

Nottinghamshire business supports production of masks for public

- Export Champion creates new line of face coverings as part of coronavirus (COVID-19) response
- Company donates £1 for each face covering bought to local NHS trust

A Department for International Trade (DIT) 'Export Champion' is leading the way in supplying face coverings to its local area and beyond, in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Source Control Masks is the trading name of Mansfield-based industrial supplies business Hall-Fast. The business normally exports to over 100 countries including Nigeria and Poland. However, in light of the outbreak, it has refocused efforts to support and increase UK supplies of face coverings for the British public.

The Department for Health and Social Care published [guidance](#) on 11 May 2020 to advise the public to consider wearing face coverings in enclosed public spaces such as shops, trains and buses to help reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

With the assistance of DIT advisers, the business is working to secure thousands of face coverings from Asia. The company has sold over 8,000 so far and has said its aim is to keep the UK public safe whilst ensuring medical PPE is reserved for healthcare workers.

The business is donating £1 for every face covering sold online to the Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, their local NHS trust, and has raised £2160 so far.

Hall-Fast previously donated excess PPE stock to the value of £2,000 to their local NHS back in March as lockdown restrictions began.

The company has a long-standing relationship with DIT, becoming an 'Export Champion' when DIT first set up a base in the East Midlands.

Managing Director of Hall-Fast, Malcom Hall MBE:

After the lockdown was imposed in March, I began importing face coverings for purchase. I did this so as to encourage customers not to buy the medical facemasks that ought to be reserved for

healthcare workers.

It's important that we support our NHS by ensuring they have the equipment they need while protecting each other and ourselves.

DIT have been a great help to Hall-Fast and we have a long-standing relationship with the department as it existed in its previous forms. I have received continued support from International Trade Advisors both before and during the pandemic and have benefitted from the government's Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

With no current cure to COVID-19, I want to help keep British people safe and provide the right type of equipment for people as lockdown restrictions ease.

Minister for Exports, Graham Stuart MP:

Hall-Fast is a great example of a UK business taking the initiative during this pandemic as well as supporting their local NHS and the British public.

It's imperative we continue to keep international trade lines open and running, as working together is the only way we will be able to move past the pandemic.

Importing PPE is an important part of the UK's response to COVID-19, and my department is doing all it can to support this.

I commend Hall-Fast for their innovative approach and ability to adapt to need. In doing so they support us all, not least the local community in Mansfield.