



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Case Study Report:

# Design Commission for Wales

August 2016

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.

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## **Introduction**

The Welsh Government expects all public bodies in Wales to champion diversity and inclusivity in their work and all Public Sector Boards to strive for greater diversity and inclusion.

A Board composed of individuals with a variety of skills, perspectives and backgrounds yields differing voices that can play an important role in accomplishing the organisation's mission and increasing understanding of different needs.

This case study was established as part of the Welsh Government's commitment to identifying and promoting good practice case studies of diverse and inclusive Public Sector Boards in Wales. The case study relates to the Design Commission for Wales' public appointments process 2015-2016 and its outcome.

## **The Design Commission for Wales (DCFW)**

The Design Commission for Wales (DCFW) was set up in 2002 by the Welsh Government. The Commission is a small public body working throughout Wales to help shape our built environment and make Wales a better place to live and work.

The DCFW promotes good design across sectors and communicates its benefits, prioritising the design quality of the built environment and the importance of good design for public good and to help make Wales a better place.

The Design Commission for Wales' Board plays a key role in terms of advocating the work of the Commission, effecting good governance, agreeing strategic direction, acting as champions and advocates for the organisation, and enhancing its profile. DCFW is committed to equality and has a commitment to increasing the number of under-represented groups on its Board through the public appointments process.

## **Good practice in planning and engagement**

At the start of the appointments process in 2015, the Board had seven members, including the Chair. However, of these seven, and following the retirement of some members, only one director was female. This process sought to appoint a new Chair and up to two new members.

A collaborative, partnership approach between Welsh Government and DCFW was established at the outset with a considered approach to designing an appointments process which would be proactive in seeking to attract people from all walks of life and encouraging female applicants for the advertised positions.

*“The Commission is keen to broaden perspectives and enhance diversity at board level, welcoming applications from all genders, ages, disabilities and ethnic minorities”*

This public appointments process was seen as a real opportunity to identify and action innovative ways to attract and encourage greater diversity onto the Board.

Before active work on the appointments process began, the Sponsor Division and DCFW agreed a timetable for each stage which took into account working arrangements, Board meetings and leave commitments. Consideration was also given to media messages and the timing of the official advertising period to avoid the summer holidays but also to ensure continuity of Board governance.

## **Publicity and Media Strategy**

Working in partnership, the Welsh Government and the Design Commission For Wales devised and agreed a publicity and media strategy and timeline to raise awareness of the board positions and stimulate interest and applications from under-represented groups. This strategy included

### Press Advertisement

A press advertisement was designed which stated that DCFW was seeking applicants for the position of Chair / Board members. The messages contained in the advertisement (**Annex A**) were clear.

*The Design Commission for Wales is seeking individuals to join its Board, to add new perspectives and complement current members*

This process was not just about recruiting the same people - those who had Board member experience - but it was reaching further, searching for different views and seeking to diversify.

*Whilst we do not require everyone who joins us to have previous Board experience or work directly in the design professions, all of our Board members share a real interest and passion for good design in the built environment*

The advertisement highlighted the desire of both the DCFW and the Welsh Government to broaden the experiences on the Board and set out what the position could offer to candidates, including professional development and purposeful and rewarding work.

The press advertisement was designed to be short, focused and inviting. The social media platforms of the Commission, the Welsh Government and press partners were coordinated around a date and time for the launch of the advertisement. It was placed online and in selected printed media, which included Wales Online and Golwg, at the start of the formal recruitment process on 14 September 2015. The advertisement was also circulated to a wide range of networks and associations.

This was considered the best way to attract applicants from non-professional backgrounds who may otherwise not be aware of the positions.

### Information for candidates

The standard 'information for candidates' document (**Annex B**) was reviewed and simplified to use language which offered greater encouragement for a diverse range of applicants.

Terms such as "expertise" were removed and "interest in" substituted.

The document contained supportive statements such as the following:

*You will find a lot of information in this pack and we want to be sure you have everything you need to make an application so remember that you will be supported by members of the existing board and by a great staff team. You will also have the opportunity to meet and spend time with us during the appointments process.*

At the outset, it also set out the commitment to increasing diversity on the Board:

*We particularly welcome and encourage applications from under-represented groups including women, black minority ethnic, disabled people, LGB people or transgender people who may be currently under-represented on the Board.*

### Awareness Raising

The strategy recognised the value of setting out the networks to reach out to. It used all avenues available in the hope of reaching and encouraging the widest possible field to apply. The use of Welsh Government and DCFW social media presence was used to raise greater general awareness of the positions.

The wider networks and equalities platforms of both DCFW and Welsh Government were also alerted and asked to carry the advertisement. This included women's organisations and a diverse range of equalities groups including Diverse Cymru, Disability Wales and the Equality and Human Rights Commission. They were also asked to circulate to others with an interest.

Groups with an obvious interest were also targeted such as the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Royal Society of Architects in Wales (RSAW), the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), and Landscape Institute Wales.

Chwarae Teg were also notified and asked to promote the opportunity. DCFW is a supporter of Chwarae Teg's 50/50 by 2020 campaign which is working to encourage more women into decision making positions by 2020.

Groups such as Young Planners and Young Designers and DCFW's own HATCH multi-disciplinary group were alerted so as to reach younger audiences who may not have thought about applying or thought these positions would not be relevant to them.

### Articles/Essay Pieces\*

Opportunities were seized to highlight the appointments and discuss diversity issues through the development of written articles/essay pieces which were published in the Western Mail on 16 September and 23 September 2015. The first highlighted the appointments available and the Commission's desire to increase diversity on the Board and, in particular, to address gender imbalance.

Carole-Anne Davies, Chief Executive of DCFW, said:

*"This is a critical set of appointments for us, and it's essential that we get it right.*

*“We’ve lost two of the three women we were fortunate to have on the board due to the cycle of appointments and, although we’re an all-female executive team, we need a more balanced board, reflective of our ambition”*

The article also described the work of the Commission in identifying the barriers to young designers and their career paths. In response to this, DCFW has established the HATCH network to create a voice for young practitioners from different disciplines, with the added benefit of developing the pipeline for future public appointments.

The article stresses DCFW’s commitment to diversity:

*“Good design affects the quality of everyone’s daily life....It is not the preserve of a certain class, culture age or gender.*

*“What’s important to us is to find people with a passion for the built environment, for the places where we live and in helping us move closer to our vision of a Wales which is simply a better place.”*

Carl Sargeant, Minister for Natural Resources, said:

*“We need a greater diversity in public appointments to ensure that decisions being made take account of different viewpoints and issues. As a Government we have given a commitment to seek to address this and I welcome the work the DCFW is doing to increase the diversity of their board”.*

In the second piece, Carole-Anne Davies set out the need for greater diversity and, in particular, for more women to be represented at Board level and to come to the forefront of traditionally male arenas such as construction, architecture and civil engineering. The article highlighted the “shocking” statistics on diversity in the construction industries where:

*“The presence and visibility of women is just 16% out of those who work in the industry”*

The article also described many good examples of cross disciplinary working although:

*“not without exception the disciplines begin and too often stay well within their channels. The lack of diversity of representation, alongside this single discipline approach risks a self reflective industry that perpetuates a small talent pool and restricts growth”*

The article challenges widespread recruitment practice where appointments are often made to perpetuate existing inequalities.

*“Appointing in our own image is not simply a recruitment issue that prevents us harnessing the skills of a diverse workforce in a competitive age. It indicates industry self reflection and a narrowness of networks, forged at an early stage”*

The piece concludes with a statement about the appointments then being advertised for the Chair and Board members:

*“At the very least our own appointments opportunity means we can get better at noticing. We can better understand and address gaps, invite the wider perspectives we need to check and illuminate established views; be better informed, more capable, and simply do what we do, but better. There’s no downside to diversity”.*

**\*Available at Annex C and D**

### DCFW Open events and Board Observation

Two welcoming and informative open days/evenings were arranged for potential applicants to come along to the DCFW offices, meet the existing staff team and Board members and find out more about the roles on offer. Refreshments were provided in a relaxed and informal environment.

On 20 October 2015, candidates had an opportunity to observe a DCFW Board meeting.

### **Outcome**

Once the application period had closed all of the applications received entered the formal appointments process where each candidate was assessed on their individual merits in a fair and equal manner.

The wide engagement approach taken for this exercise led to a high number and strong field of applicants. In total, twenty-four applications for Board members were received. Of these, eleven applications were from women, thirteen from men, one candidate identified themselves as disabled and there was one application form from the minority ethnic communities. Six candidates were invited to interview.

In order to inform future publicity activity, an analysis was carried out on where applicants had heard about the appointment:

- 25% had heard about it from Welsh Government/Civil Service Jobs website
- 25% from 3rd party website
- 17% word of mouth
- 17% professional body
- 13% via the online advertisement
- 4% direct e-mail

Following interview, two women and one man were appointed to the Board.

Four applications were received for the Chair position. A female Chair was appointed.

Following this public appointments process, the DCFW Board now has a Board of three female and four male Commissioners (plus one male co-opted member).

Those appointed are recognised as diversifying the make up and skillset of the Board as well as increasing the geographical spread of members (one is from North Wales and a Welsh speaker).

An added bonus of this wider, more inclusive engagement also saw a lower age profile of applicants and appointees - another key aim of the Commission.

For the Chair position, out of four applicants, two were in the 40-44 age range and one in the 30-34 age range.

For Board Members, two out of three appointees are from the 30-34 and 35-39 age ranges with eight applications from these two age groups in total.

## **Lessons to share**

Three new Board Members, the new Chair, Chief Executive and representatives of the sponsor division took part in a discussion about the recent DCFW appointments process on 11 April 2016.

### Partnership, collaborative approach

From the outset, the Welsh Government and DCFW worked in partnership to deliver a more diverse Board. The leadership shown by the Minister, the Chief Executive of DCFW and the expert advice provided by Public Appointments Unit and the Sponsor Division in Welsh Government were all felt to be mutually necessary to achieving this goal.

Differences were noted by the Chief Executive with their previous experience of the public appointments process when all was handled by the Sponsor Division with little input from DCFW. Their more recent experience was felt to be a more open and responsive process utilising the different areas of expertise as appropriate.

### A clear strategy

Addressing gender imbalance was established at the outset and was central to the design and development of the publicity and media strategy. Clear steps were set out with timings appropriate to the public appointments process.

The questioning approach of DCFW was highlighted throughout where questions were posed such as - Do we have all the talent in the room? Where else can we target our approach? What else can we do?

### Commitment to diversity

The commitment by all to increasing diversity on the Board was felt to be crucial for various reasons: the appointment of younger people bringing different perspectives and experiences; people with different world views and different ways of thinking; and women role models in a male dominated sector.

The importance of having the right mix of people on the Board was also stressed. This process was not just about improving gender balance but having the right person who just happened to be female. It was important to foster an approach where the women who were appointed did not “pull up the ladder” behind them, where talent was encouraged to develop and aspirations raised.

Opportunities and links to well publicised schemes and organisations such as Chwarae Teg and the Presiding Officer's Women in Public Life mentoring scheme were also felt to be useful in helping to addressing some of the barriers and highlighting potential appointees. These were also seen as a source of support and learning. The DCFW Chief Executive is an independent mentor and is aware of barriers to progress, particularly for young women in the leadership sphere.

It was also felt that addressing gender imbalance needed to be challenged more widely, across those traditionally male dominated sectors which could house the potential Board members of the future. It was important to get those messages 'out there' in order to increase diversity and develop women into more senior positions.

Overcoming challenges across these sectors was also seen as an opportunity to foster inter-disciplinary working.

DCFW's own HATCH network was highlighted as it aims to break down the barriers between disciplines and:

*"Raise awareness of the value of good, joined up design and planning, and the difference it can make to individuals and communities".*

The network offers opportunities to:

*"better get to know each other, the disciplines we work in and our design ambition"*

## Engagement

DCFW recognised that in order to attract a more diverse set of candidates, they had to be explicit in their intention and proactive in identifying potential applicants. Building on this knowledge, they made use of networks to promote the vacancies and targeted their communication. The opportunity to meet with the Chief Executive and team, and to hear more about the workings of the Board and expectations of a Board Member, was felt to be of huge benefit. Open evenings meant people could gain a feel for the organisation as well as the role of a Board member before deciding whether to apply.

These events also meant that prospective applicants felt encouraged to apply with the understanding that this would still be subject to fair and open competition.

It was also noted that in the past there had not been the same opportunities to find out more about the Board and the Commission.

## Advertising Materials

This was felt to be a key issue in attracting different people to apply. DCFW and Welsh Government worked in partnership to adapt the language contained in the advertisement and person specification.

DCFW led the design of the materials. The values and culture of the organisation were central to the design of the materials as the process sought to appoint people who not just had necessary skills but could fit with the values of DCFW.

The materials were seen as highly accessible, informative and engaging. The use of very clear and simple English made them easy to read and understand.

It was felt these provided appropriate information and encouraged applications from people who may not ordinarily have put themselves forward. The design itself was also felt to be of huge importance as those applying would, in all likelihood, already work in the sectors and would be attracted by them. The design was seen as selling the Commission and its values well.

### Flexibility

The process takes time and circumstances can change. By the time the appointments were made, one candidate was celebrating a new pregnancy. She was fearful that she may not be appointed as a result. This was relayed to the Sponsor Division and to DCFW who were able to allay her fears and put support in place to ensure she would be able to participate as a Board member. In her comments the candidate said she was:

*“Absolutely flabbergasted to be shown this kind of support”*

It was felt that this could be seen as trailblazing in terms of support for women in taking on a role as a Board member. It was felt many women would not ordinarily put themselves forward due to conventional barriers of perception around age, gender or pregnancy.

### The public appointments process

The Chair and Chief Executive commented that successful appointees had managed the public appointments application process well. It was felt that information and training could be helpful for others to shape their applications and to improve their response to role requirements. The advertisement had clearly listed what the Board was looking for and successful candidates had married their applications to this well.

The introduction of open evenings and opportunities to learn more about their Board were seen as key in encouraging different people to apply. However, it was felt timings can prove difficult with this aspect as the appointments process is lengthy and can be set to tight deadlines driven by patterns of Government recess periods etc. Although a clear publicity strategy was in place for this appointments round, it was felt it could be helpful to give more notice to prospective candidates, if possible, to ensure more people would be able to attend. The need to plan as far in advance as possible was seen as a key learning point for this appointments round.

Views on the interview process were mixed. For most, it had been a positive welcoming experience, for others intimidating. Interviews took place at the Welsh Government office in Cathays Park which added to the feeling of intimidation for one of the interviewees.

Concerns were raised by the Chair in terms of the interview questions which did not allow for organic exploration of points raised as all candidates were asked the same questions. The process was felt to be too restrictive and they would have liked to be able to probe and explore answers differently. Fairness of treatment does not have to be negatively affected by real, fluid discussion. The need to put the interviewee at ease and make the process as pleasant as possible was stressed with the interview aiming to reflect the positive culture of the Board.

However, it was felt the process was fair but not necessarily fully adequate. These are lessons which can be discussed for future public appointments rounds.

## **Conclusion**

The time and resource dedicated to the planning and design of this public appointments process, the partnership and collaborative approach and the strategy for publicising the positions all contributed to a successful outcome.

DCFW recognises increasing diversity on their Board goes hand in hand with addressing the diversity challenges in the sector. They are committed to challenging the established norms and single discipline approaches which exist and to putting measures in place to support the different sectors to work together to address these. Through the determined publicity and media strategy for this exercise, DCFW and Welsh Government attracted people who may not ordinarily have applied to the Board.

Time was afforded to think through the process to attract a wider field and the obvious benefits of a collaborative partnership approach is recognised as necessary to promoting the messages and encouraging a wide range of people to apply.

Creating a diverse Board takes time and commitment with the organisation focusing on developing a culture that is respectful of diverse communities and the values diversity brings.

Working in partnership with the Welsh Government, DCFW has shown a real commitment to increasing diversity on their Board and challenging the longer term aims of addressing gender imbalance across sectors. They remain committed to equalities and diversity and their work in these areas continues.

## Annex A: Press Advertisement

WE'RE SEEKING YOUR  
HELP WITH OUR VISION  
FOR A WALES THAT IS  
SIMPLY A BETTER PLACE.

IF YOU CARE ABOUT THE DESIGN OF THE  
WORLD AROUND YOU AND BELIEVE WALES'  
CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES SHOULD BE  
GREAT PLACES TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY,  
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

# CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBERS

THE DESIGN COMMISSION FOR WALES (DCFW) IS SEEKING  
INDIVIDUALS TO JOIN ITS BOARD, TO ADD NEW PERSPECTIVES  
AND COMPLEMENT CURRENT MEMBERS.

We promote good design and communicate its benefits, working to champion high standards of design for all our environments, throughout Wales. We make a real difference on the ground by providing design review services for new development proposals, supporting local authorities, community groups and other networks involved in shaping our built environment, delivering publications, exhibitions and events.

The Commission invites your application for new appointments including a new Chair and up to 2 Commissioners to help steer our strategic direction and be ambassadors of good design in Wales.

Whilst we do not require everyone who joins us to have previous Board experience or work directly in the design professions, all of our Board members share a real interest and passion for good design in the built environment. In addition to an appreciation of urban and landscape design, architecture, infrastructure and environment, we are seeking new Commissioners with knowledge of commercial property development, communications and marketing.

You will be supported by members of the existing board and by a great staff team and will have the opportunity to meet and spend time with us during the appointments process. We're also sure that you'll make a great contribution to our work so what are you waiting for?

You can find more on our website at [dcfw.org](http://dcfw.org) or call the team on 029 2045 1964. For more information on the application process and to apply, you can also visit <http://wales.gov.uk/publicappointments> or for queries contact the HR Helpdesk on 029 2082 5454 / [SharedServiceHelpdesk@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SharedServiceHelpdesk@wales.gsi.gov.uk).

The closing date for applications is **9th October 2015**

A large print, Braille or audio version of this advert can be obtained by request from 029 2082 5454.





# Appointment of a Chair and Board Members (Commissioners)

Information for Candidates

## Introduction

The Minister for Natural Resources is seeking a new Chair and up to two board members (Commissioners) to the Design Commission for Wales (DCFW).

Here you can find more information to help you apply and understand more about the post and the appointments process.

We're seeking your help with our vision for a Wales that is simply a better place. If you care about the design of the world around you and believe Wales' cities, towns and villages should be great places to live, work and play, we want to hear from you.

The Design Commission for Wales (DCFW) is seeking individuals to join its board, to add new perspectives and complement current members.

The Commission invites your application for new appointments including a new Chair and up to 2 Commissioners to help steer our strategic direction and be ambassadors of good design in Wales.

Whilst we do not require everyone who joins us to have previous Board experience or work directly in the design professions, all of our Board members share a real interest and passion for good design in the built environment. In addition to an appreciation of urban and landscape design, architecture, infrastructure and environment, we are seeking new Commissioners with knowledge of commercial property development, communications and marketing.

You will find a lot of information in this pack and we want to be sure you have everything you need to make an application so remember that you will be supported by members of the existing board and by a great staff team. You will also have the opportunity to meet and spend time with us during the appointments process. We're sure that you'll make a great contribution to our work so what are you waiting for?

## Background – What is the Design Commission for Wales?

DCFW was set up in 2002 by the Welsh Government. The Commission is a small public body working throughout Wales to help make it a better place.

The Commission promotes good design for our places, buildings and public space and communicates the benefits of good design for everybody.

The Commission provides a Design Review Service for development schemes throughout Wales, available to all local authorities clients, developers and members of the public. The Commission provides early stage consultation on development proposals along with bespoke training and development services for local authorities that focus on planning and project delivery mechanisms and wider design awareness.

The Commission works with colleagues in the fields of urban design, architecture and landscape design, civil engineering, building services and the wider environmental professions who are involved in shaping the countryside, cities, towns and villages of Wales. The Commission engages with members of the public, stakeholders in professional bodies, local authorities, clients and commissioning bodies, in planning, regeneration, energy and infrastructure, making our assistance available throughout Wales.

The Commission carries a wide range of expertise, even though we're a very small team. Alongside that expertise we need enthusiastic champions and advocates to help guide us.

## What does the Design Commission for Wales aim to do?

The Commission promotes good design and responds to its 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 Welsh Government's 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.
- To 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.

For further information about the Design Commission for Wales please visit our website [dcfw.org](http://dcfw.org) or contact Carole Anne-Davies on 029 2045 1964 or via email at [cad@dcfw.org](mailto:cad@dcfw.org).

## The Board

The Board plays a key role in terms of advocating our work, looking after our governance and enhancing public relations. Board members are ambassadors for the organisation and it follows that they should genuinely appreciate and champion the work of the Commission.

The Board currently has seven members, including the Chair. All appointments are made through an open competition process. During preparation for your application you will have the opportunity to meet and spend time with us and ask any questions you may have.

## Staff Team – Who will support you

DCFW's staff team is led by the Chief Executive. The range of the work undertaken by DCFW is wide; therefore the day-to-day management is undertaken by the Chief Executive and team. We are here to support you and keep you well informed. We enjoy what we do and want you to share in our very rewarding work whilst helping us with our strategic direction, and bringing your energy and ideas to the role.

## Role Description – Chair

### What you will do

For the role of Chair we are seeking an individual with knowledge and experience appropriate to a senior governance role who is eager to play a part in promoting good design for the delivery of a better quality environment in Wales and to act as an ambassador for the Commission.

The current Chair, will remain in post until April 2016 and will be available to meet you and share thoughts on the role. There will also be opportunities to observe the role and the new chair designate will be able to shadow the current chair, attend Board meetings and other events to familiarise themselves with the role before their appointment begins in April 2016.

As Chair your main duties will be to:

- provide overall leadership to the organisation;
- ensure diversity and a broad range of skills on the Board;
- act as an alternative spokesperson for the organisation;
- demonstrate credibility amongst multi-disciplinary design professions;
- ensure Board effectiveness and decision making;
- ensure succession planning;
- appraise annually Board members and the Chief Executive;
- maintain a good but discerning relationship with the Chief Executive; and
- agree agendas and necessary paperwork with the Chief Executive.

## Role Description – Board Members

### What you will do

In addition to the Chair we are seeking up to two new board members (Commissioners) to join us. You will be eager to play a part in good governance and advocate the importance of good design for a high quality built environment in Wales. You will be expected to act as an ambassador for the DCFW and its work. You will strive to promote DCFW, its activities and its needs to as many individuals and bodies as possible so as to enhance the organisation's profile and purpose.

In addition to a background in the fields of urban and landscape design, architecture, infrastructure and environment, we are seeking new board members with knowledge of commercial property development, communications and marketing.

Similar to the role of Chair, the appointments process aims to allow new board members to familiarise themselves with the operation of the organisation by attending and observing board meetings and other events.

## Person Specification – Who we are looking for

We are seeking to appoint individuals who can demonstrate the following:

- enthusiasm for our work;
- awareness of and enthusiasm for good design in the built environment (but not necessarily as a practitioner) with the ability to operate in an inter-disciplinary arena;
- management and governance experience and interest;
- good communication skills;
- a clear understanding and commitment to equality and inclusion and to challenging discriminatory practices; and
- an understanding of the importance of high standards in public life.

In terms of the role of the Chair the individual should also be additionally be able to demonstrate:

- good leadership skills;
- credibility in the design arena;
- the ability to comment on design issues;
- the ability to engage with others across professional disciplines; and
- an understanding of the Built Environment industry, how it operates and who the key players are, politically and commercially with an appreciation of the importance of capturing good design quality early in the development process.

For both posts the ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh is desirable but not essential.

It is the Welsh Government's policy and a key commitment of the Commission to promote and integrate equality of opportunity in all aspects of its business including appointments to public bodies.

We particularly welcome and encourage applications from under-represented groups including women, black minority ethnic, disabled people, LGB people or transgender people who may be currently under-represented on the Board.

The Commission wants to hear from you, to answer your questions and help you in your decision to apply.

## Eligibility – Who can apply

Applicants should be persons who conduct themselves at all times in a manner which will maintain public confidence.

All board members are responsible for agreeing the DCFW's strategic direction and acting in the interests of the success of the organisation.

DCFW is a Private Limited Company incorporated in England and Wales and is a wholly controlled subsidiary of the Welsh Government. Commissioners are Directors of the company and therefore need to comply with all relevant legal requirements. Support and information in this regard is provided by the wider board and staff of the DCFW.

## Terms of Appointment

Appointments will be made by the Minister for Natural Resources.

The appointments will be for an initial period of 3 years, renewable subject to satisfactory review, to a maximum of 10 years.

The reappointment process will also take account of the diversity of the Board.

## Time Commitment

Chair / Board Members will need to consider a time commitment of about 2 days per month to prepare for and attend board meetings 4 times a year including the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

## Location of Meetings

Board meetings are usually held in Cardiff, but there may be occasion when meetings are required elsewhere in Wales. You may also wish to attend Commission events throughout the year at various locations around Wales.

## Pay / Remuneration

Board Members of the DCFW are not employees. They currently serve in a voluntary, unpaid capacity.

Travel and other reasonable expenses that might be incurred in carrying out work on behalf of the Design Commission for Wales can be reimbursed.

## Help for the Chair / Board Members

Reasonable adjustments will be made to enable the chair / commissioners to effectively access services and or carry out their duties.

## Selection Process

Although appointments to the DCFW do not come within the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments these appointments are made using a process which takes into account the Commissioner's Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies.

It is the policy of the Welsh Government to promote and integrate equality of opportunity into all aspects of its business including appointments to public bodies. Applications are welcomed and encouraged from all groups and we ensure that no eligible candidate for public office receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, or pregnancy and maternity. The principles of fair and open competition will apply and appointments will be made on merit.

## Starting date

1 April 2016

## Application

You are encouraged to find out more about the Commission from their website [dcfw.org](http://dcfw.org) or by telephoning the Chief Executive.

To apply you will need to submit two supporting documents. The first a full CV and the second a personal statement (no more than two pages of A4), telling us about your experience, how you meet the role description and person specification and how you could contribute to the Design Commission for Wales. The two documents should be uploaded to the "Attach Supplementary Document(s)" section of the online application form.

We hope you will find the online process simple to follow but we recognise that not everyone will be able to use it because of their own individual accessibility requirements.

If you are unable to submit online you can also send printed hard copies by post to:

Shared Service Helpdesk  
Welsh Government  
3rd Floor  
Cathays Park  
CF10 3NQ

## Closing Date and Key Decision Dates

The closing date for applications is 9th October 2015. Applications received after this date will not be considered. You will be informed whether or not you are being invited to interview at least two weeks before the interviews which are expected to be held in the fortnight commencing 30th November. The Minister's decision on these appointments is expected by the end of December.

## Further Information and Queries

For further information about the Design Commission for Wales please visit their website [dcfw.org](http://dcfw.org) or contact Carole Anne-Davies on 029 2045 1964 or via email at [cad@dcfw.org](mailto:cad@dcfw.org).

For further information on the application process and to apply, please visit <http://wales.gov.uk/publicappointments> or for queries contact the HR Helpdesk on 029 2082 5454 / [SharedServiceHelpdesk@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SharedServiceHelpdesk@wales.gsi.gov.uk).

# Commercial Property

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## Wanted: People with designs to make a better life



> Carole-Anne Davies, CEO and Alan Francis, chair of Design Commission for Wales

**T**HE Design Commission for Wales (DCFW) plans to appoint some new board members including a chair this autumn and is encouraging applications from all walks of life.

The Welsh Government's design quality champion for the built environment wants the new board members to be in place from April 1, to complement the six people already on the board. The current chairman, Alan Francis, will step down on March 31.

The Commission is keen to broaden perspectives and enhance diversity at board level, welcoming applications from all genders, ages, disabilities and ethnic minorities.

Carole-Anne Davies, chief executive of DCFW, said: "This is a critical set of appointments for us, and it's

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essential that we get it right.

"We've lost two of the three women we were fortunate to have on the board due to the cycle of appointments and, although we're an all-female executive team, we need a more balanced board, reflective of our ambition.

"In addition, the Commission has identified the barriers to young designers and their career paths, and has established the Hatch network to create a voice for young practitioners from different disciplines. Historically we've had the benefit of excellent contributors on inclusive environments, but we now want to encourage fresh thinking and new viewpoints."

She added: "Good design affects the quality of everyone's daily life, in the places they live, work and socialise; in better connected places, in our schools and hospitals and particularly in our homes. It is not the preserve of a certain class, culture age or gender.

"What's important to us is to find people with a passion for the built environment, for the places where we live and in helping us move closer to our vision of a Wales which is simply a better place.

"We have been extremely fortunate in having Alan Francis as our chair for a maximum term of office, and Alan and I both wish to see part of his legacy result in an even stronger board."

Together with an enthusiasm for good design, an appreciation of

urban and landscape design, a passion for great buildings, places and spaces, DCFW is also looking for some of the new commissioners to have a knowledge of commercial property development, communications and marketing.

As part of the board, the new commissioners will meet four times a year and be responsible for governance, providing strategic direction and championing the work of the Commission and the importance of good design for a high-quality built environment. The term of office will run for three years from appointment.

Carl Sargeant, Minister for Natural Resources, said: "We need a greater diversity in public appointments to ensure that decisions being made take account of different viewpoints

and issues. As a Government we have given a commitment to seek to address this and I welcome the work the DCFW is doing to increase the diversity of their board.

"Having a strong DCFW Board will also help us achieve good design in the built environment which everyone across Wales will benefit from.

"I hope this recruitment process will help to widen the field of potential candidates and deliver a more representative board for DCFW."

DCFW was established in 2002 by the Welsh Government to promote design excellence across sectors for Wales' places, buildings and public spaces, communicating the benefits of good design for all.

Applications for the new board positions opened on September 14 and will close on October 9.



► Appointing in our own image ... prevents us harnessing the skills of a diverse workforce ... and indicates industry self-reflection and a narrowness of networks, says Carole-Anne Davies, the chief executive of the Design Commission for Wales

## Lack of diversity leads to a smaller talent pool

**T**HERE are some shocking statistics on diversity in our construction industries.

A survey by the ONS revealed that the presence and visibility of women is just 16% out of those who work in the industry, while those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds represent a mere four per cent.

And other diversity groups are likely to be just as poorly represented, if not worse. Many of the disciplines shaping our built environment still struggle to achieve true collaboration. Given that planners, architects, engineers, urban designers, landscape architects and the world of contracting all have distinct educational and professional routes into the business, this is hardly surprising.

While there are many good examples of cross-disciplinary working, nevertheless, there are still many who still find it difficult to break out of their silos. Although not without exception, the disciplines begin, and too often stay, well within their channels. The lack of diversity of representation, alongside this "single discipline" approach, risks a self-reflective industry that perpetuates a small talent pool and restricts growth.

While there remains a widespread

As the Design Commission for Wales encourages applicants from all walks of life to apply for its board positions, its chief executive, Carole-Anne Davies on why wider sector needs great diversity

picture of unrepresentative governance at board level, reflected in successive reports from Lord Davies, the construction and built environment industry sectors appear to be particularly poor.

We have all attended industry and extra curricula sports hospitality events, typically and overwhelmingly populated by dark-suited men. Diversity of age, ethnicity and gender remain key gaps in widespread recruitment practice that could still be said to reflect its "own image". And it is this, perhaps, that may present the greatest barrier.

Appointing in our own image is not simply a recruitment issue that prevents us harnessing the skills of a diverse workforce in a competitive age. It indicates industry self-reflection and a narrowness of networks, forged at an early stage.

Many architects will admit that their networks largely comprise other architects; it's not dissimilar in

planning, engineering and other built environment disciplines, and it is only marginally better in urban design and landscape architecture. In the Design Commission's work in promoting good design quality, achieving genuine inter-disciplinary collaboration and networks is often the most challenging. Welcoming non-industry, or alternative perspectives, is very rare indeed.

We build for end users, but they are rarely in the frame - consultation remains a retrospective exercise. We design for inclusiveness, but we can be selective in target areas - how frequently might we consider dementia, autism or even anxiety for that matter?

While awareness has grown regarding everyday sexism and bias we observe in our day-to-day experience that these are not deliberately exclusive strategies; the traditional imbalance seems to be still largely a default.

That's what makes it so challenging - it's simply that we fail to notice, and that's really quite shocking. We simply don't even realise that, at the very least, half of the world for whom we plan, design, build, operate and deliver services are not fully considered, and it's not simply about complying with policy or regulation.

Among residents of the short terraced street where I live are four or five languages, at least three faiths, many colours, a wide range of ages, sexual orientation, social, economic and educational needs. But it is rare that the commonplace diversity of my everyday life becomes evident in my professional role. This also contrasts with my previous life in the cultural arena, which, on the whole, does better on this front.

We are currently recruiting for three board positions including a chair, and welcome applications from any gender, age, ethnic minority, disability or sexual orientation. At the very least our own appointments opportunity means we can get better at noticing. We can better understand and address gaps; invite the wider perspectives we need to check and illuminate established views; be better informed, more capable, and simply do what we do, but better. There's no downside to diversity.