



By appointment  
to H.M. The Queen  
motor car manufacturers  
Bentley Motors Limited  
Crewe Cheshire



By appointment  
to H.H. The Prince of Wales  
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**BENTLEY**

## Press Information

### **BENTLEY CELEBRATES 70<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF DESIGN IN CREWE**

- **70 years since Bentley established own design department in Crewe**
- **The first Bentley designed in Crewe was the R-Type Continental in 1951**
- **Design process has matured from wax carving and watercolours into virtual reality, using latest cutting-edge techniques**
- **Design methods flourish despite global pandemic through diversity**
- **Design department grows 10 times larger over the last 20 years to meet demand and continually evolve Bentley design DNA**
- **Location for new Design Studio being drafted as one of the next Crewe Campus developments**

**(Crewe, 23 September 2021)** Bentley Motors is celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of its own Design department at Crewe. The first Crewe-designed Bentley was the R-Type Continental in 1951, and was the responsibility of John Blatchley, the Head of Styling. John’s previous experience as chief designer from Gurney-Nutting, the coachbuilders responsible for the iconic ‘Blue Train’ Bentley, meant he had a honed sense of proportion and form.

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Andreas Mindt, Bentley’s Director of Design, comments:

“Leading the next evolution of Bentley’s design DNA is a true honour, especially after so many decades of exquisite design in our studio in Crewe. There are iconic Bentleys that were created here – beautiful cars that have stood the test of time, and which inspire our styling cues to this day.



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“Our team of designers is now engaged with their next opportunity – creating Bentley’s first BEV, which must translate and reshape those classic forms and details to a truly future-facing design. Not only that, the car must be sustainable in more ways than just being electric – so we are exploring sustainable materials, recyclability and new ways of working to ensure the car has a low carbon footprint throughout its lifecycle. Getting this design absolutely perfect will help guarantee the next chapter in this astonishing history of Bentley Design.”

When it was founded in 1951, the design department’s key responsibility was to communicate ideas and design proposals and share their vision with other areas of the business. This was achieved by capturing design sketches as watercolour artworks, painted by hand - beautifully crafted yet with no opportunity to click an ‘undo’ button if a mistake was made.

The watercolour renders were then reproduced in scale or full size technical drawings depicting side, front, rear, plan elevations and sectional views along the body to describe to the model makers the form of the new car.

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Model makers of recent times follow the same processes as they did in the 1950’s. To visualise the drawings in three dimensions, a metal framework is covered with a malleable material (historically wax, and more recently clay) then accurately shaped to describe the form of the new vehicle. Measurements could then be taken from the model and cross-referenced back to ensure the drawings were representative.

Nowadays measuring arms and scanning equipment enable quicker assessment of three dimensional models, with accuracy down to hundredths of a millimetre,



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and provide data as either numeric print outs or cloud data uploaded directly within the design studio for instant virtual reference.

### **Virtual Reality and Global Pandemics**

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The latest era of design is now highly computer dependant and can be represented in virtual reality. Designers can now sketch in a virtual world that can be experienced regardless of geographical location on screens or through headsets and augmented reality. Even with new tools and techniques, once the design has reached full maturity a full size model will still be made, ensuring all of the fine details are perfect before release for production.

Darren Day, Head of Interior Design – and the longest serving member of the Bentley design team, comments:

‘Despite the global pandemic we have had to learn to adapt and use the tools around us to continue evolving how we design. I had at least two of my design colleagues working in different locations around the world due to the pandemic travel restrictions preventing their return to Crewe. Using virtual reality we could hold design reviews, assess details, alternate texture, choose colour, swap materials and yet still make progress and achieve our deadlines.’

Darren joined Bentley’s design team 27 years ago and was one of five. Today the design team has grown significantly and is now more than 50 individuals covering design aspects for the interior, exterior, user experience, colour and materials, bespoke requests, and collaborations.

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Looking to the future of Battery Electrical Vehicles, design is anticipated to play a key aspect for customers more than ever before, due to similarities offered from electric motors and other similar components. Design will not just play a part in customers vehicles but with enhanced technology they will be intertwined with their lifestyle too.

The design team has already collaborated with other luxury manufacturers sharing knowledge and techniques to bring Bentley's design language to other areas beyond luxury vehicles.

### **Beyond Luxury Vehicles**

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Crafted with passion and finished with love, design from Bentley now stretches beyond luxury vehicles and provides lifestyle options too. Bentley Home furniture can be tailored to meet the customer's personal tastes, and to fit any elegant home. Sporting a passion for individuality, furniture can be customised in the finishes that have made the British brand unique, from the most exquisite leathers and wood veneers.

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Each piece is individually finished by hand and fuses traditional craftsmanship with new technology, embodying the techniques and principles of modern luxury integral to Bentley Motors.

Chris Cooke, Lead Designer, comments:

"We work very closely with our colleagues at Bentley Home to ensure the furniture we create embodies the exacting standard in design and manufacture we have in our cars.



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“From the language and flow of the surfaces to the detailed execution of the veneering process, the Bentley Home range is a great example of what we do best, create luxury products for discerning customers.”

The striking furniture pieces draw inspiration from both long-established and modernist design, and interpret the personality and discerning aesthetic of Bentley Motors. The silhouettes and iconic shapes of Bentley models new and old, alongside the precious materials that characterise car interiors, can be seen in the design language of Bentley Home’s beautiful home pieces.

If bespoke furniture is not enough, the world’s first Bentley-branded residences will be in Sunny Isles Beach, Miami. Built to suit luxury car owners, each residence will include an in-unit multi-car garage and a patented car elevator alongside all the most desirable luxury amenities.

The tower will feature uninterrupted views of the ocean and the waterways, bringing the beauty of the outdoors into each new home. Sustainable materials are featured throughout, and with a focus on wellness, the residences are created to appeal to the most discerning customers.

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## The Future of Design

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Pyms Lane has remained the focal point for Bentley’s headquarters in Crewe since the factory was built in 1938. This focus will only increase with Bentley’s plans to develop further areas of the site to support Bentley’s journey towards electrification. After 70 years of design, it would only be appropriate that one of the most inspirational areas of the business is set to relocate to one of the



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most iconic buildings on the campus for the next era, with the build of a new Design Studio in the months to come.

- ENDS -

### **Notes to editors**

Bentley Motors is the most sought-after luxury car brand in the world. The company's headquarters in Crewe is home to all of its operations including design, R&D, engineering, Mulliner and production of the company's three model lines, Continental, Flying Spur, and Bentayga. The combination of fine craftsmanship, using skills that have been handed down through generations, alongside engineering expertise and cutting-edge technology is unique to UK luxury car brands such as Bentley. It is also an example of high-value British manufacturing at its best. Bentley employs around 4,000 people at Crewe.

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