

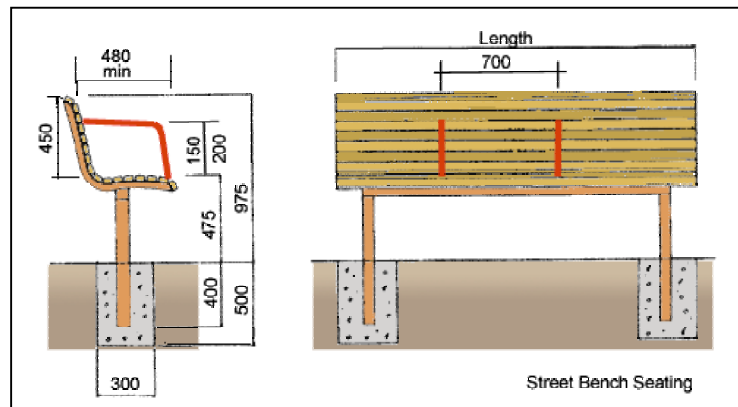
Street Seating

The design of seating in outdoor public spaces is as important as in any other location. Poorly designed public seating can cause pain and injury to users. Seating should always take ergonomic factors into account and seating should not be designed as public art. The comfort of users and safety of people using the street must always be considered.

The height of the seat should be in accordance with the anthropometrics of the demographics of the user population. Therefore, designers should consider providing seating at various heights.

Seat backs again need to be designed to suit the population and should provide support to shoulder level (975 mm approx.). This height also provides additional support for people when sitting or standing. The back should have a height of 900-1000 mm above the footway so that it is visible to people with visual impairment and forms a hand support for people when sitting.

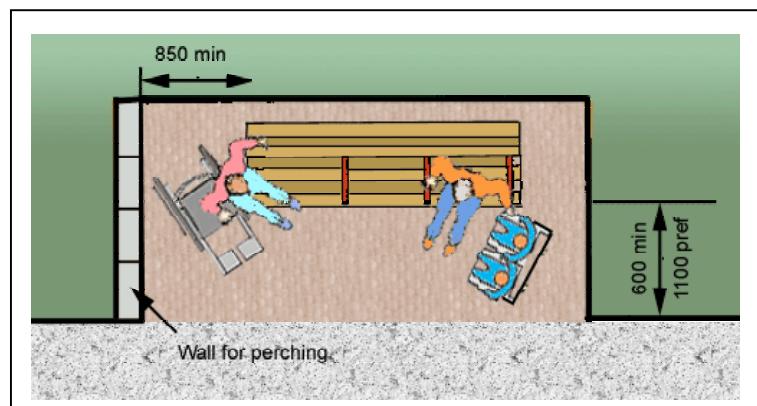
Close packed stringers make seating more comfortable for longer periods. Seats should be ergonomically designed.



Arm rests are an important factor for many people both when seated and during sitting and standing activities. End arm rests may be omitted at one or both ends on some street seats to allow wheelchair riders to transfer and people with movement

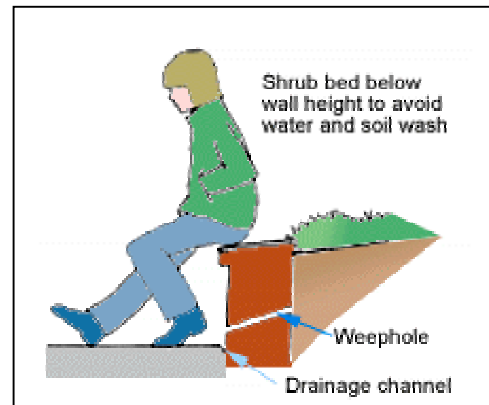
impairment to sit. Arm rests at centre seats should always be provided to aid users, the central arm rest also helps reduce

antisocial behaviour (sleeping on street seats). Where one arm rest is omitted from a bench consider providing some suitable for left handed transfers. Arm rests need to be at least 600 mm above the floor and provide good grip, preferably warm to touch. They must



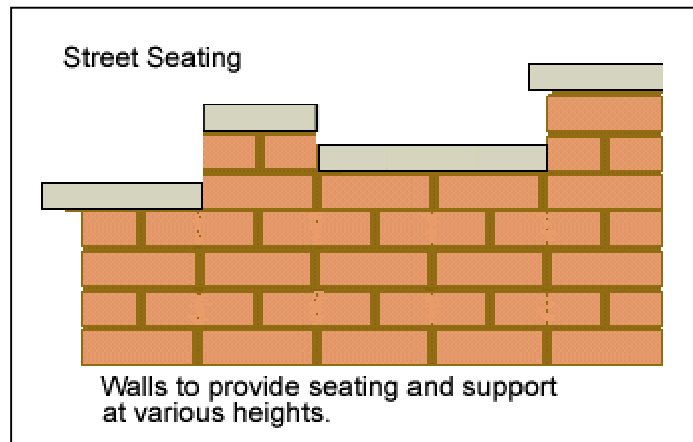
be robust enough to withstand a heavy person (say 85 kg) slipping and jerking the rest or falling on them.

In confined spaces a 400 mm wide foot space for seated people is the minimum, while 600 mm minimum is preferred for the safety and comfort of those seated and for people walking by. The foot space should be colour contrasted to the footway and where possible a tactile surface should be used. Feet should not extend into the walkway causing a tripping hazard.



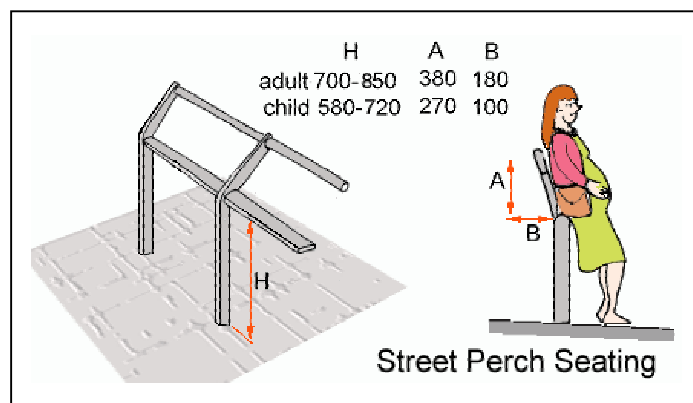
Seat space should be 600-700 mm wide, wider space should be provided outdoors to allow for heavier clothing and more awkward movement.

Street seating does not always need to be formally designed seats. Walls and perches are suitable alternatives in place of seats where space is at a premium and to increase the frequency of resting places between seating. In urban areas especially these rest places need to be robustly designed to deter vandalism. These can be low maintenance features which will suit the poor maintenance frequency applied by most local authorities.



Where walls are used as seating consider providing the wall at different heights to suit leg length and to provide support when sitting and standing. Where possible it is preferred that this type seating has a back rest support provided.

Perches should provide at least 600 mm foot space from the edge of the footway. Tactile warning should be given where the perch extends into a footway. Consider perches and wall seats at various heights to suit people of different builds.



In rural and country locations alternate designs using stone and timber structures can be used to suit the area.

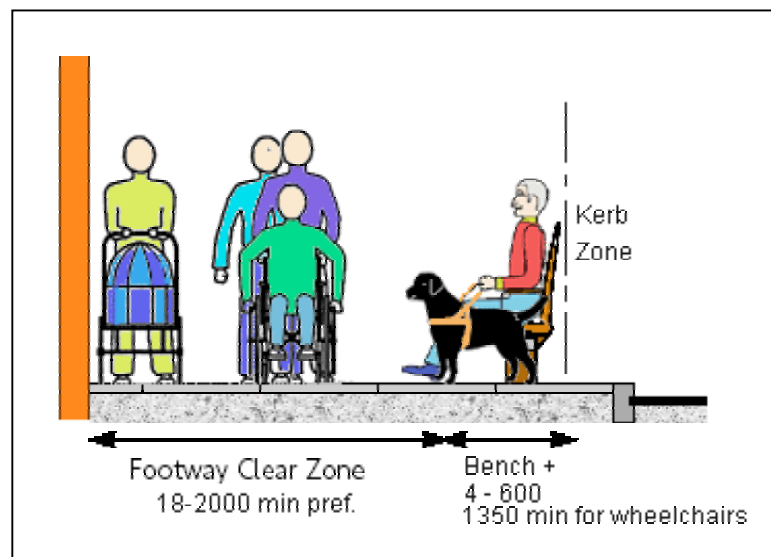
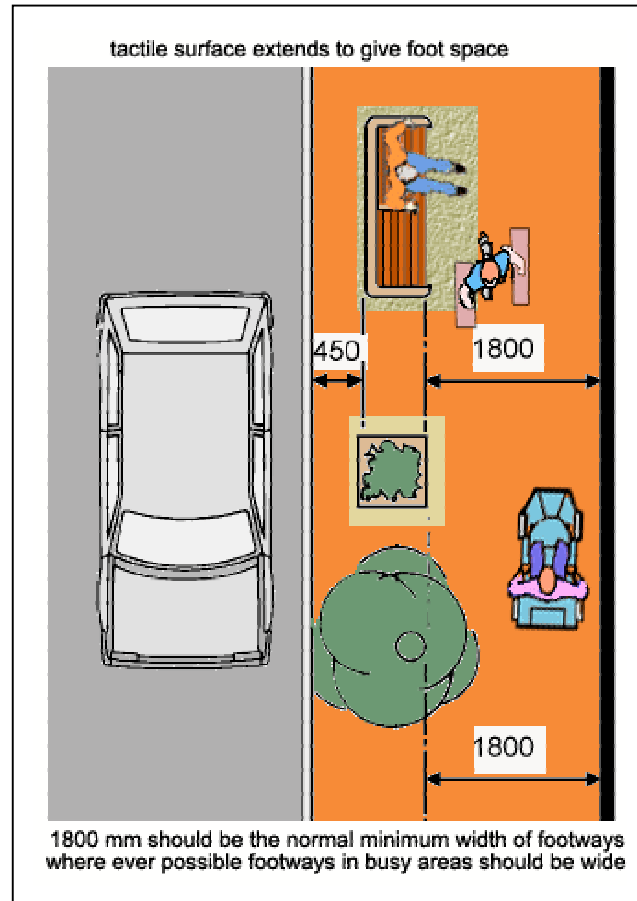
Seating should be sited where it is visible to passing people. If seating is placed in a footway tactile surfaces should extend out from the seat to provide sufficient space for seated people's feet. (600 mm approx.)

Street lighting where provided should be sited near the seating. This allows pedestrians to find the seating while discouraging vandalism.

Consider placing seating in groups where people can socialise rather than single units.

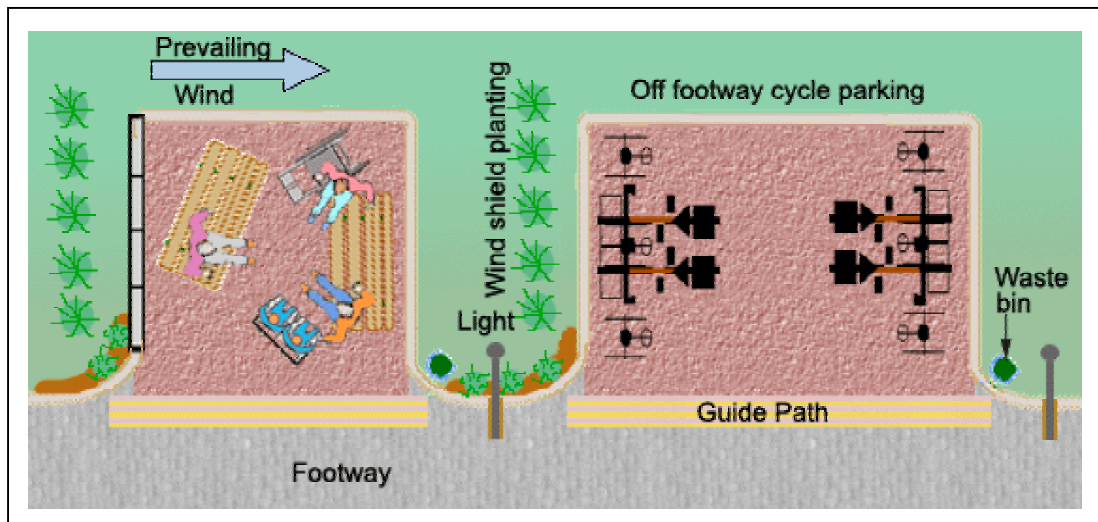
Space needs to be allowed for baby buggies, wheelchairs, companion dogs and baggage out of the pedestrian stream.

Where a seat is located alongside on in the footway it must be located in the furnishing zone. Sufficient space for feet of seated people should be provided. Where wheelchairs can be expected the overall depth of the seating space needs to be 900 mm (in line parking) or 1350 mm (parallel parking).



1.1 Seating Parks and Premises

Where seating is provided in of street locations, the seats should be out of the footway preferable in groups with a variety of seat heights and arm rests.



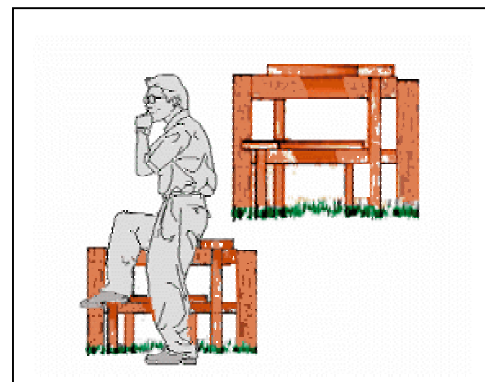
Consider providing a wind break, shade trees on in some locations rain shelter.

Plantings and walls should act as a wind break to the prevailing wind directions. This planting could include trees which can also act as a sun shield leaf fall should be kept clear.

A guide path can be used as a divider between the seating area and footway both as a wayfinding signal and as a warning that people are leaving the seating area and entering a footway with possible cyclists and mobility scooters.

1.2 Less Formal Seating

Hiking rest areas should be provided with a mixture of seating opportunities, including dropped tree trunks, rocks and perch/stiles. Very heights e.g. 450, 500, 600, 700 mm to suit people's stature and ability to sit. Similar perches can be used to enhance the utility of look-out and viewing points and fishing stations. Perches should be maintained and strong enough to support expected weights. 200 x 100 verticals, 73 x 100 horizontals or 300 x 25 thick planks.

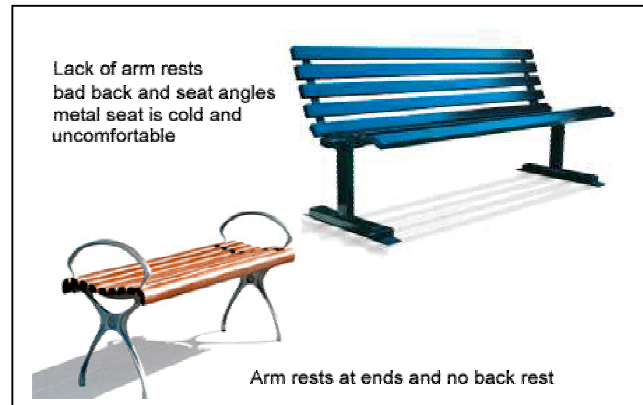


1.3 Poor Seating Design

In general street seating is designed more for art than usability.

Too little attention is paid to ergonomics and the demographics of people who use the area when street seating is designed or purchased.

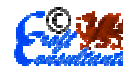
Spending money to install street seating which cannot be used or is easily vandalised is neither a good advertisement nor does it attract return visitors.



The seat designs shown illustrate some of the problems found in current street seating.



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