

ROLE DESCRIPTION

DESIGN ADVISOR

The Design Commission for Wales is seeking a high calibre individual for the role of Design Advisor, to join its small team based in Cardiff and serving the whole of Wales.

Title:	Design Advisor
Employed by:	Design Commission for Wales (DCFW LTD)
Responsible to:	Chief Executive
Closing date for Applications:	By 1700hrs Tuesday 15 th September 2026
Mode of submission:	CV and Cover Letter Via Email to connect@dcfw.org
Interviews to be held:	22 nd /23 rd September 2026 Design Commission for Wales, 4 th Floor, Cambrian Buildings, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff, CF10 5FL

The Role

The Design Advisor plays a key role in the work of the Design Commission for Wales – leading on design review, delivering training, responding to consultations, preparing written material and helping to deliver events. The successful candidate will have a passion for good design and placemaking and the contribution they can make to quality of life and public value in Wales. This role focuses on ensuring that good design and placemaking is understood, recognised, promoted and implemented.

As Design Advisor you will be a credible professional with experience in the built environment, ideally in urban design, architecture and/or planning. You will be able to effectively communicate and advocate the importance of good design for the built

environment across sectors and disciplines and among decision makers. You will have the confidence and communication skills to lead training and engagement programmes for local authorities, private and third sector and other multi-disciplinary audiences throughout Wales. In the role of Design Advisor you will support DCFW's current ambitious range of initiatives as well as develop and implement your own creative and targeted ideas for stimulating design quality across the built environment sectors in Wales.

Over the next couple of years, we have a particular focus on supporting design quality in affordable housing developments and promoting well-designed smaller/infill site development in existing towns and settlements. This presents a fantastic opportunity to be involved at an early stage in these initiatives. Skills and experience in these areas will be particularly relevant.

Design Advisors play an important role in the small staff team and must have excellent organisation, communication and team working skills. DCFW serves the whole of Wales and the Design Advisor will be expected to travel throughout Wales (and elsewhere as necessary), including overnight stays, as required to execute the responsibilities of the role.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead the organisation of the design review service and promote it to existing and potential users. This will involve early engagement with local authorities, scheme promoters and clients to determine their needs, liaising with our panel of experts and making arrangements for the review, taking part in review meetings, and composing the official comment of the Commission in the form of design review reports.
- Play a key role in the production of the Placemaking Wales newsletter including establishing topics, identifying contributors and editing articles in collaboration with our Communications Officer.
- Research and share best practice and evidence of the value and benefits of good design including through seminars, publications, advice and articles on the website.
- Maintain and enhance existing stakeholder relationships and use your knowledge and initiative to develop new ones in the design and development industries

including clients, local authorities, professional and membership organisations, Welsh Government and others.

- Provide feedback on consultations and queries as they arise.
- Developing and delivering bespoke training to organisations such as local planning authorities, members, and housing associations.
- Pick up work streams relating to promoting good design from the earliest stages with affordable housing providers and the promotion of small housing sites within existing settlements.
- Developing and delivering projects that align with DCFW's strategic plan and the Programme for Government including resource management and project programme.
- Arrange and deliver workshops on design, planning and placemaking topics.
- Contribute to DCFW's work in relation to town centre regeneration and placemaking including commenting of Placemaking Plans, providing guidance and supporting local authorities.

Additional Duties

- Assist the development of DCFW's services and programme and their delivery in line with the Commission's strategic and corporate aims.
- Liaise as necessary with team members and the Design Review Panel.
- Liaise with external bodies to enhance and support existing partnerships and develop new ones.
- Where appropriate, work closely with the Office Manager to secure, control and account for project budgets and monies.
- Maintain effective records, documentation and reporting systems for both internal and external use.
- Prepare for and attend meetings/events of DCFW.

All the duties of the Design Advisor will be undertaken in close consultation with the Chief Executive.

Essential Attributes

- A passion for placemaking and the understanding of the importance of good design.

- Knowledge and experience of relevant disciplines in the built environment including architecture, urban and landscape design, regeneration, transport/mobility and housing.
- Understanding of placemaking in the Welsh context including both rural and urban challenges.
- An instinct for relationship building and enthusing others.
- An ability to analyse, interpret, present and communicate information effectively to a range of audiences.
- Awareness of Welsh Government policy and strategies including Planning Policy Wales, the emerging National Development Framework, relevant policy at national and local levels, as well as other significant legislation such as the Well-being of Future Generations Act and Active Travel Act.
- Awareness and understanding of local authority planning, development management and regeneration practice in Wales.
- An understanding and awareness of the importance of sustainable development.
- An understanding of the commercial property and development sector.
- Excellent analytical skills and the capacity to exercise sound judgment.
- The ability to think and act strategically to achieve positive influence and added value.

Essential Skills

- Experience in the built environment design disciplines such as urban design/architecture/landscape/development
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills.
- Exceptional organisational and presentation skills.
- Efficient, motivated and able to work under pressure, supporting and being supported by colleagues in a small team.
- A high degree of energy, enthusiasm, initiative and self-motivation.
- The ability to be an effective ambassador for the Commission and its work, enthusing others and building consensus.
- Computer literacy and administrative self-sufficiency.
- A full, current driving licence.

A good knowledge of local authority policy and practice and national planning policy in Wales would be advantageous.

The ability to communicate in the Welsh language would assist the post-holder but is not essential for the role.

The above is a description of the role as perceived at the time of writing and may be liable to change in the future, in consultation with the post holder, to reflect changing requirements.

Culture and Conduct

The Design Commission for Wales has established and nurtured a positive developmental, creative and collegial culture to which it is fully committed.

All team members will act as ambassadors for the Commission in their daily professional conduct and capacity, and in promoting DCFW's work through public platforms including public speaking, events, print, online and broadcast media.

All team members will uphold and demonstrate in action the Vision, Aims and Values of the Design Commission for Wales, treating colleagues with mutual respect and professionalism.

All team members will act in accordance with DCFW's Annual Framework and Plans; Codes of Conduct and other items contained in its Policy & Procedures Manuals and Handbooks, behaving at all times in a manner commensurate with a respected, publicly funded and accountable body.

Design Commission for Wales

The Design Commission for Wales is a national organisation established by Government to promote good design for the built environment and champion high standards of architecture, landscape and urban design in Wales.

Our vision is for a Wales that is a better place.

We aim to promote good design for the built environment and communicate its benefits.

The Commission is small, agile and expert. Our team works throughout Wales to help make it a better place, by design. We promote good design across sectors, prioritising

the quality of the built environment in Wales and the design quality of buildings, places and public realm.

Through our advisory services, including the national Design Review Service, events and training we engage with colleagues in the fields of architecture, urban and landscape design and planning, involved in shaping the countryside, cities, towns and villages of Wales. We work with practitioners, professional bodies, local authorities, clients and other commissioning bodies, in the design professions, planning, regeneration, energy and infrastructure, making our expertise available throughout Wales.

Our small, operational team is complemented with additional capacity in the form of expert volunteers appointed as Design Review Panellists. The skills and experience of the whole team span commercial property, regeneration, architecture, sustainability, urban and landscape design, energy infrastructure including on/offshore wind, as well as engineering, planning and transport.

Principal Terms and Conditions:

Title:	Design Advisor
Contract Status:	Full-time contract The position is subject to satisfactory completion of a three-month probationary period
Responsible to:	Chief Executive
Location:	Design Commission for Wales 4 th Floor, Cambrian Buildings, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff, CF10 5FL and at locations throughout Wales, as necessary. The post requires a minimum three days per week presence at the Design Commission for Wales office in Cardiff supplemented by hybrid working arrangements.

Hours of Work: **37** hours per week. Some degree of flexibility is required along with the willingness to travel and cover overnights stays, to meet business needs.

Annual Leave: 8 public holidays and 4 discretionary days per year in addition to a maximum of 30 days per annum, pending formal agreement on appointment.

Payment Mechanism: BACS on 15th of each month
Two weeks in arrears, two weeks in advance.
Payable on last working day closest to the 15th of the month where it falls on a weekend or public holiday.

Remuneration: **£40k**, per annum.
Future awards in line with DCFW's remuneration policy and as determined by the Board of Directors.

Pension Scheme: Local Government Pension Scheme

Equal Opportunities Policy: DCFW is committed to equality of opportunity in all aspects of its work and all personnel carry out their duties in accordance with this commitment and our Policy.

Notice period: Employer – Three months
Employee – Three months

DCFW operates a strict no smoking policy. Further detailed terms and conditions, family friendly policies, flexible working etc will be provided in the contract of employment and are expanded upon in the Staff Handbook.

Applications to be made by CV and covering letter via email to connect@dcfw.org

The closing date for applications is 1500hrs 15th September 2026. Interviews for shortlisted candidates will be held 22nd/23rd September 2026 at DCFW's office in Cardiff.

Comisiwn Dylunio Cymru Design Commission for Wales is the trading name of DCFW LIMITED a Private Limited Company No: 04391072 incorporated in England and Wales as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Welsh Government. Registered Office: 4th Floor, Cambrian Buildings, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff CF10 5FL