

Greener and cleaner new seats installed at Liverpool Street station

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Sustainably sourced seats have been installed by Network Rail at Liverpool Street, almost doubling the seating capacity at the station.

The number of seats has increased from 208 to 411, providing a place to sit for more of the 69.5 million passengers who use Liverpool Street in a normal year. The extra capacity also means that it will be easier for people to follow current social distancing guidelines.

Created by acclaimed designer Johan Berhin, the new seating represents a significant upgrade in comfort, style and convenience, with tables and USB charging points built in to improve the journey experience for passengers.

The new station furniture comes with outstanding green credentials. The wooden seats themselves are oak and beech from 100% FSC certified sources, the legs are 85% recycled steel and the feet are made from recycled ocean plastic. In addition, the seats are treated with natural wax rather than synthetic varnishes, and they can be cleaned effectively with ordinary soap and water instead of chemical detergents.

Liverpool Street's seating had been identified as an area for improvement by the National Rail Passenger Survey. The survey shows passengers giving the station's seating an average score of 42% over the last two years, far lower than the 85% overall rating for Liverpool Street over the same period.

Network Rail's head of route stations for Anglia, Oliver Ross, said: "We heard loud and clear from passengers that they wanted better seating at Liverpool Street, and we were determined to deliver an outstanding solution that would make a big difference to the quality of people's journeys.

"The new seating is not only considerably more comfortable than our previous metal benches, but it is also incredibly eco-friendly, which fits in perfectly with our goal to create a cleaner, greener railway.

"It's great to see passengers enjoying the new furniture already and I would invite them to let us know what they think. Many people are understandably concerned about travelling at the moment but we are putting safety and cleanliness first in everything we do. For example, as soon as our seats were installed, we added eye-catching blue covers to remind everyone of the need to social distance.

"This is an exciting time for Liverpool Street, with a host of projects being completed by Network Rail to transform the station over the coming years. The new seating follows on from the launch of our refurbished toilets last month, and the opening of the passenger information point in the centre of the concourse. There's lots more to come soon."

Johan Berhin, designer and founder of Green Furniture Concept, said: "We are delighted that passengers have been so happy with our seating installations at London Bridge, Victoria and Paddington, and it's great to continue at Liverpool Street. You can find our furniture all over the world, in airports, shopping malls, schools and healthcare facilities, but we have a system that can be tailored to provide unique solutions for each location. Thank you Network Rail for working with us so closely on the seating integration in your stations.

"Sustainability is the heart and soul of what we do. When I started out, I was shocked by how smelly furniture manufacturing was, with all its synthetic glues and coatings, and I decided that my approach would be different. Circularity is key to us in the choice of materials and design, and our products are made using renewable energy in an area of southern Sweden that is renowned for its furniture making.

"In addition, our seats can be easily maintained. Most scratches can be covered by a natural wax, and even if there is more substantial damage, we can replace individual wooden slats, meaning that we don't have to scrap the whole bench. I hope that passengers at Liverpool Street will love their new seats and enjoy using them for many years to come."

Photo credit: Network Rail

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