

The Viewpoint Bench



We can carve the view from your site onto the backrest of a solid bench made by skilled craftsmen using English timber. We can add into the view, your local wildlife or historic features to help you interpret the area and its evolution through time.

Greenspace Designs have been creating and installing these innovative and highly distinctive pieces of interactive furniture for more than twenty years. They can be found at viewpoints across the United Kingdom, from the Isles of Scilly to the Scottish border.

Each bench is carved specially for the point where it is to be installed. The view is chosen by the site manager who also decides which landmarks or features are to be identified on the bench back. They can also choose to celebrate local wildlife and habitats, or human activities which have taken place there recently or historically. So the Viewpoint Bench becomes both interpretation for its location and a useful educational tool. If preferred the view and interpretation can be carved onto a panel which is fixed to the back of the bench. This way visitors can stand behind the bench to see both the panel and view then sit on the bench to enjoy the landscape at leisure.

Families and groups love to explore the images and discover different animals or features incorporated into the artwork. As well as wildlife themes we have created benches showing Roman lifestyles, Tudor ship building and Georgian architecture, and the way these activities have shaped the landscape. Artwork is created for each site, we then use our unique etching process to carve the artwork into sustainably sourced English timber for the bench backrest.

The beauty of carving timber is that it lasts and looks good years after its installation. The images inspire visitors of all ages and encourage close examination of both the bench and the view on which it is based.

Our Artist is Mike Langman

Mike is an internationally renowned and award winning artist with over thirty years' experience drawing and painting for The RSPB, The National Trust, The Wildlife Trusts and other heritage and wildlife organisations. His ability to capture the essence of British wildlife, habitats and

scenery can be seen in the images he creates. The intricate nature of his artwork means that returning visitors can discover new features within the image that they perhaps missed on their first viewing.

Sustainably Sourced Timber

We tend to work with three timber species, Oak, Sweet Chestnut and Cedar. All our timber is grown in Britain and has been sourced sustainably. We can tell you where each piece of timber we use came from and the reason the tree was felled. Much of our wood comes from wind-blown trees as we have a network of tree surgeons who let us know when suitable, large trees blow down in storms.



Artwork detail from a Viewpoint Bench

Legs are made from English Oak or Sweet Chestnut, two of the most durable native timbers available. Benches installed over twenty years ago are still much used and loved today. By selecting the highest quality timber we are able to guarantee our benches against rot for ten years and expect them to be enjoyed for decades.

“This is the best bench I have ever seen”, was a comment made by Peter Joyce, a National Lottery Projects Auditor and National Parks Consultant who has seen hundreds of benches over the years

The Carving Process

Our unique etching process allows us to accurately carve Mike Langman’s artwork into the timber giving a lasting impression of the view. It is carved between one and three millimetres deep creating a clear, sharp image which will withstand vandalism and weathering allowing the image to be viewed for decades to come.

Master Carpentry

The professional craftsmanship involved in the manufacture of a Viewpoint Bench is a joy to behold. There are no visible fixings above or below the bench. The robust design is put together giving silky smooth sanded and oiled surfaces that excite the senses of sight, touch and smell. We can offer straight edges or we can follow the natural curves of the grain giving a ‘waney’ edge.



This Viewpoint Bench with the pylon central to its image, mirroring the one in the view behind it, demonstrates how site-specific our benches are. The scrub has been cleared beneath the pylons resulting in the conservation of the wildlife rich marshes, celebrated in the image on the bench back.

Tamper Proof

The two inch thick timbers and robust fixing techniques make our benches extremely tamper proof. We regularly install them in city parks where they withstand the worst vandalistic abuses thrown at them. Due to their substantial dimensions, any physical attacks or pen graffiti can be sanded off and the bench re-oiled to return it to its original condition simply and cheaply. The depth of the carvings allow multiple pen marks to be sanded out with no detriment to the images.

Furthermore, we have ad hoc evidence to suggest that the natural character of our benches actually reduces vandalism. Often, whilst the plastic and metal features in the same park are destroyed, our wooden benches remain untouched and continue to be enjoyed.

With no visible fixings and legs buried deep in the ground, our benches are difficult to steal. If required anti chainsaw measures can be fixed in the legs and supports to stop thieves from removing the classic carved views.

Maintenance

Because the benches are made from timber heartwood, the natural durability of the product means that no maintenance is required. Over a couple of years they weather to an even silver colour and will remain in this condition for decades with the image still clearly visible.

Some site managers like to keep the fresh honey-coloured timber look. To do so, benches can be lightly sanded once a year and coated with Danish Oil to seal the surface and prevent the silvering process that comes with age.

Artwork Process

Stage 1: You send us a clear digital image of the view you wish to celebrate plus either a species list or reference materials for activities you wish to include in the view (Roman Villa, Bronze Age Earthworks, etc.)

Stage 2: We produce a draft copy of your artwork showing the different elements we can include and the number of text labels that can be added where appropriate.



Sample Draft Artwork

Stage 3: Based on your comments, we produce proof artwork for final approval before etching the artwork into the timber to make your Viewpoint Bench.



Sample Finished Artwork

Our artwork is site specific and unique. Arrangements can be made if you wish to use it for leaflets or electronic media.

Cost and Production Time

The price for designing and creating a unique 2.2m long Viewpoint Bench is £2,600 plus delivery, installation and VAT. We expect to deliver benches within three weeks of agreeing the final artwork.

Installation

We have two standard methods of installation. For the first, we make the legs 1m long and fix anti-lift pegs to their bases so that they can be dug 600mm (2 feet) into the ground to give a sound fixing without the need for concrete.

For the second method, the legs are 400mm long and are fixed to solid surfaces using either hidden steel rods in the legs or ground anchors fixed through angle iron bolted to the base of the legs.

We can install these benches for you or supply them with all necessary fixings for you to install yourself.

Delivery Methods

We can deliver and install benches for £325 plus £2.15 per mile for the distance from our workshop (EX20 4HX) to your postcode.

Alternatively, if you wish to install yourself, Palletline will deliver one or two benches to mainland England and Wales for £250 plus VAT.

For Further Information

Contact the office, details below.