



William Hughes Group

New tech, new capacity & new capabilities at William Hughes

Advanced assembly, forming and fabrication assets from Sertec's recently closed springs and wire forms division have been given a new lease of life at Dorset-based William Hughes Ltd.

When the assets became available, Engineering Director at William Hughes Ltd., Emma Burgon, spotted an opportunity to not only bolster her company's existing capabilities, but also introduce new ones.

"We've been able to increase our welding capacity," she explains, "growing from eight weld cells to 12, and we will be adding a further four bending machines, taking us up to 10 in total. We're also planning to move some plant to our facility in Bulgaria."

Some of the machines are upgrades too. "We already have Itaya machines, but they are 10 years older than the Sertec machines, which also have some added functionality, so we are just going to swap them out and put the older machines into storage. We picked up some extra coiling machines too, so five new coiling machines will be coming through the door."

William Hughes has also gained some new capabilities thanks to an EDM wire eroder. "We've never had EDM capabilities before. It will allow us to pre-cut blocks prior to CNC milling, meaning a lot less work will need to be done. Our customers don't normally give us very much time to make weld jigs, but if we can get off tools quicker than anybody else, we will win the project. Speed of design coupled with speed of manufacture of weld jigs is definitely a big plus as far as our customers are concerned."

The new assets have almost immediately resulted in new business too, with the company recently winning significant business for welded-assembly work and contracts for six new wire frames for two of the world's leading tier one automotive suppliers.

"It's all looking very positive," Burgon concludes. "We still have a few hoops to jump through before it all stabilises, but our additional capacity and capabilities, not just here in the UK, but also in our Bulgarian and Polish plants, will put us in an amazing position to go into 2022 with some real optimism."

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Caption: Expanded production area at William Hughes