

The Green Man

In pagan times, mainly the Celts for this symbol, (before the main world religions existed) humans were much more aware of the seasons and the passing of time. The modern 9-5 day of work whatever the weather or season was just not what happened. Humans rose with the light and went to bed when it was dark. This meant their working day on the land was longer in the summer and they relied on the land to sustain them.

But who is this strange green figure, surrounded by foliage, often with leaves spilling forth from his mouth?

He can be thought of as an environmental guardian, the keeper of the forests and the woods.

The green man is believed to symbolise the circle of life and death and re birth. He is a pagan symbol who heralds spring after a long winter and the reawakening of lush vegetation. He is not a god and is not worshipped, but consider him to be a friend to humans

If you walk in a forest of ancient woodland and feel that you are not alone, then the chances are that his spirit is with you!

You may also see him at May festivals, Wassailing ceremonies and there are a lot of pubs across England called the Green man.

In these days of gender equality, your green face could be a green lady, a green woman, a green person.

Gather leaves in the autumn to make a face. For a longer lasting face, use crayons to make a rubbing of the leaf, cut it out and then make a picture. Children can be encouraged to make up stories and poems about caring for the land and environment to be kind to the planet. It may be interesting to have a look around an old church to see if you can spot any stone carvings inside the church or maybe on gravestones. Medieval buildings may also have green men carved on them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQHI2mzF1Do>

