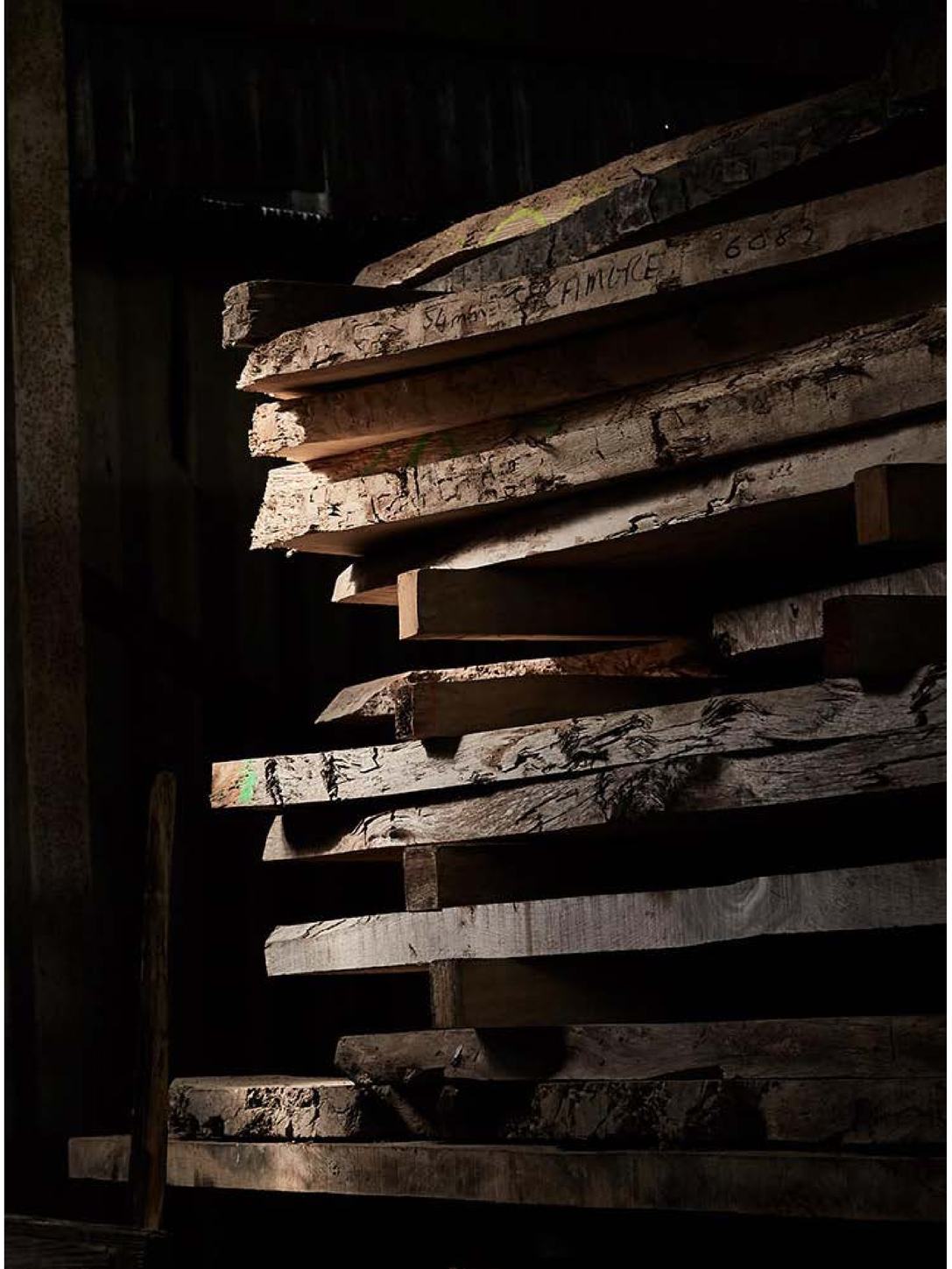


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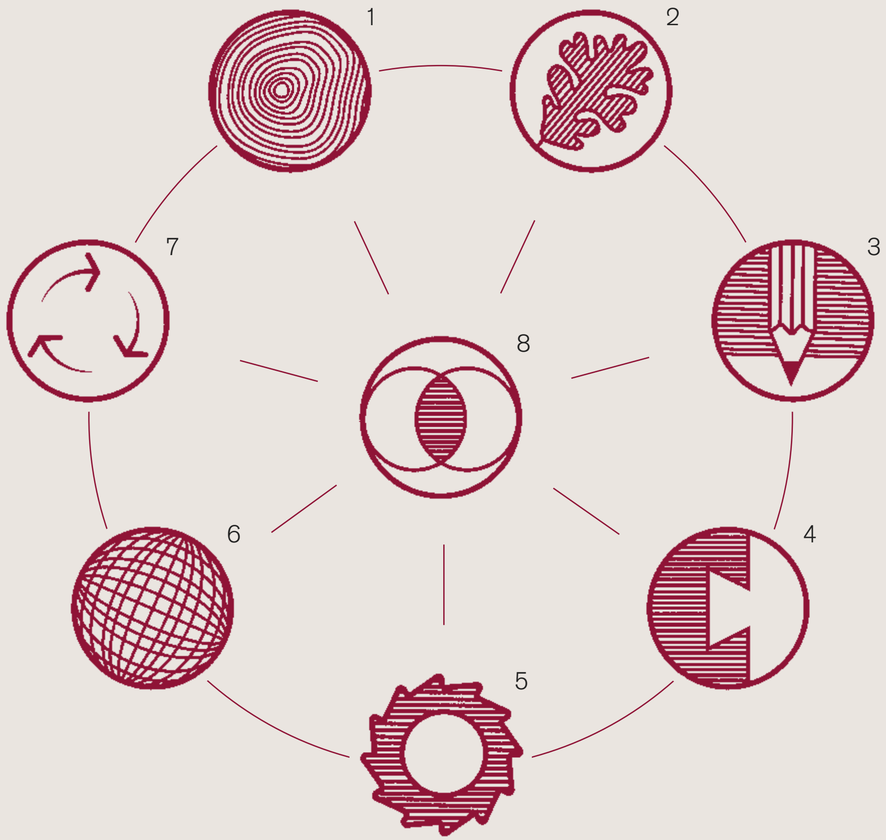
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Made WELL

For us, Making WELL is creating furniture that gives more than it takes, moving beyond just minimising our negative impacts and ensuring that we deliver a positive impact for both the environment and our health and wellbeing.

We believe that it is only when we consider the materials we use, the way we design, the quality of our making, how we manufacture and distribute, and what happens to our furniture at the end of its life, that we can create something that is truly Made WELL.



1 Sustainable Materials
+ 2 Healthy Materials
+ 3 Design
+ 4 Craftsmanship
+ 5 Responsible Production
+ 6 Low Impact Distribution
+ 7 Circularity
+ 8 Transparency





“

At Benchmark, we have always strived towards an increased knowledge and awareness of global impact. From a furniture maker’s perspective, this calls for transparency and accountability on the products we make and how we make them.

The only meaningful statements about sustainability are those that can be measured and independently verifed, so that consumers can make informed choices.

Over the last 10 years we have pioneered and invested in Life Cycle Assessments (LCA), Environmental Product Declarations (EPD) and Declare labelling to provide clear and unambiguous information about what is in our furniture and the impact it has on our environment and our health.

In creating this report, we want to share what we are doing in the hope that together we can create a ripple effect and many others will follow…

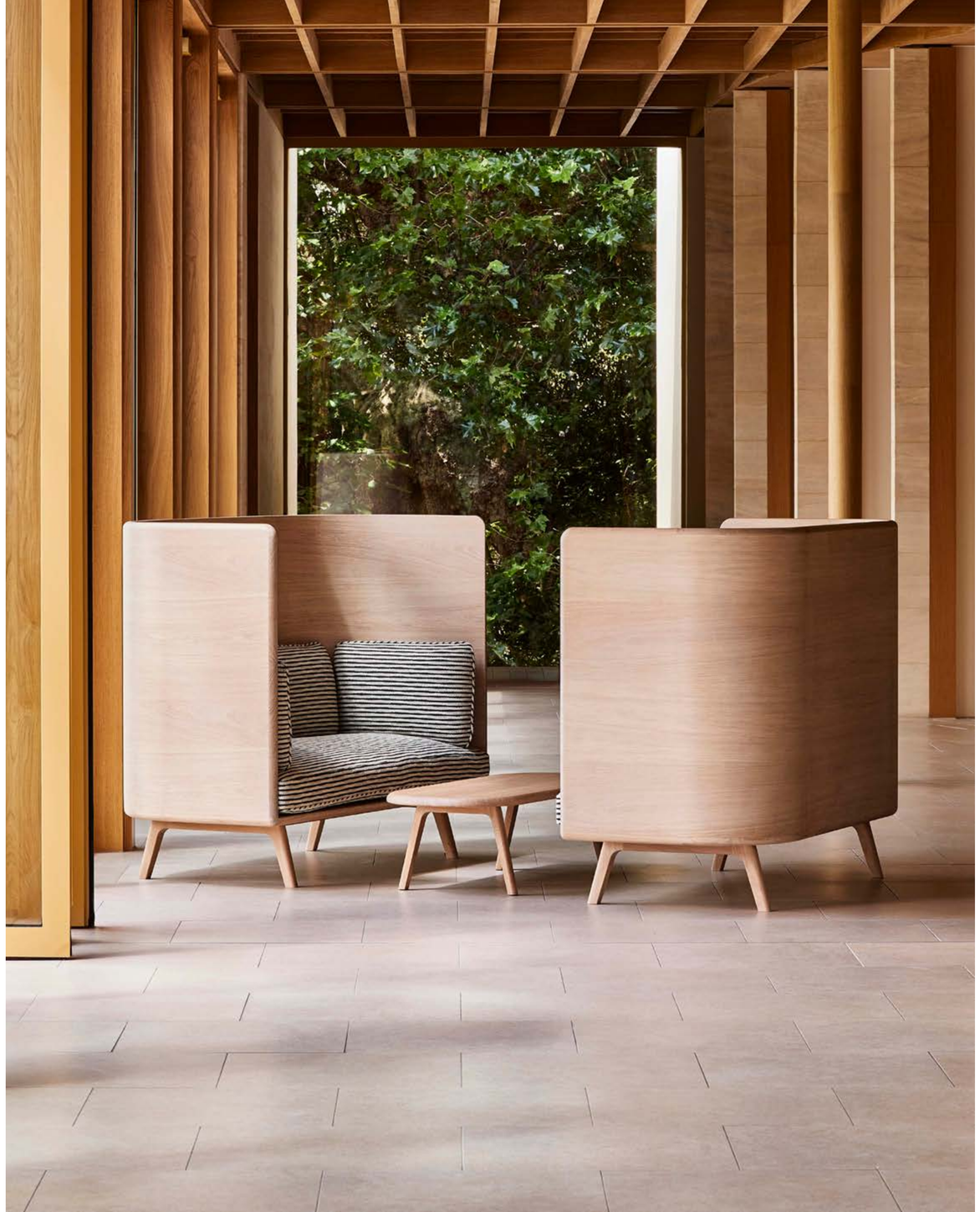
Sean Sutcliffe
MD & Founder of Benchmark

About Benchmark

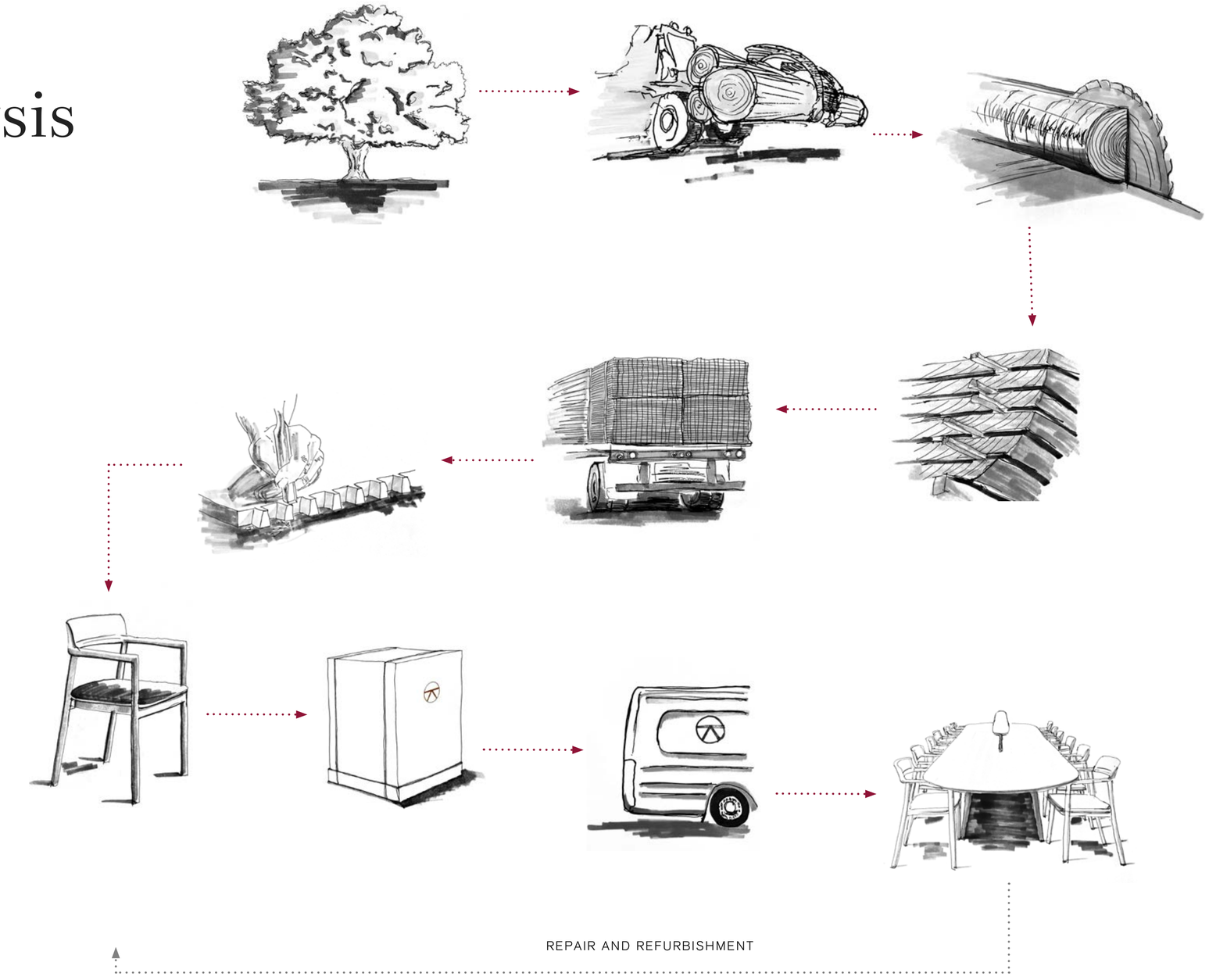
A powerhouse of craft, Benchmark are one of the UK's leading furniture makers. We design and make beautiful, healthy, sustainable and ethical furniture for workspaces, institutions, hospitality and the home.

Founded by Terence Conran and Sean Sutcliffe, all our furniture is made in our own workshops in West Berkshire and Dorset in England.

We have our own furniture collection and make bespoke furniture and specialist joinery for commercial projects.



Life Cycle Analysis



We have always considered the environmental impact of the materials we use and the processes that go into making our furniture.

We have invested in Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs) and independently-verified Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) to demonstrate this.

An LCA is a methodology for assessing the cradle to grave environmental impacts associated with each stage of a product's lifecycle - from raw material extraction and processing, and a product's manufacture, distribution and use, through to the recycling or final disposal of the materials.

Carbon Footprint

The first EPD's published in 2020 on our OVO collection, show our solid timber furniture to be carbon neutral or better; which means that it stores more carbon than it emits during manufacture, distribution, and use.

Our aim is to publish independently-verified EPD data on all of our core collections by the end of 2021.



OVO BENCH
2200w 365d 430h

Carbon absorbed	77kg
Carbon emitted	46kg
Carbon stored	31kg

CARBON FOOTPRINT
-31kg
CO_2 EQUIVALENT



OVO TABLE
2900w 1100d 750h

Carbon absorbed	321kg
Carbon emitted	198kg
Carbon stored	124kg

CARBON FOOTPRINT
-124kg
CO_2 EQUIVALENT



OVO HIGH STOOL
370dia 770h

Carbon absorbed	15kg
Carbon emitted	10kg
Carbon stored	5kg

CARBON FOOTPRINT
-5kg
CO_2 EQUIVALENT



OVO COFFEE TABLE
1600w 630d 295h

Carbon absorbed	96kg
Carbon emitted	57kg
Carbon stored	39kg

CARBON FOOTPRINT
-39kg
CO_2 EQUIVALENT

EPD®
THE INTERNATIONAL EPD® SYSTEM

Sustainable Materials

FSC
www.fsc.org
FSC® C016983
The mark of responsible forestry





We make furniture from timber which means that we start from a strong position in terms of carbon footprint.

Trees take CO_2 out of the atmosphere and capture it in the form of carbon for centuries in the wood that they yield. When we make that wood into furniture, its carbon is stored for the lifetime of the piece.

We are proud to have chain of custody certification from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Tracing the path of products from forests through the supply chain, this certification provides assurances that the timber we use to make our furniture comes from responsibly and sustainably managed sources.

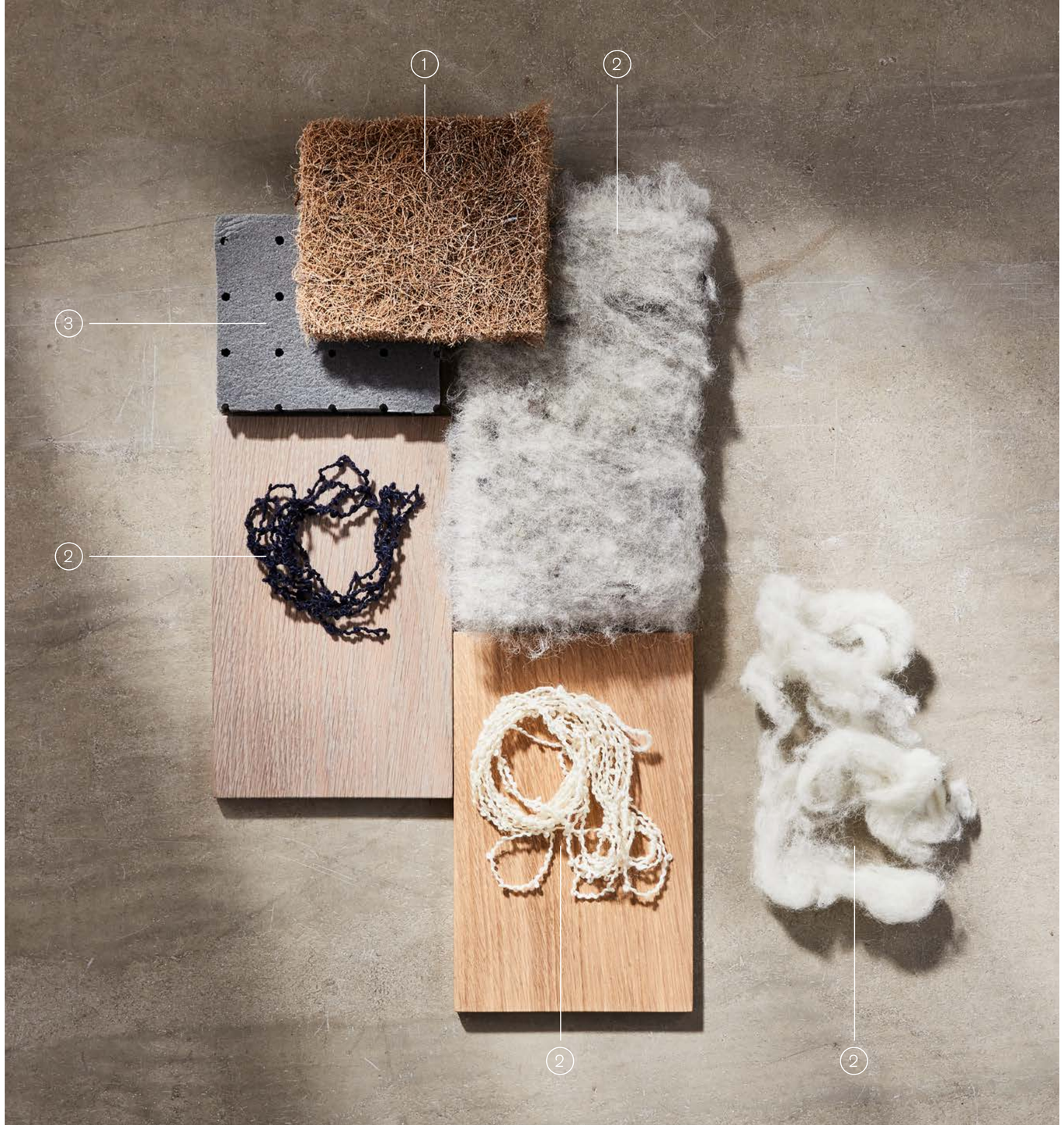
We work with clients to encourage sustainable choices. We never use endangered species, preferring to work with sustainably certified temperate hardwoods, sourced from as close to home as possible.

In an attempt to move away from fossil fuel derived materials and overcome the significant environmental concerns surrounding the disposal of plastic foam in landfill, we are challenging the way that upholstery is usually made.

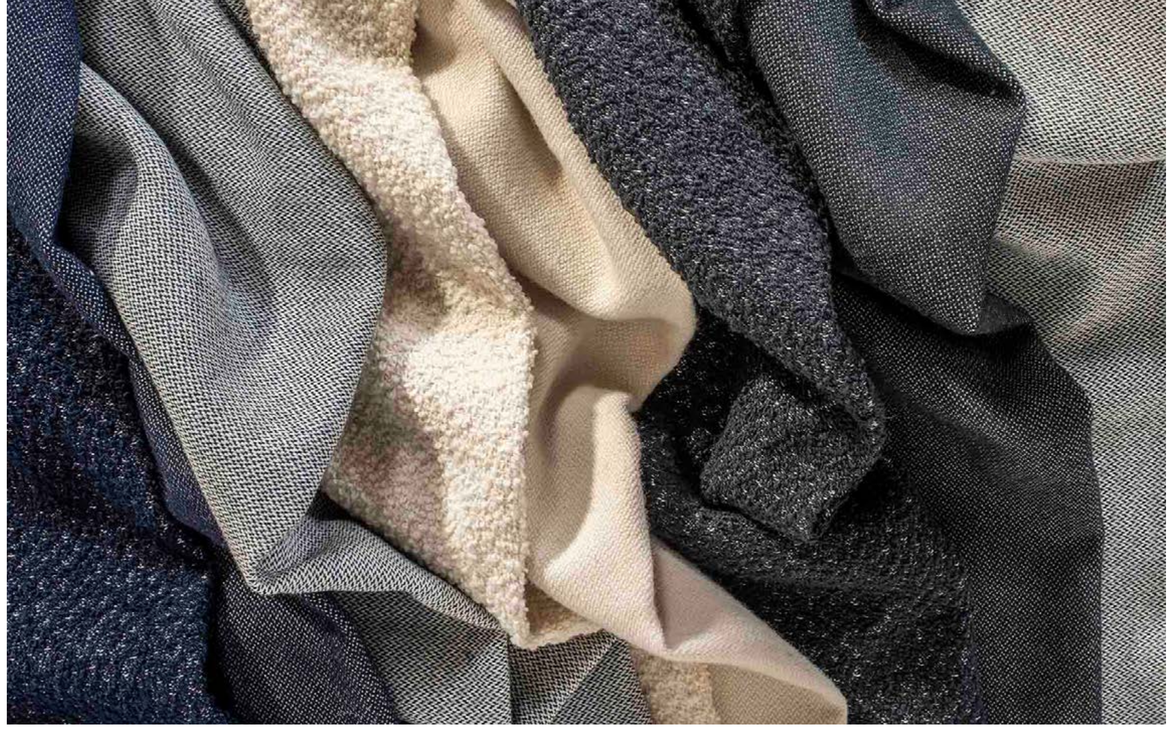
Our upholstery fillings - developed in collaboration with The Naturalmat Company - use only natural, sustainable, and biodegradable materials.

Rather than plastic foam, we use certified organic and fair trade coir from coconut husks for structure and support, topped with natural latex from the Havea rubber tree for comfort, all wrapped in organic lambswool, sourced locally from farms in Dorset, Devon and Cornwall.

1 Coconut Fibre
2 Organic British Lambswool
3 Natural Latex







With the launch of the Benchmark Natural Fabric Collection, we are able to offer our customers a 100% natural and sustainable upholstery solution.

Born from a need to source fabrics to partner with our natural fillings, which meet our aesthetic values and sustainable requirements, we have created our own fabric collection. Developed in collaboration with British textile manufacturer Tibor, the collection of three different textural wools is woven in Lancashire from British wool and organic cotton.

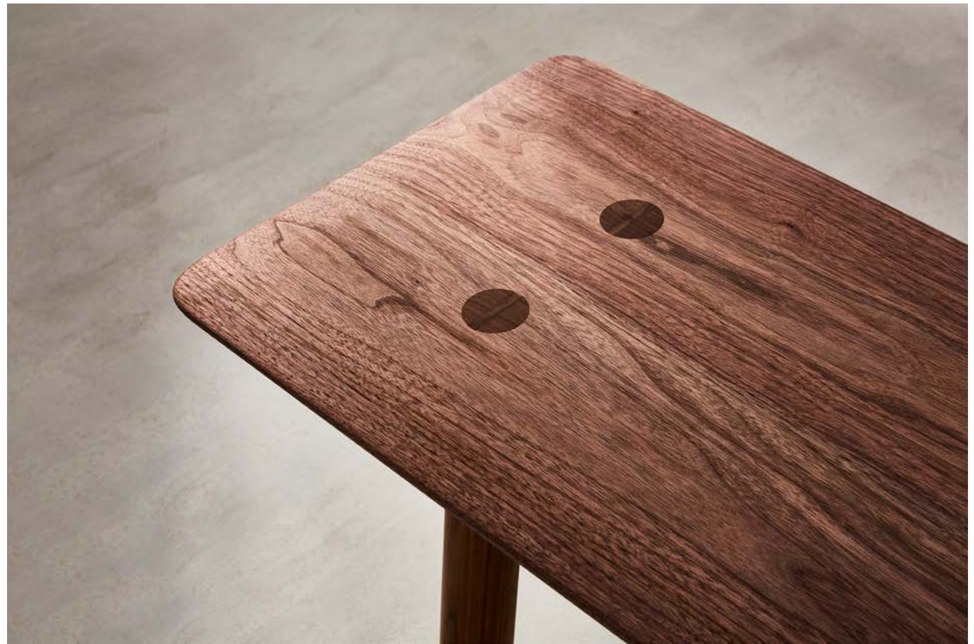


The finishes we use are made from natural oils and waxes that are both sustainable and environmentally friendly.

These low VOC finishes provide excellent protection while allowing the timber to look and feel as natural as possible.

We avoid the use of plastic lacquer. Unlike oils and waxes, most lacquers are harmful to the environment and cannot be easily refurbished.





Healthy Materials

We make our furniture with natural and healthy materials.

Timber has many positive health-giving characteristics. It feels good to touch and has thermal, anti-microbial and acoustic qualities - as well as connecting us with nature.

Contact with timber is proven to benefit both our psychological and physiological well-being. Put simply, wood is good for us.

> *“Put simply, wood is good for us.*





The air inside our homes and workspaces is generally more polluted than the air outdoors and these pollutants can have serious long term health effects on our bodies.

Off-gassing is the term used to describe the airborne release of chemicals, or Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Harmful VOC's are given off by many interior products such as floor coverings, furniture and wall finishes.

Furniture is non-toxic when its production uses neither toxic chemicals nor emits high levels of harmful VOCs. This should be true of the component materials, as well as the construction and assembly of the piece.

When developing new collections, we always use natural materials over synthetic alternatives. We work with water-based glues and low VOC finishes, such as natural oils and waxes.

In interiors where solid timber is used instead of composite board materials such as MDF, levels of harmful airborne VOCs fall dramatically.

Chemical fire retardants are proven to be harmful to humans, and yet are applied as standard to many upholstery fabrics and plastic foams.

The combination and mix of natural fibres selected for our upholstery fillings allow our natural upholstery offering to meet fire regulations without the need for these toxic fire retardant chemicals.

Our Natural Fabric Collection is made from wool which is breathable and antibacterial. It is also able to absorb moisture and certain VOCs, improving the air quality in indoor spaces.





Declare.

Solid Timber Furniture Benchmark

Final Assembly: Kintbury, Berkshire, UK
Life Expectancy: 100 Year(s)
End of Life Options: Salvageable/Reusable in its Entirety, Biodegradable/Compostable (99%), Recyclable (100%)

Ingredients:

Timber: Solid Timber (FSC/PEFC Certified); **Finishes:** Fatty acids, vegetable-oil, polymers with isophthalic acid, pentaerythritol, trimellitic anhydride and trimethylolpropane; Naphtha (petroleum), hydrotreated heavy; Candelilla wax; Carnauba wax; Paraffin waxes (petroleum), hydrotreated; Fatty acids, soya, polymers with hydroxy-terminated Me Ph siloxanes, pentaerythritol and phthalic anhydride; **Wood Glue:** Polyvinyl acetate; Water; **Fixings:** Steel

Living Building Challenge Criteria: Compliant

I-13 Red List:
☐ LBC Red List Free
■ LBC Red List Approved
☐ Declared

% Disclosed: 100% at 100ppm
VOC Content: Not Applicable

I-10 Interior Performance: AgBB Scheme French A+ 2011
I-14 Responsible Sourcing: Product Available with FSC Chain of Custody; Low Risk Wood

BUK-0001
EXP. 01 DEC 2021
Original Issue Date: 2019

MANUFACTURER RESPONSIBLE FOR LABEL ACCURACY
INTERNATIONAL LIVING FUTURE INSTITUTE™ living-future.org/declare



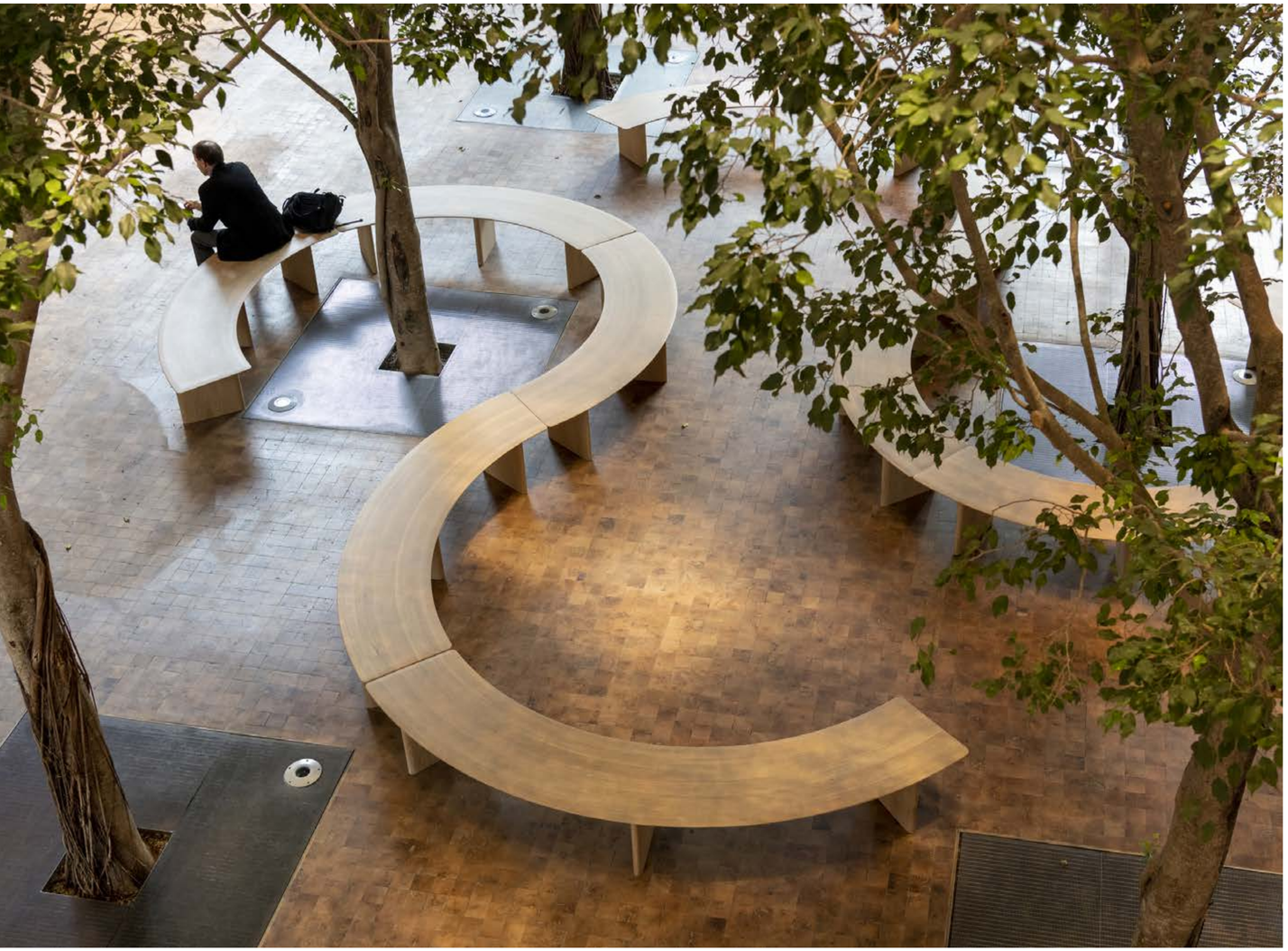
We have chosen to invest in the Declare Label so that we can rise above the greenwash and enable our customers to make informed choices about the health impacts of the furniture they buy.

Our furniture collection, our upholstery fillings and our Natural Fabric Collection all come with Red List Free and Declare Labelling.

The Declare label is an internationally recognised ingredients list for products that provides complete transparency; showing where a product comes from, what it is made of, and where it goes at the end of its life.

Red List Free certifies that our furniture does not contain toxic chemicals nor emit harmful VOCs, and that it meets the requirements for WELL Certified buildings - and other healthy building standards.

Design





We don’t think of something as being beautifully designed unless it is also sustainably designed.

We aim to create simple, elegant designs that transcend fashion and are cherished for a lifetime, thereby avoiding the need for replacement.

We design with material usage in mind, with the objective of creating more from less; often employing the principles of biophilic design, by looking to nature for our design inspiration.

We create furniture with flowing lines, natural colours and organic textures for restorative, connective and productive spaces.



Consideration of physical and psychological ergonomics plays an important part in our design process.

The Global Wellness Institute reports that an improved connection to nature in office design can boost productivity by 8%, rates of wellbeing by 13% and can increase creativity. In educational spaces it can increase rates of learning by up to 25%; and in hospitality, guests are willing to pay up to 20% more for a room that integrates biophilic elements.

Biophilic design aims to create calmer living and working spaces which have positive impacts on the mental and physical health of inhabitants.

This manifests in furniture that celebrates the haptic qualities of solid timber, with soft edges and profiles that are pleasing to the touch and comfortable to rest our arms and legs. It may be a sofa that provides the optimal balance of support and comfort, or a sit-stand desk or meeting table to encourage movement and good posture.

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We use the principles of biophilic design and look to nature for our design inspiration.



Craftsmanship



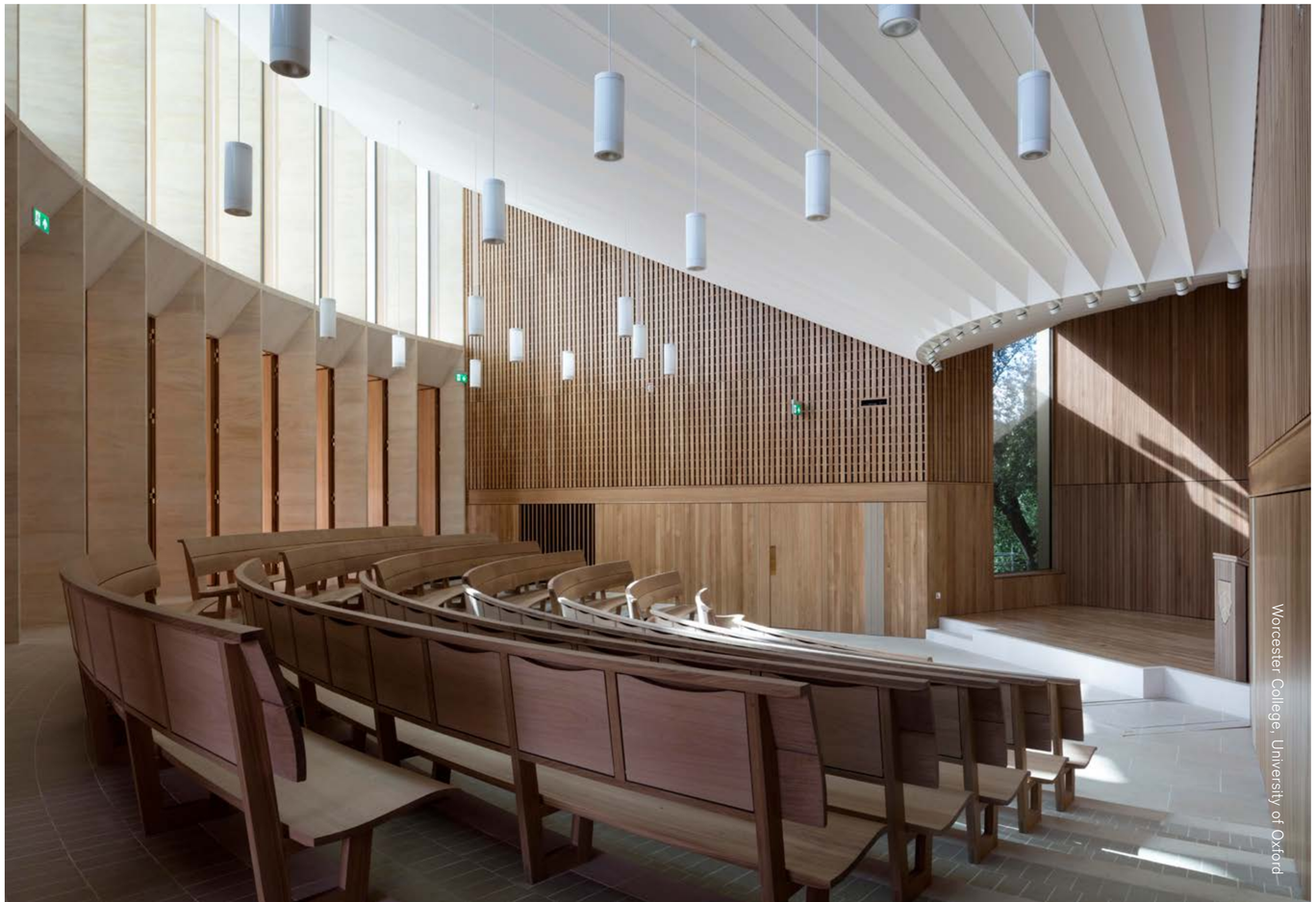
“Making with longevity in mind ensures that the carbon stored in our furniture remains there for a very long time.

We are a company with a deep-rooted belief in the value of craft and craftsmanship.

Our highly skilled craftsmen care deeply about the entire making process. We have our own workshops for milling, cabinet making, CNC-machining, veneering, finishing, metal working and upholstery, so that we can control quality at every stage, from selection of the best raw materials through to final installation.

This care and attention results in furniture that is built to last, and creation of pieces that can be passed down through generations.

This is reflected in our commissions for great institutions such as Westminster Abbey, Oxbridge colleges and many museums and public buildings around the world that share a requirement for sensitive design, exquisite craftsmanship and longevity.



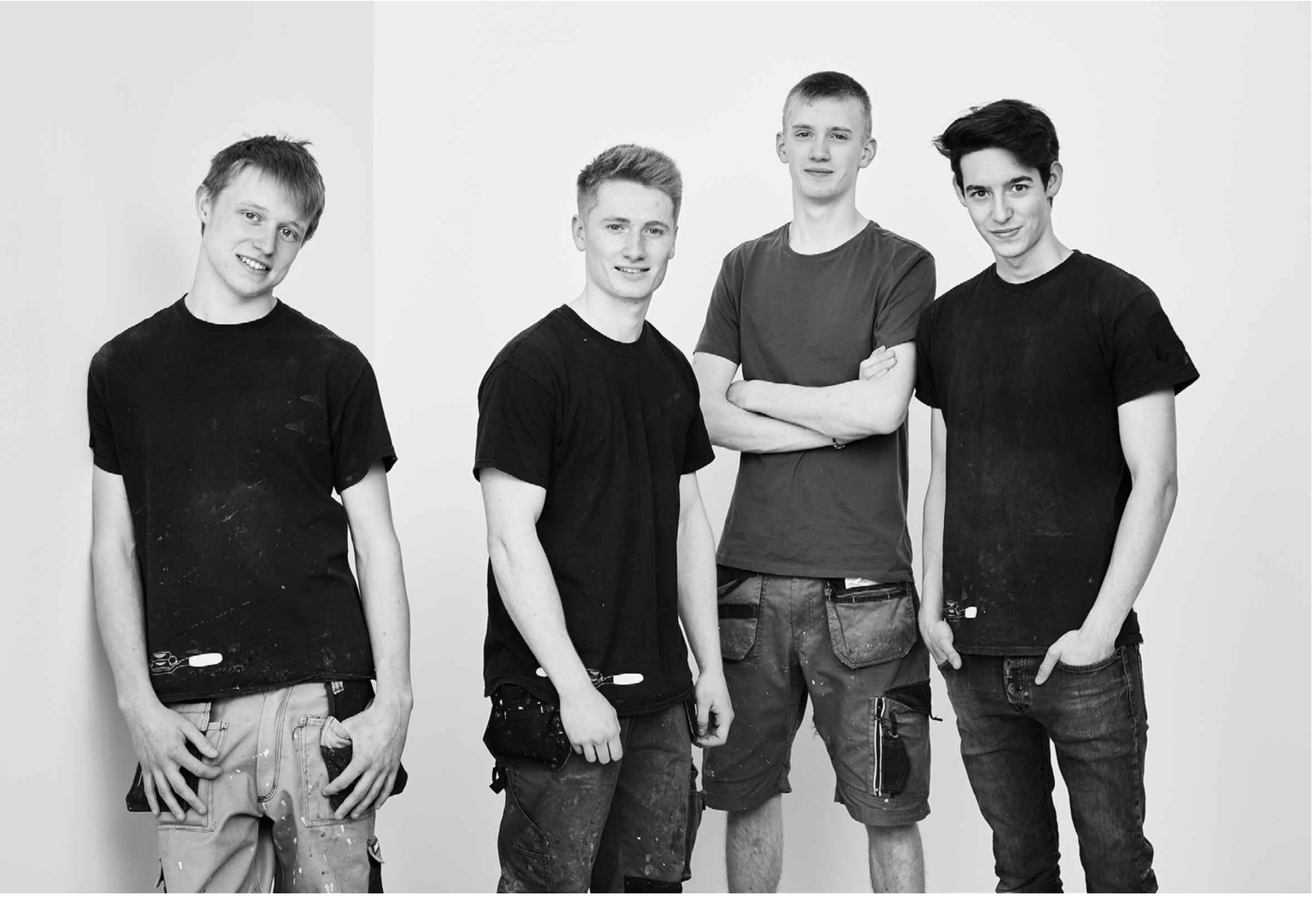
Worcester College, University of Oxford

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In our world of mass machine production, the handmade object provides a connection to the heart and the hand of the craftsman. It gives that object a value that cannot be counted or described, but that we feel and treasure.

Sean Sutcliffe
MD & Founder of Benchmark







We exist to create a legacy of makers and making.

Our award-winning apprenticeship scheme has been running for over 30 years and remains the cornerstone of our business.

Skills are passed down from senior maker to apprentice, ensuring that our values of craftsmanship and quality are imbued in our team from the very beginning.

Many of our senior craftsmen and management team joined the company as apprentices, and we firmly expect many of those starting with us today to remain with us for the next 30 years.

Responsible Production

Sustainability is at the heart of every decision we make; considering material and resource management, our products and the way we make them, through to the way we manage our workshops, our employment practices and our waste.

We are proud to have been twice winners of the Queen's Award for Enterprise in Sustainable Development, as well as the Queen's Award for Enterprise in International Trade.

THE QUEEN'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE: INNOVATION 2007

THE QUEEN'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2015

THE QUEEN'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE: INTERNATIONAL TRADE 2020







Making furniture from wood inherently uses less energy than plastic, steel or glass, and therefore our material choice benefits us substantially in our aim to reduce the carbon impact of our production. But that does not stop us constantly seeking ways to reduce the impacts of our business and our operations.

99% of the bi-products of our manufacturing are re-used, recycled or converted to energy.

Large off-cuts are used to make smaller components. When these offcuts are too small to produce anything useful, they are turned into biomass fuel to heat our workshops.

We have designed our workshops to minimise our carbon footprint through high levels of natural light, low energy LED lighting and use of biomass energy. We use only energy from 100% renewable energy sources.

We are constantly measuring and improving our environmental impact through our ISO 14001 certified Environmental Management System (EMS).



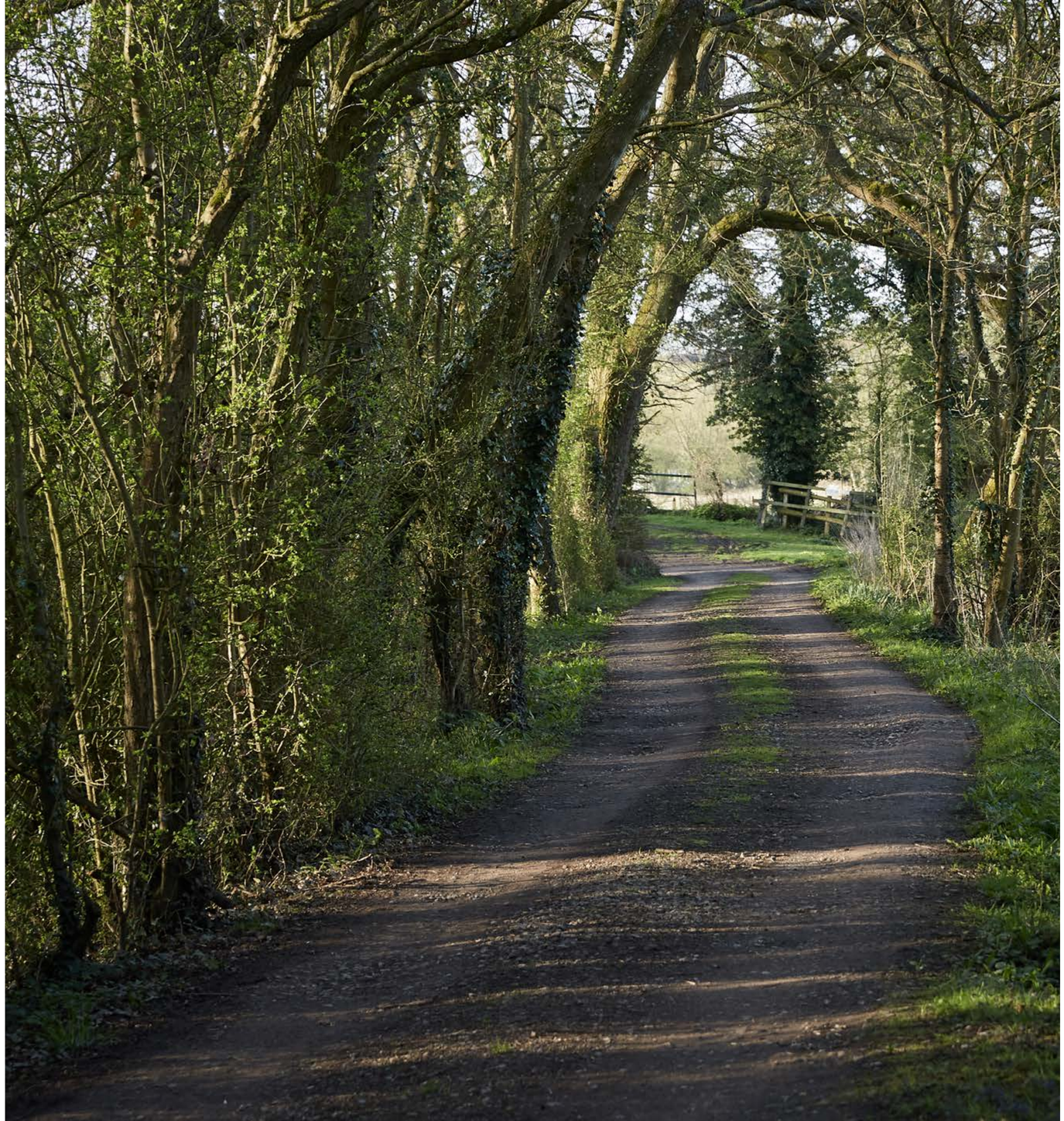


We believe in the value of developing longstanding relationships with our workforce, our suppliers, our customers, and our local community.

We try to source materials and services locally wherever possible to contribute to the prosperity of rural communities and minimise material miles.

We have built strong relationships with our local community by employing local people, investing in improvements to the surrounding countryside, supporting local initiatives and working with local schools and charities.

Grown in Britain





Low Impact Distribution





We seek to minimise the environmental impact of our deliveries.

We plan our delivery schedule to consolidate deliveries to minimise miles. International deliveries are made by sea freight rather than air.

We use recyclable packaging materials. We blanket wrap whenever possible, unwrapping our furniture in situ and returning the blankets for reuse. We have substituted plastic packing foam with a biodegradable corn starch.

Where crating is inevitable, we try to ensure that our crates are returned so that they can be reused.

Our team are conscentious (and a little obsessive) about waste. When sending out samples, we reuse packaging that has been sent to us, and use paper tape instead of plastic.



Circularity

Our furniture is designed and made with longevity and circularity in mind.





Our use of solid timber and natural oil finishes means that our furniture can be easily refurbished and returned to as-new condition.

We offer a **Lifetime Repair** service to encourage refurbishment rather than replacement.

When our furniture is no longer wanted or needed, we offer a **Take Back Scheme** so that furniture can be returned to us to be refurbished or repurposed and given a new life.

As a last resort, if it cannot be re-used or repurposed, our use of natural materials ensures that it is can be returned to the ground or used for biomass.

Transparency

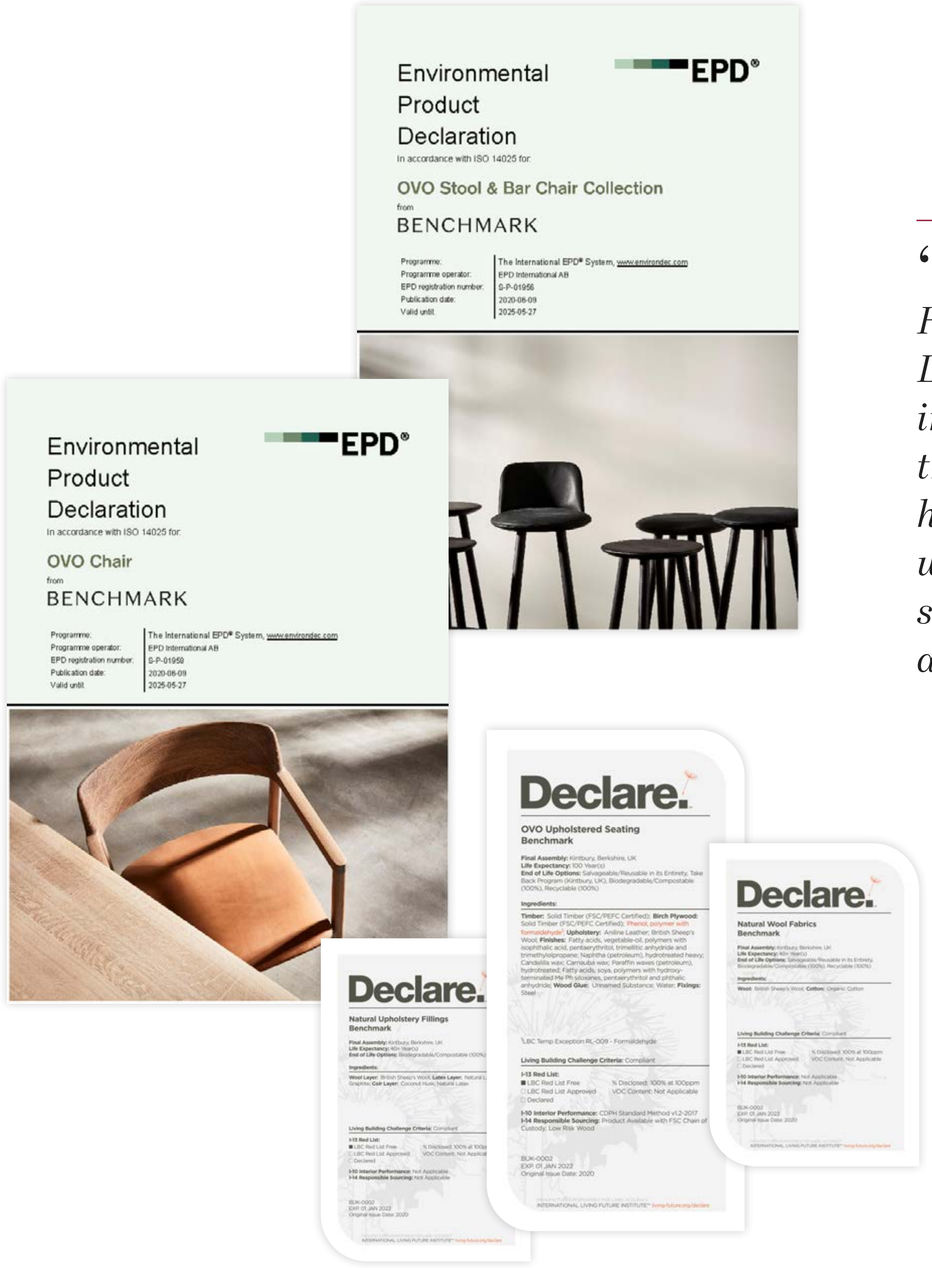
We believe that full transparency should become the rule not the exception.

We continue to invest in evidence-based certifications so that we can provide hard facts on the impact that our furniture and our business has on the environment and human health.

Our data-driven EPD's, which are third-party verified and based on international standards, transparently communicate the results of a product's Life Cycle Assessment. As well as Global Warming Potential (GWP) or the carbon footprint of a product, the EPD gives insight on Eutrophication Potential, Acidification Potential and Photochemical Ozone Creation Potential.

From our EPD's, we have created Climate Declarations - an accessible one-page statement focusing on the product's carbon footprint.

The real strength of EPD's and Climate Declarations are that they have a common format which, when used by multiple suppliers, allows consumers to compare products like-for-like in order to make informed and more sustainable choices.



"

Having EPD's and Declare Labelling has been a big investment for us, but we feel that it is important to provide hard facts and metrics in an era when nearly every company seems to be claiming that they are sustainable.



LP50 is a collaboration of leading manufacturers with a collective vision of a future where every product is optimised to make a positive impact.

As a member of The Living Product 50, we are committed to inspiring change, leading by example, and bringing more people to the table.

Through the sharing of our knowledge and experience, we aim to create conversations within the design community and to educate future generations via talks, presentations and conferences, and by engaging in high profile projects to promote sustainability and transparency. We do this in the hope that together we will create a ripple effect and that many others will follow.



“

In the words of my all time design hero, Leonardo da Vinci, “the finest and noblest teacher is nature itself”.

Nature plays such a vital role in our health, our wellbeing and our happiness. By using biophilic shapes, natural materials and finishes that allow the texture of the timber to be felt, we bring a touch of nature into the homes and workplaces of our customers.

Sean Sutcliffe
MD & Founder of Benchmark

BENCHMARK

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THE QUEEN'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE: INNOVATION 2007

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THE QUEEN'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE: INTERNATIONAL TRADE 2020

LP 50

Grown in Britain

QAS INTERNATIONAL ISO 14001:2015 REGISTERED COMPANY

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