technologies that worked. Until 1970s the cable was made here in Greenwich and loaded onto cable-laying ships moored on the riverside using the equipment that is still in place on the shore today.

Enderby House became crucial to the history of the world's communications after the Atlantic Telegraph Company was set up in 1856 to provide a telegraph link between the old and new worlds.

The cable for the first attempt was partly made at Morden Wharf. The cable was loaded on to the cable-laying boat from Greenwich — but it lasted in service for only two months.

In 1862 the cable pioneers were ready to try again,

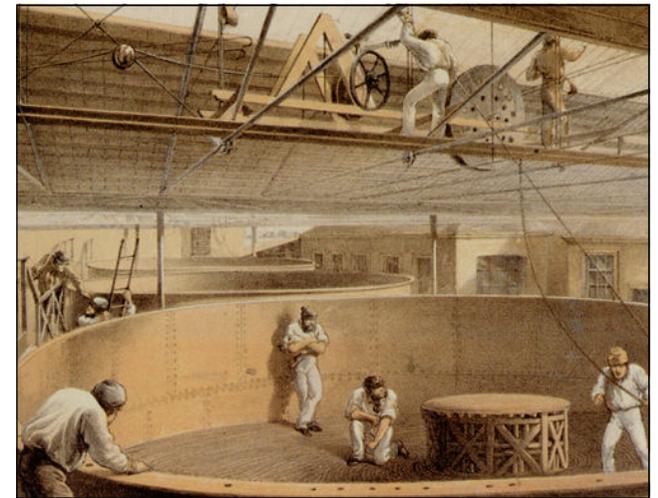


with a heavier and better designed cable — carried on Isambard Kingdom Brunel's enormous ship *Great Eastern* (pictured above), which was built on the Isle of Dogs. That broke, but a third cable was successfully laid to the new design in 1866, and the second cable was dragged up from the bottom of the ocean and repaired. Communications around the world had changed for ever.

### The speed of news: 40 days to a few seconds

Until the first cables went into service, political, business and family news went by ship. Sailing ships took 40 days or more. The first paddle steamer to cross the Atlantic took 18 days. When the Atlantic cable was in service, people could send news from America to the UK in seconds — from the birth of a baby to grand politics.

Within years, other cables — almost all of them made here in Greenwich — were laid at the bottom of the sea to



join up the world's telegraph networks. The picture above shows Greenwich workers loading cable. And then, in the twentieth century, to connect the world's phone networks — followed from the 1990s onwards by the internet.

### The optical fibre revolution

A century after Telcon made the first cables here in Greenwich, a young Chinese student called Charles Kao came to Woolwich Polytechnic — now part of the University of Greenwich — to study electronic engineering. By then Telcon had become part of the giant Standard Telephone and Cables group, and Kao went on to work there — where in the 1960s he came up with the revolutionary idea that hair-thin strands of glass could carry information in the form of laser light.

In 2009 Sir Charles Kao, as he now is, won the Nobel Prize for physics for the work he started here in what's now the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

That's why we believe this historic site should be preserved so that it continues to inform the people of Greenwich and further afield about their contribution to the information revolution. Without Enderby House and the work done there, we'd have none of these:



Find out more on [www.enderby.org.uk](http://www.enderby.org.uk)