

One of the five Dura workbays at Alf England Motorcycles

CASE STUDY:
ALF ENGLAND MOTORCYCLES,
WARWICKSHIRE, UK

BESPOKE DESIGN: ONE-OF-A-KIND WORKBENCH

Having used Dura in their main workshop for more than 20 years, the business approached Dura with a new challenge; a completely one-off piece of furniture, designed by the technicians to exactly meet their needs. This is the story of how Dura turned a simple sketch into a world-class piece of bespoke workshop furniture.



One-off service bench within new specialist workshop

THE BACKGROUND

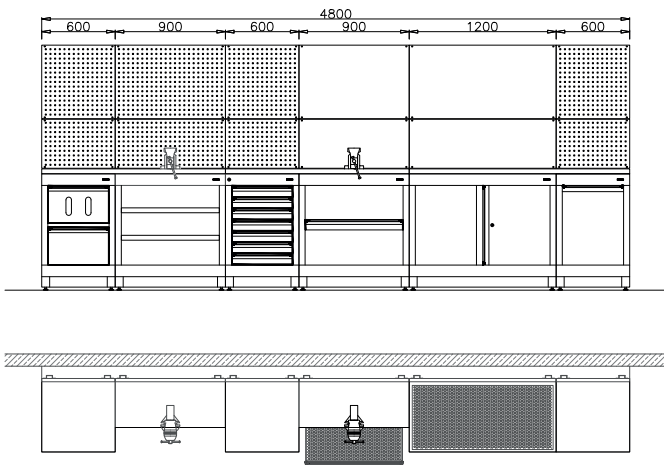
Based in the Midlands, Alf England is one of the county's largest and respected motorcycle specialists, renowned as one of the UK's top Yamaha dealers. Established in 1946, the four-generation family business first chose Dura for its main service workshop in 2002, steadily added to its facility and expanding their workshop with Dura furniture throughout.

In 2023, Alf England sought to build a new workshop and expand its service offer to include specialist suspension services. Everyone in the business – from senior managers to trusted technicians – brought ideas to the table.

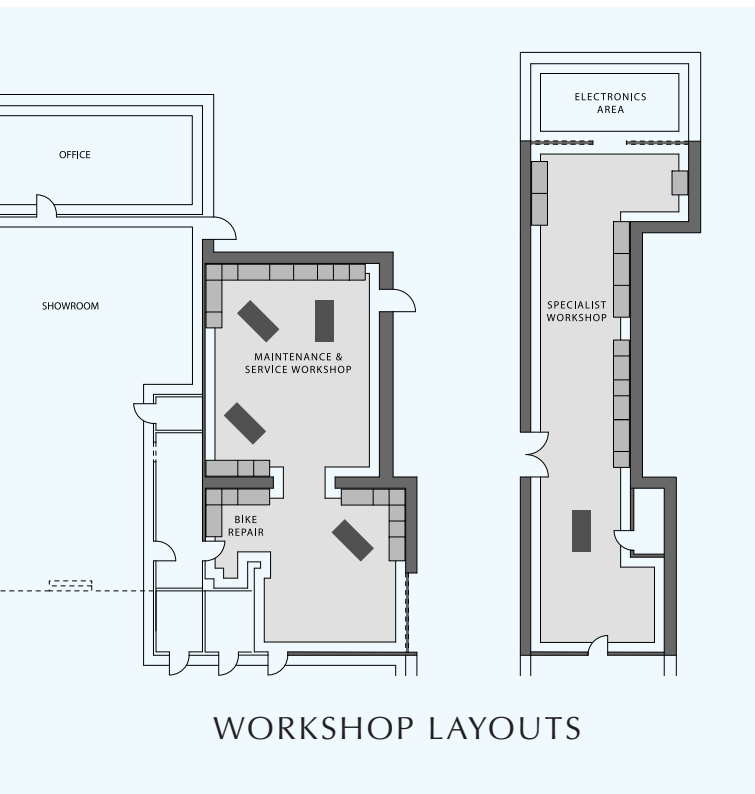
At the very heart of the workshop was an ambitious concept; a completely bespoke, one-off piece of workshop furniture.



CAD render of the bespoke furniture concept



Layout for Specialist Workshop



THE DESIGN

Alf England has always put the customer first; it is an approach that is embodied throughout the business. When it came to designing their new workshop, they started with those who were closest to their customer's bikes; the dedicated team of technicians.

Having worked daily with Dura furniture for more than two decades, the technicians knew Dura's cabinets were an outstanding base for any workshop task. Their new space, however, would see the team take on even more specialist work.

To get the most from their new facility, Alf England started by asking the technicians a simple question; if they were designing a workbench specially for suspension servicing, modification and refurbishment, what would they do? Over the course of several weeks, ideas were considered, and a rough sketch created.

Their concept was inspired; central to the design was a set-back open cabinet with a single vice mounted on a thick, stainless-steel top. Within, was a full width retractable drip tray, topped with a perforated panel to catch any liquids from components. Combined, this enabled technicians to get closer to the job, whilst also keeping all fluids from the floor, increasing safety and cleanliness, both critical factors when working with suspension.

Accompanying this is a shallow sink mounted onto a 1200mm width unit with a shallow drop, ensuring all liquids would drain into a waste-oil catch tank within. A perforated panel was added to the sink, offering a totally flat work surface for technicians.



There is nobody else we would use for a professional environment. Some of our workshop furniture has done 20 years and it works just as well now. You won't get that from off the shelf stuff. If somebody is thinking of a workshop, hands down, Dura.

Steve Cole, Sales Manager





Design features of bespoke furniture keep entire workshop clean and safe

Dura's in-house design team quickly created CAD drawings of the concept. Over the course of six weeks, Dura used its extensive experience of workshop design to support Alf England with the development of their workstation.

The final design was a world-class piece of furniture. It offered 4.8m of solid, stainless-steel workspace, a 1200mm integrated sink and two set-back work benches with vices, one featuring an integrated retractable drip tray, the other with height adjustable shelves for storage. Additional to this was a double width cabinet, integrated waste bin, seven-drawer tool storage unit, double drawer unit with integrated glove and towel dispenser and full height perforated back panels, offering quick access to tools.

To bring the concept to life, a full visual render of the final design was created and shared with the team at Alf England, where it was given unanimous approval for production.

The entire design was manufactured at Dura's facility in Plymouth, UK, home to some of the most advanced manufacturing machinery in Europe. Once fully built, tested and approved to Dura's uncompromising standards of quality, it was delivered directly to Alf England where two members of the Dura Install Team completed the entire install of Alf England's second workshop in just one day.



We went to Dura with just a sketch on a scrap of paper and they have created a product that exceeds every wish and requirement we could have asked for. Even our specialist suspension partners don't have facilities like this!

Steve Cole, Sales Manager



THE RESULTS

Within a space of just six months, Alf England's idea had gone from a simple concept sketch to a fully installed, one-off workspace. The final piece was designed and built to their specification. Fully manufactured and installed by Dura, it now equips Alf England to offer a unique, industry leading service, expanding their service offer, customer base and ultimately enhancing the company's bottom line.

Today, Alf England's technicians have a world-class environment to complete specialist tasks. This clean space is essential to many of these tasks, which can now be completed with greater ease and efficiency. Features, such as the retractable drip tray, increase the safety, efficiency, and practicality of the space to unparalleled levels.

Aesthetically, the space reflects the same levels of professionalism as Alf England and its employees. It inspires confidence in their customers who entrust their motorbikes with the team at Alf England.



Perforated steel for drainage



Stainless steel worktop





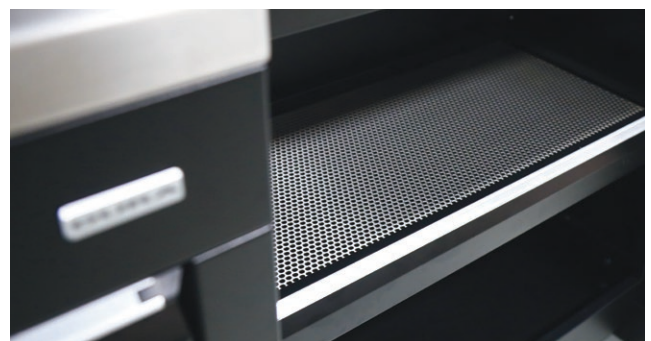
As good as new; Alf England's main workshop was installed in 2002

Over 80 years of trading, Alf England has seen many changes, both in motorbikes and their riders, but one thing has remained consistent: the business's absolute commitment to their customers and uncompromising levels of service. This latest investment is testament to this.

"The end result is fantastic," comments Steve Cole, Sales Manager and fourth generation of the family dealership. "We went to Dura with just a sketch on a scrap of paper and they have created a product that exceeds every wish and requirement we could have asked for. Even our specialist suspension partners don't have facilities like this!

"We are now a real one-stop shop; customers can specify a new bike or choose a quality used model and have it fully serviced here. Now, they can also tune or enhance their bike – new or existing – to their exact specification, whether that is for touring the continent or taking it on the track.

"Everyone here knows we are extremely lucky to have these facilities and we are very proud to offer services of this standard, both to our existing customer base and to new customers. For 80 years, customers have been at the heart of our business, and this is the latest example of our commitment to them."



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