

# The future of railway stations: a place where people can stop, stay and spend

May 18, 2022

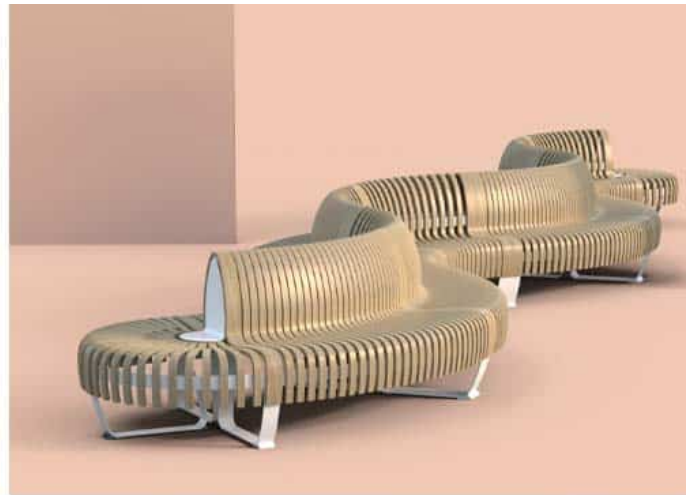
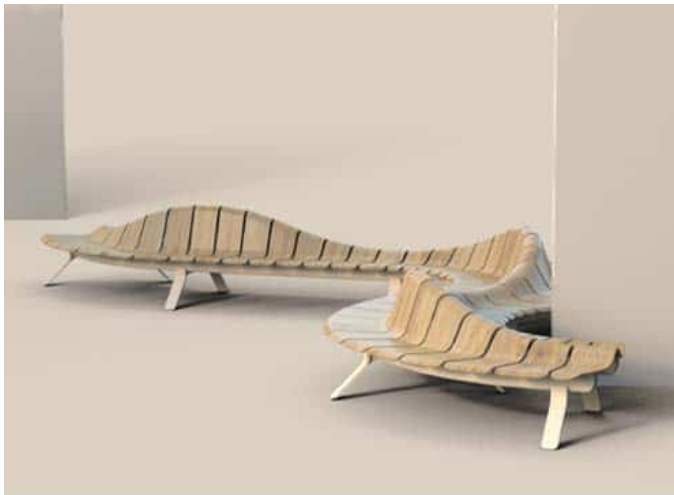


With restrictions lifted, stations should be the shop windows to our towns and cities, says one business that plays a major role in the changing face of our networks.

**Green Furniture Concept** says a people-centric transformation of stations is necessary to make rail an essential choice for prospective customers and drive revenues back to where they need to be post-lockdown.

The sustainable design and furnishing business has revitalised stations such as Stockholm Central, London Bridge, Victoria and Kings Cross. In these stations, the likes of functional, cold, right-angled metal seats were swapped out for contoured, seamless and comfortable alternatives. Lamps were disguised as natural tree-like structures, and tables ditched sharp edges for smooth lines. Planters can also be seen in its projects, breaking up the space into cosy seated settings.

All of this work is overseen by **Green Furniture Concept's** in-house experts. They are behind the designs of the furniture and the layout – so what they do cannot be repeated by others.



## Serious designs, serious revenue

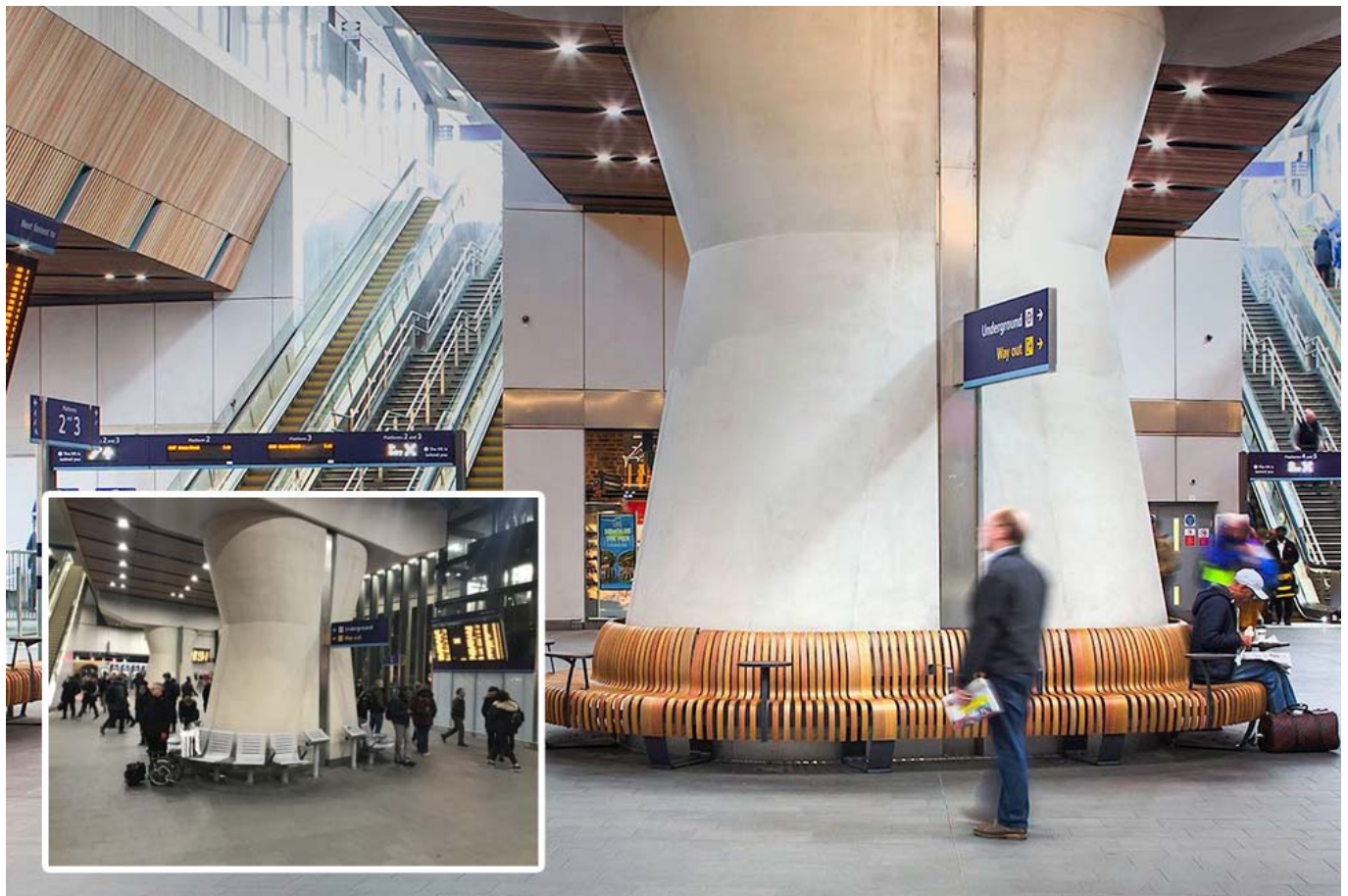
This finely-tuned dedication to creating great spaces is something **Green Furniture Concept** hopes will be taken up by prospective customers, and for a good reason. “When revenue has never been more important, we have to take the station and its design more seriously,” Adele Kamel, Director of Communication and Brand Strategy, said. “Stations need to become a destination; they need to be somewhere people can stop, relax and spend time. They have to be about more than just travelling.

“Nobody has missed public spaces as much as passengers have, but they need encouraging back.

“To do this, you need to design with a sense of flow, taking people through a station and into a welcoming human-centric space where they can stop – and not because they are waiting for a person or a train but because they want to be there.

“We think this point of view is something more and more station managers are agreeing with now and benefitting from.”

One example of this is London Bridge Station. Once, metal seats and concrete made for foreboding surroundings.



*Main image: finished design; Inset image: what it looked like before*

The effect of this was one station managers could measure: customer satisfaction was at only 36%. This meant people were less likely to stay and less likely to spend money in the station at its range of shops.

**Green Furniture Concept** decided that the best thing to do was bring nature inside the station. As a matter of course, it uses its team of in-house experts to understand the layout and get a feel for the challenge and the aspirations of the station managers. Then, it creates a detailed floorplan and 3D renders to show its clients what a scheme will look like.

With London Bridge Station, an organic look radically transformed how people felt when they walked off the streets or platforms. The wooden seats mirrored a similarly wooden ceiling, changing the concrete structure into something more natural.

As a consequence, people stopped, got a newspaper and bought a coffee. They looked around and spent money. Waiting for trains felt less like a chore, and so, when customers were asked again, its satisfaction rating shot up to 80%.

“And the good news is this transformation process doesn’t take long,” Adele said. “From idea to installation, you could be looking at as little as six to eight weeks. The installation itself can be done overnight.

“And what you have will last and look timeless. It will serve station managers, passengers – and the shops they will attract people to – for a very long time.”