



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Gatenby  
Sanderson

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# Covent Garden Market Authority: Appointment of Non-Executive Director (finance)

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## Briefing pack for applicants

The closing date for the receipt of applications for this role is 12 noon on Monday 3 February 2025.

Ref: APPT17-23

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# Defra mission statement

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) wants Britain to be a great place to live. Our work plays a critical role in the wellbeing of everyone in the country through the creation of healthy environments, a world leading food and farming industry, a thriving rural economy and enhanced protection against floods and animal and plant diseases.

Appointing high-calibre people from diverse backgrounds, with relevant skills, knowledge and experience, to the boards of public bodies and statutory corporations will help ensure that the work of Defra and its partners is more effective, resilient and accountable and meets the needs of a modern and diverse Britain.

## Equal Opportunities

UK Government has a policy of equality of opportunity. We aim to promote equal opportunity policies whereby no one suffers harassment or unfair discrimination either directly or indirectly, on grounds such as race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or age.

## Diversity

We positively welcome and encourage applicants from all backgrounds. All public appointments are made on merit following a fair and open competition as regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

## Disability

We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. 'Minimum criteria' means you must provide sufficient evidence in your application, demonstrating that you meet the minimum level of competence required for each essential criterion, as well as meeting any of the qualifications, skills or experience required. The Cabinet Office and Defra is committed to the employment and career development of disabled people. To show this we proudly display the Disability Confident Leader logo. More information about Disability Confident Leaders is available by clicking the logo. If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes where possible. If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, please refer to the 'How to submit your application' section below.



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# About Covent Garden Market Authority

**Covent Garden Market Authority** (CGMA, or 'the Authority') is a statutory corporation set up in 1961 with a legal obligation to provide and run a horticulture wholesale market. It oversaw the move in 1974 from the market's famous Covent Garden site in central London (home to a fruit and vegetable market since 1654) to its new location at Nine Elms, also in central London. CGMA owns the 47-acre site on which the market is situated and in partnership with Vinci St Modwen is redeveloping the market on the existing site to create a vibrant new Food Quarter for London. CGMA is overseen by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Secretary of State is responsible for the appointment of CGMA's Chair and Board. Operating as a commercial landlord, the Authority has a statutory duty to at least break even, taking one year with another, and our ambition is for it to be a thriving and profitable business. In its latest published accounts CGMA had a turnover of £14.4m and a workforce of 30 staff members.

## **New Covent Garden Market today**

Today the iconic New Covent Garden Market (NCGM) is home to over 160 mainly SME businesses employing 2,500 people, with a combined turnover of £888m in 2022-23. It supplies a large proportion of the fruit and vegetables in meals served outside the home in London, from hospitals to the peak of the hospitality industry, and serves a significant number of London's florists.

## **The redevelopment**

CGMA is undertaking a long-term project to rebuild the market to meet the needs of a modern wholesale market and the customers that it serves.

The redevelopment of the market and its place in the eagerly anticipated Food Quarter for London is progressing at pace. The complex migration strategy for the main fruit and vegetable market, while businesses continue to trade, is advancing well, with many new units built, fitted out, and occupied. The Flower Market is thriving in its temporary home until the end of the redevelopment, and the new Food Exchange, opened in 2017, is fully occupied with tenant businesses that include a business incubation floor with demonstration kitchens. The Food Exchange is also the home to CGMA's offices, and commercial tenanted offices.

In 2020 CGMA, with Government approval, agreed an out of court settlement with market tenants in response to legal action brought by the Covent Garden Tenant Association (CGTA). The legal action resulted from concerns that the redevelopment would be disruptive, and the finished market would not be fit for purpose. The terms of this settlement included amendment to the development plans, an enhanced contribution to tenant fit-out costs, and concessionary rents for the duration of the redevelopment. The dispute caused a delay to construction and the redevelopment is now due to be completed by the end of 2027.

To allow CGMA to meet this cost without facing insolvency, Defra provided a grant for the full anticipated cost of the settlement, spread over 6 years. The grant is split into annual allocations

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that are paid based on evidence of need.

It should be noted that until the redevelopment is completed in 2027, and as a result of the tenant settlement, CGMA will have severely restricted profit-making abilities.

Defra also provided COVID related cashflow support which is repayable once CGMA returns to profit.

## **Disengagement**

It has been the policy of successive Governments since 1990 to remove NCGM from central Government control and ownership. The redevelopment of the market will facilitate the long-term policy of removing responsibility for it from central Government. CGMA and Defra are working closely together to prepare a strategy for achieving this, including options for future ownership of the site.

## **The vision**

The vision for the future is of a flourishing, modern fresh produce wholesale market and a new cluster of food-related businesses. NCGM is one of three iconic elements in Nine Elms (the others being Battersea Power Station and the new US Embassy) and an important source of over 2,500 jobs. It will be better equipped than ever before to feed London's revitalised street markets and important hospitality sector with diverse, high quality fresh produce and supplies the floristry trade, encouraging innovation and high quality in UK growers and producers.

The redeveloped site is made up of the following elements:

**New Covent Garden Market** - the main wholesale market for traditional wholesalers and distributors. At the heart of London's new Food Quarter, the UK's biggest and best wholesale market; feeding and flowering London for centuries, it will become a market for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The market stands as a better environment for both the produce and for the people that buy and sell it; a place where small businesses start and grow.

**The Food Exchange** – a 4-floor facility that sits between the wholesale market and the new mixed-use development next to Nine Elms' new London Underground Station. The Food Exchange acts as a new hub for food businesses in the UK – a place to exchange ideas, commerce, knowledge and experience. Here, food businesses benefit from the energy that comes from working alongside each other. On the first floor of the Food Exchange, Mission Kitchen, a facility offering flexible workspace and commercial kitchens to rent, for food entrepreneurs, startups and small businesses, has enjoyed a very promising first three years. This joint enterprise with the Greater London Authority represents a significant financial and social investment for CGMA.

**The Retail Market** - An exciting food market of vibrant retail stalls, specialists, and independents. This will be a celebration of community, focusing on quality and affordability.

The new Food Quarter will support growth and innovation in this vital sector. More efficient

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operations and new income streams will build strength and long-term value for the market. Continuing to build towards this vision as the redevelopment project maintains momentum is a critical challenge.

## Further information

For further information about New Covent Garden Market, the redevelopment project, CGMA and its board, please visit:

[http://www.newcoventgardenmarket.com/.](http://www.newcoventgardenmarket.com/)

The appointment is made in accordance with the [Governance Code on Public Appointments](#) and is regulated by the [Commissioner for Public Appointments](#)

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# The role and person specification

## Role of the Board

The CGMA Board consists of up of 7 Board members including the Chair, providing strategic direction to the market through its redevelopment phase and ensuring the stability and viability of the market to enable government to disengage from responsibility of the market. In supporting the Chair to deliver the redevelopment, the board will help lead the Authority through a period of significant change that is part of a wider vision in which they are seeking to incorporate a consumer facing Food Quarter.

CGMA is a small organisation of some 30 people whose offices are situated on the market site at Nine Elms in Vauxhall in central London. There will be a minimum of 6 Board meetings and 3 Audit and Risk Committee meetings a year, as well as 2 days away as a Board and preparation time.

## Key challenges for the organisation

### Redevelopment project

- Successful delivery of the market redevelopment project to time and budget, in accordance with the objectives of the original business case and contractual obligations, reflecting industry needs. The redevelopment is being undertaken whilst the market continues to operate with all the attendant issues this creates.
- Ensuring the market tenants continue to have a voice and are integral to the vision for the new market.

### Market Management

- The market primarily operates from 10.00pm to 07.00am. CGMA as landlord manages services to the tenants and seeks to ensure the market is well run and that responsibilities to tenant businesses are effectively met, whilst complying with CGMA's statutory duties.
- Preparing the market for the future – helping the tenants manage change in the way the market operates and is run, so it meets the needs of its evolving customer base.

### Organisational performance

- Maximising organisational efficiency and appropriate financial performance to ensure CGMA is well placed to be a thriving going concern and deliver value for money, both for present effectiveness and in preparation for when Government relinquishes its statutory responsibilities for the market.
- CGMA is governed by Statute and must operate in accordance with those Statutes.

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## About the role

The Board requires a broad range of experience from its Non-Executive Directors. We seek a finance professional with the integrity, skills and judgment necessary to deliver strategic direction at a time of significant change for New Covent Garden Market. They will be able to command the confidence of Ministers, fellow Board members, Executive Directors, tenants and stakeholders and will be expected to contribute to corporate decisions at a senior level.

Demonstrable experience with similar sized businesses is important. Preferably this will include experience with tenant-based businesses. The CGMA financial team is small (around 6 FTE), and the role will involve providing hands-on guidance to this team at times.

Good governance is crucial to the success of the redevelopment project. The successful candidate will provide financial oversight on behalf of the Board and will have a proven record in finance at a senior level. They will also be expected to chair the Audit and Risk Committee.

All Board members are expected to adhere to the Nolan principles governing the conduct of public servants.

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# Essential Criteria

*In their applications, candidates must be able to demonstrate evidence of all of the following essential criteria:*

1. Strong financial acumen ideally gained within a commercial environment, with the ability to chair the Audit and Risk Committee and hold senior finance executives to account.
2. [CCAB](#) (or equivalent) financially qualified with a wide current knowledge of financial accountability and practice.
3. Senior commercial expertise, preferably within a property or asset management context along with an understanding of tenant-based businesses.
4. The skills necessary to deliver effective strategic direction.
5. The ability to deliver strong corporate governance.

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# Terms of appointment

## Period of appointment

We will be looking for the successful candidate to take up the position in April 2025. The term of the appointment offered is likely to be 3-4 years from the commencement date. There is a possibility of reappointment after this time.

## Remuneration and time commitment

A non-pensionable remuneration of **£520 per day** is payable based on a time commitment of **2-3 days per month** for the first 12 months. This will be reviewed after 12 months, with the expectation that the time commitment will then be reduced. A per diem rate of £431 will be paid for additional duties.

There are a minimum of 6 Board meetings and 3 Audit and Risk Committee meetings a year, as well as 2 days away as a Board and preparation time (see Annex C for key dates). Reasonable travel expenses are also paid.

As the market works at night you may be required from time to time to attend at night and/or early in the morning.

## Location of Offices

The Covent Garden Market Authority offices are in London, based at New Covent Garden Market on the Nine Elms site in Vauxhall.

## Annual Appraisal

The Board members are subject to an annual appraisal by the Chair of CGMA.

The draft **terms and conditions** for the appointment can be supplied on request.

You must inform Defra if you have any **conflict of interest** that might affect your ability to undertake this role. You should disclose information on any relevant business interest, public appointment or position of authority, including other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies.

The successful candidates must abide by the principles of public service ([Annex A](#)), the 12 Principles of Governance for all Public Body Non-Executive Directors ([Annex B](#)) and the [Code of Conduct for Board members](#).

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# Overview of the recruitment process

The **closing date** for applications is noon on **3 February 2025**. We expect final interviews to take place in the week commencing 31 March 2025.

It is essential that your statement of suitability gives full but concise information relevant to the appointment, clearly demonstrating how you meet each of the [essential criteria](#).

The Advisory Assessment Panel will consist of:

- Adrian Cooper, Deputy Director, Commercial Policy Division, Defra, as Chair;
- Catherine Dugmore, Integrated Care Board member, NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex, as the Independent Panel Member;
- Wanda Goldwag, Chair, Covent Garden Market Authority.

The panel will assess your application to select those demonstrating the best fit with the role by considering the evidence you have provided against the essential criteria set out in the 'Person Specification' section. Failure to address any or all of these may affect your application.

If the panel decides longlisting is necessary, the candidates selected at that stage may be invited for a preliminary discussion with GatenbySanderson to further explore their skills and experience prior to shortlisting. At the shortlist meeting the Panel will decide who to invite for final interview.

Interviews are expected to take place in person at Defra in London and will last for approximately 45 minutes. Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance, should you be selected.

You will be able to claim reasonable travel expenses incurred travelling to and from the interview (please note you may be asked to justify travelling costs if Defra considers the claims excessive). Please let Defra know beforehand if you are likely to claim, along with the approximate costs.

References will be taken up for those candidates selected for interview and due diligence checks undertaken. Details about our checks are on [page 13](#) below.

These are Ministerial appointments and all candidates deemed to be appointable by the Panel may be asked to meet with Minister responsible for CGMA before a final decision is made.

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# How to apply and submit your application

The recruitment process is being supported by GatenbySanderson on behalf of Defra and the Authority. To apply for this post please submit the following information no later than 12 noon on Monday 3 February 2025.

All applications must be submitted via this link: [www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe102461.1](http://www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe102461.1)

- a CV of no more than two sides of A4;
- a supporting statement of not more than 1000 words (approximately two sides of A4), setting out how you meet the essential criteria – make sure you refer to the contents of this document and provide specific examples;
- e-mail addresses for two referees;
- a completed diversity, conflicts of interest, conduct and political activity monitoring form which will form part of the online application process (please note section on [Conflicts of interest and due diligence below](#)).

For a confidential discussion about the role to help you determine your suitability for application and/or to answer any questions you might have, please contact one of our recruitment advisors at GatenbySanderson:

- ✉ [Zoe.Bennett@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:Zoe.Bennett@gatenbysanderson.com)
- ✉ [Julie.Myers@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:Julie.Myers@gatenbysanderson.com)
- ✉ [Tracy.Wicik@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:Tracy.Wicik@gatenbysanderson.com)

If you have any questions about [the appointments process](#), you need a change to be made so that you can make your application or require additional assistance to support you in your application, please email GatenbySanderson at the email addresses above.

Alternatively, please contact the Defra Public Appointments Team on:

- ✉ [publicappts@defra.gov.uk](mailto:publicappts@defra.gov.uk)

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## Conflicts of interest and due diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the Covent Garden Market Authority and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your application. If you have queries about this and would like to discuss further, please contact [Mary.Dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com](mailto:Mary.Dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com).

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue(s) in your application. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media.

As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. This information may be made available to the Advisory Assessment Panel and they may wish to explore issues with you should you be invited to interview. The information may also be shared with ministers and Cabinet Office.

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## Ineligibility criteria

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you become bankrupt or make an arrangement with creditors;
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors;
- you are disqualified from acting as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- you have been convicted of a criminal offence, the conviction not being spent for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (c. 53);
- you become subject to a debt relief order or a bankruptcy restrictions order;
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

## Data protection

Defra is committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal information and does so in accordance with data protection law including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All the information you provide will be used to proceed with the public appointment listed in this information pack and in the case of diversity monitoring information may be anonymised and used solely for monitoring purposes. For more information about the way we collect and hold your information, please read our Privacy Notice, accessible through the Cabinet Office website (<https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk>) or by requesting a copy from [publicappts@defra.gov.uk](mailto:publicappts@defra.gov.uk).

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# The Commissioner for Public Appointments

This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, to ensure that it is made on merit after fair and open competition. More information about the role of the Commissioner and the Governance Code on Public Appointments can be seen at:

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk> or

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/578498/governance\\_code\\_on\\_public\\_appointments\\_16\\_12\\_2016.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578498/governance_code_on_public_appointments_16_12_2016.pdf)

For full details of the complaints process for public appointments, please click on the following link which will take you to the Commissioner for Public Appointments website

<https://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/regulating-appointments/complaints-and-investigations>

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## Annex A: The seven principles of public life

### Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

### Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

### Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

### Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.



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## Annex B:

# 12 Principles of Governance for all Public Body NEDs

### 1. Expertise

- Consider and act in the best interests of your organisation and its objectives; delivering the outcomes expected by your sponsor department, ministers and ultimately the public.
- Consider the broader mission and duties of your sponsoring Secretary of State, his or her Department and the Government.
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties and the organisation's Framework Document and act within its powers.
- Exercise reasonable care, skill, and diligence in the exercise of their authority and judgement.

### 2. Scrutiny and challenge

- Maintain independence from the executive to allow scrutiny of management and in meetings agree goals and objectives and monitor performance and the reporting of performance so that the public who use your organisation receive a high-quality service.
- Satisfy yourself on the integrity of budget setting to deliver objectives and financial information and reporting against budgets, and that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible. Meet the requirements of [Managing Public Money](#), including supporting the Accounting Officer in fulfilling their duties to provide propriety and value for money in the use of public funds.
- Champion high standards of risk management by ensuring your organisation has effective risk reporting, controls and governance, risk expertise and risk tolerances to effectively manage risk.
- Represent your organisation to the department and to Ministers, as well as ensuring Ministers' views are considered by the executive team of the organisation, as appropriate.

### 3. Support

- Support the board in succession planning and be prepared to put yourself up for re-appointment, as well as promoting the need for a diverse board.
- Participate in and promote regular reviews of your organisation, as well as the board's own effectiveness, with particular focus on the organisation's purposes and its efficiency in meeting these purposes. Engage in the appraisal process, including self-reflection on your own abilities.
- Listen carefully to, ask appropriate questions of and support management to encourage discussion in a manner that promotes a culture where all perspectives are listened to, while fulfilling the individual Director's duties and responsibilities and respecting and valuing the expertise of the executive team. Promote the success of the entity having regard to the interests of all members and stakeholders, and all risks.

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# Annex C: CGMA Board members and key meetings

## Members of the CGMA Board

- Wanda Goldwag (Chair)
- Sarah Calcutt
- Fiona Fell
- David Fison
- Victoria Wilson

## Meetings currently scheduled for 2025

<b>Board Meetings</b>	<b>ARAC Meetings</b>
30 January	29 January
26 February	
27 March	
24 April	15 April
29 May	
26 June	
31 July	
25 September	9 September
30 October	
27 November	11 November

