

# Bolton business opens purpose-built facility to manufacture HS2 safety doors

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Booth Industries, a Bolton-based SME, has opened its new factory unit, where it will build safety doors for HS2's tunnels.

Mark Thurston, the HS2 CEO, visited to see how work was going at the newly expanded premises, where a 10-year contract worth £35 million will be carried out. The contract, awarded in September last year, allowed the company to increase its workforce, including the offer of new apprenticeship opportunities.

Earlier this year, the team added its first female apprentice to the 130-strong Greater Manchester workforce.

Since winning the contract, Booth Industries has become a carbon neutral company, and is aiming for net zero by 2025.

The new 600-square-metre space is adjacent to the main factory in the heart of the town. It will enable teams to fulfil the contract and also carry out work for other customers.

The doors will seal off north- and southbound tunnels from one another, and also provide a point of access in an emergency.

The doors need to meet stringent fire integrity measures as well as a whole host of other demands – the trains will pass within metres of them going at up to 250 miles per hour. The doors will be capable of withstanding constant 14Kpa pressure cycles, along with 2hr Integrity and 2hr Insulation against fire – a world first and setting a new benchmark within the industry. They will be manufactured using majority UK made steel and fitted across the 32 miles of tunnel between London and Crewe.

The initial phase of the SMEs contract with HS2 will concentrate on developing and testing, and then manufacturing of the cast-in sub frames. Manufacturing and installation work is expected to start 2025.

Speaking after his visit to Booth Industries in Bolton, HS2 CEO Mark Thurston said: “There are businesses across the UK with the expertise and ability to help us build HS2 and Booth Industries is just one of over 2,000 that are already helping us do that. It is great to see the benefit the project is bringing to an SME in Bolton, as well as the onward economic impact through the local supply chain.

“As progress to build HS2 continues, there will be thousands of contract opportunities for UK companies to become part of this exciting national endeavour.”

Mike Jenkinson, Managing Director of Booth Industries, said: “We’re proud to welcome HS2 to our primary site in Bolton, where our new state-of-the-art, energy efficient, manufacturing facility has just been built. The new facility provides valuable additional capacity to facilitate the delivery of several key public sector contracts, including our work for HS2.

“The skills required to deliver this project are highly specialised, including modelling the effect of a 200mph wind load created by trains as they pass the doors at high speed, destructive testing for fatigue and fire-testing in furnaces, reaching temperatures of around 1,000 degrees Celsius. Delivering on this means pairing decades of knowledge and unique I.P. with new innovative techniques and designs.

“Securing the contract has also enabled us to create new jobs, including apprenticeships and graduate positions, and many more will come once we move into the manufacturing and installation phases. We are delighted to be part of this key infrastructure project and looking forward to delivering a program of great British engineering and manufacturing we can all be proud of.”