



THARSUS, BLYTH

MEMBERS OF NORTH EAST ENGLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



UK BUSINESS HEROES RECOGNISING BUSINESSES. ONE STORY AT A TIME

A robotic solution to keeping people safe at work

Tharsus designs and manufactures innovative robotic solutions which enable their high-profile customers to tackle tough challenges, disrupt markets and gain strategic competitive advantage.

As the pandemic began to affect the country in early March 2020, Tharsus realised two elements in particular would be critical to overcoming the crisis: protecting the health service and protecting the economy. They felt that giving people the means to keep working safely would be the key to achieving both of these aims at the same time.

So Tharsus turned their experience of tackling corporate challenges to an assault of their own against Coronavirus in the North East.

In just 12 weeks and under lockdown conditions, a specially chosen multi-discipline Tharsus team took a unique social distancing system from initial idea to working reality. The result could be quickly and widely deployed to support themselves and organisations around them to keep people working safely.

Named 'Bump', the system comprises wearable devices which enable people to maintain social distancing in real time, by collecting data about the number and duration of close contacts, or Bumps, between them. It was designed to show exactly when and how people are interacting in the workspace – in offices, warehouses, factories and laboratories.

This data has already proved itself to be very powerful. It can – and has – in an outbreak situation enabled track and trace of at-risk people extremely quickly and with a very high degree of accuracy.

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As Bump approached a workable reality, Tharsus identified and reached out to key organisations which they felt had urgent need of Bump and would benefit from it most. It was immediately deployed within the Northumberland NHS Trust to help keep its frontline staff safe. Deployment into the northern divisions of medical company Smith and Nephew followed and two BAE Systems sites followed that.

Closer to home, Tharsus deployed Bump across their own business and their sister business, keeping all 400 colleagues across the group safely working as the crisis continued.

More and more people are now working safely in the wider North East community thanks to Bump. As the pandemic continues, further organisations are turning to Tharsus and Bump to help with safer working, which is great news for Tharsus' Blyth home community and the wider North East community as a whole.

Tharsus' achievement in creating Bump has won official recognition from the Royal Academy of Engineering, with a President's Special Award for Pandemic Service.

"The pandemic has forced businesses to re-consider their responsibility as employers. Health of workforces is now more than ever an important metric facing leadership teams. Bump gives people help to stay distanced and gives employers assurance they're operating responsibly."

Brian Palmer, CEO, Tharsus

"The word trail-blazing does not do justice to this truly outstanding North East business. They won a BCC national award in 2019 and are brilliant, innovative manufacturers. Congratulations Tharsus."

James Ramsbotham, Chief Executive
North East England Chamber of Commerce