

# Ricardo gears up to assemble protective face shields for the NHS and care homes

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- Production to commence of a Ricardo-designed face shield, as part of the crucial personal protective equipment (PPE) required in front-line NHS roles
- Facilities at Ricardo technical centres at Shoreham-by-Sea and Leamington Spa will be repurposed as assembly and logistics centres for the new face shields
- The face shields will be donated free of charge to front line NHS workers and care homes

As a part of the national effort to provide much needed personal protective equipment in the fight against COVID-19, Ricardo has announced that it is about to go into production manufacturing face shields which will be used by frontline NHS healthcare staff as well as by key workers in the care home sector. To ensure that the face shields can get to NHS staff that need them as quickly as possible, facilities at Ricardo's Technical Centres at Shoreham by Sea in West Sussex and Leamington Spa are being repurposed as assembly lines and logistics centres for the face shields.

The face shield is being produced to a bespoke Ricardo design, leveraging its design, engineering and manufacturing expertise. A prototype was delivered by the company's in-house rapid prototyping team and facilities. However, it was quickly realised that rapid prototyping would not provide the volumes of

face shields needed or at the speed required.

Ricardo used its manufacturing supply chain expertise to engage with an injection moulding partner, to create a tool capable of high-volume manufacture. Using this bespoke tooling, and its engineering design expertise, the team took the opportunity to refine the original rapid prototype design of the face shield for enhanced comfort over extended periods of wear, inviting local NHS doctors to test the new face shield design for comfort and wearability. Tooling and the first batch of units is already in progress and Ricardo will make its first donation of face shields to NHS staff and key frontline workers shortly after Easter.

In addition to the supply of face shields to the NHS and others in the UK, Ricardo is looking to make similar initiatives at its facilities in Europe and the US, for the benefit of local communities. The company has also offered its services to support the rapid design or conversion of vehicles for use as ambulances and as other support vehicles, and has offered the use of some facilities for testing or as logistic centres.

Steve Dyke, Managing Director Automotive and Industrial said: "As a world-leading engineering consultancy, Ricardo is known for its expertise and capability in innovating, adapting and bringing products to market at pace, and as engineers we live to solve challenging problems for our customers. Our people have been anxious to use their engineering capabilities, skills and knowledge to find solutions to help protect frontline staff in the NHS and other key workers. The team has worked tirelessly to enable us to be able to go into production in a matter of days, and we are proud to be in a position to use our engineering capabilities for this essential task."

Martin Starkey, Managing Director Performance Products added: "Our people are renowned for their expertise in high value manufacturing, and they have brought their trademark passion, care, dedication and commitment to assembling face shields. We are proud of our people's response in volunteering to be part of this work, and also that we are able to make the most of our facilities at the Ricardo Shoreham and Midlands Technical Centres. We look forward to delivering these much-needed PPE products to the NHS and care homes as soon as possible."

*Photo credit: Ricardo*