



## **DCFW Press Release – No embargo**

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*The Design Commission for Wales champions high standards of architecture, landscape and urban design in Wales, by promoting wider understanding of the importance of good quality in the built environment, supporting skill building, encouraging social inclusion and sustainable development.*

*We believe that good architecture and high quality in our built environment is crucial to our quality of life.*

## **My Square Mile – new resource pack for Welsh schools**

Schools throughout Wales are set to benefit from a free new educational resource pack, focusing on raising awareness of good design and the wider built environment, thanks to The Design Commission for Wales. The resource pack will be launched by Jane Davidson, Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, on Thursday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at 11.30am at the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea. Entitled “My Square Mile”, the pack encourages pupils to explore their local environment in order to develop a sense of place and a feeling of belonging.

The initiative was piloted in 33 primary schools in Swansea and subsequently offered to a number of schools in Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion. Such has been its success in stimulating pupils to investigate and evaluate their locality that the project resources are now being made available free of charge to all schools in Wales.

The resource pack, which contains a book and a comprehensive CD, shares the innovative work of the pilot schools, and acts as a framework and stimulus for other schools to develop their own projects.

Carole-Anne Davies, chief executive of the Design Commission for Wales, said, “The “My Square Mile” initiative has proved a huge success in schools in Swansea and

West Wales. It has given pupils the opportunity to get out and about and explore their local neighbourhood. It has also given them a better understanding of design and architecture.

“The resource pack provides a framework for study and offers suggestions for teachers on the introduction of themes and topics, relevant to the national curriculum, such as sustainability and citizenship. There is huge flexibility within the project which can involve a variety of subjects across the curriculum, including art, design and technology, geography, history, numbers and language.

“Different schools have adopted different approaches and have involved pupils of different age groups in the projects. There have been many wonderful surprises along the way and it has been rewarding to see how the pupils have engaged in the work and have responded so positively to its challenges.

“I’d like to thank our partners in this initiative, especially the Arts Education Teams in Swansea, Carmarthen and Ceredigion local authorities, and Eileen Adams, project author and commissioner. Our thanks also go to the schools who’ve participated so enthusiastically in the project. I am also grateful to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing for her support and funding for this educational and inspirational initiative.”

Jane Davidson, Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, added, “This innovative project is an excellent opportunity for pupils across Wales to learn more about their square mile, through exploring the relationship between buildings, spaces and people. By looking closely at the surroundings we hope young people can begin to understand how the environment is shaped and managed.

“The pilot projects to date have proved that interest is most definitely there and succeeded in offering pupils a chance to celebrate local distinctiveness and local identity. I hope teachers across Wales now take advantage of this valuable resource to foster greater interest in design and sustainability amongst their pupils.”

**-ends-**

### **Notes for editors**

The Commission was established by the Welsh Assembly Government and charged with four strategic aims:

- To champion high standards of design and architecture to the public and private sector in Wales by promoting wider understanding of design issues and the importance of good standards in enhancing the built environment across all sectors.
- To promote design practice that is compatible with the National Assembly Sustainable Development Scheme, promoting best practice in energy efficiency, waste disposal and public transport.
- To promote design practice compatible with the highest standards in relation to equal opportunity and promoting social inclusion.
- Give due regard to promoting excellence in day to day developments, like housing estates and industrial units, as well as promoting excellence in prestige projects.

*DCFW is concerned with the quality of the built environment in Wales.*

The Design Commission for Wales is a not for profit company limited by guarantee, wholly owned by the National Assembly for Wales established under the Companies Act 1985.

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### **Further Information & Contact Details**

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More information can be found on our website [www.dcfw.org](http://www.dcfw.org)

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