

Press release: Commissioners appointed to new home design body

Four new commissioners have been appointed to the government's Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission, it has been confirmed today (13 February 2019).

Established at the start of this year, the Commission will advise the government by developing practical measures to ensure new housing developments meet the needs and expectations of communities, making them more likely to be welcomed rather than resisted.

The 4 new commissioners joining the Chair of the Commission Sir Roger Scruton are:

- Ms Gail Mayhew – a property consultant with experience in regeneration and place making; Ms Mayhew is currently advising Urban Catalyst in the regeneration of Purfleet in Thurrock; she is an advocate of community engagement in the planning process, assisting groups to change the design of major proposals to better reflect and fit in with their surroundings
- Ms Mary Parsons – currently the Chair and a trustee of the Town and Country Planning Association, Ms Parsons has over 25 years' experience working in the development and construction sector and is a Group Director of Places for People; developments she is presently responsible for include a 10,000 home new community at Gilston in Hertfordshire, 2 new neighbourhoods on the Olympic Park and a new urban neighbourhood in Birmingham
- Mr Nicholas Boys Smith – the founding director of Create Streets, which was set up to promote high density, beautiful, street-based developments that involve the community; Mr Boys Smith has also led urban design projects and studies into the built environment, publishing a number of influential books on the role of design and architecture
- Mr Kim Wilkie – a renowned landscape architect and environmental planner, Mr Wilkie has sat on several bodies advising on design and beauty – including the Mayor of London's Public Realm Advisory Group and the Royal Parks Advisory Board; he also holds an Honorary Fellowship at the Royal Institute of British Architects and is currently leading the redesign of the Natural History Museum's historic grounds

Experienced parliamentarian Sir John Hayes MP will also support the Commission, adding valuable insight from his decades of service as an MP and

former government minister

An additional 9 specialist advisors will also assist during the work.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

This Commission will play a crucial role in ensuring the homes communities need are built, accepted and loved by those who live in and near them.

I'm delighted Sir Roger is being joined by such a talented team of highly-respected professionals, along with a list of distinguished advisors who will bring a wealth of expertise and a range of viewpoints.

Meeting once a month, the Commission will report back in due course once it has taken evidence and formulated its recommendations on how the government can improve the quality of new homes.

Sir Roger Scruton and Commissioners will be attending and contributing to the government's 'Better Design for Better Places' Conference, which is focused on promoting the building of better and more beautiful places for people to live. This conference, the second of its kind since the first was held last year, will take place this Thursday 14 February in Birmingham.

Find [more information on the programme for the conference](#).

The Commission was [announced in November 2018](#). It has 3 aims:

1. To promote better design and style of homes, villages, towns and high streets, to reflect what communities want, building on the knowledge and tradition of what they know works for their area.
2. To explore how new settlements can be developed with greater community consent.
3. To make the planning system work in support of better design and style, not against it.

A series of specialist advisers will also join the commission, supporting specific aspects of work. They are:

- Stephen Stone, Executive Chairman of Crest Nicholson
- Sunand Prasad, Senior Partner and co-founder of Penoyre & Prasad and past President of the RIBA
- Ben Bolgar, Senior Director of Prince's Foundation
- Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge
- Adrian Penfold OBE, Advisor in Planning and Public Affairs
- Peter Studdert, Chair of Quality Review Panels for the LLDC and LB of Haringey
- Patrick James, Founding Director of The Landscape Agency
- Paul Monaghan, Director of AHMM and Design Council Trustee
- Yolande Barnes, Professor of Real Estate at UCL