

1. Who are CFG?

The name of Counties Furniture Group has been synonymous with the highest standards in the design and manufacture of educational furniture for over forty years. There are currently 82 Local Authorities and 1 Central Government Agency who are members of the Group.

Professional Education Officers, Supplies Officers and Architects recognise the value of co-ordinated products manufactured with the benefits of aggregated demand to keep prices to a minimum.

Counties Furniture Group's primary aims are to:

- Design furniture to enhance and improve the teaching environment of its members' educational establishments
- Advise on the selection and procurement of its products
- Arrange for product manufacture and supply
- Undertake collaborative research on British and European standards

2. Formal Objectives of the Group

CFG's objectives are effectively set out in its Memorandum of Association which was incorporated as a Private Limited Company and registered at Companies House on 4th July 1991.

The main specified objects for which the company is established can effectively be summarised as:

- 2.1. The promotion and enhancement of standards of education by or under the aegis of local authorities by the research, design, production, distribution, manufacture, and supply and the development of standards of educational furniture and other educational equipment.
- 2.2. Carrying on the businesses of designers, patentees, licensees, manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, suppliers of furniture equipment and all manners of goods. Publishers of literature, information, text books, pamphlets, computer software, video and other recordings and any other mode of reproduction of information, television producers, broadcasters, film and video makers, computer programmers and manufacturers, advisers, educators and technicians.
- 2.3. All other activities which the Council of Management of the company regards as consistent with paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 above.

3. Organisational Structure

After existing as an association of Local Authorities since 1962, CFG became a company limited by Guarantee on 4th July 1991 following legal advice and the recommendations of consultants. Although a company limited by guarantee, CFG remains firmly within Local Government. The Counties Furniture Group is run by Local Authorities for Local Authorities.

CFG is controlled, for the benefit of its members, by a Council of Management which effectively acts as the Board of Directors. The members of the Council are elected by the member Authorities.

The Board oversee and direct the work of CFG's Officers who are similarly drawn from Local Authority members.

CFG reports to, and involves its Member LA's in decision making within the company by means of Advisory Committee meetings when required as well as contact between Officers and representatives of Member LA's through telephone, email, social media, our website, post and visits to address specific issues if needed.

CFG products are ordered directly from the manufacturers by Member LA's and others. Manufacturers make and supply CFG contracts to CFG designs and Standards. Products are delivered direct to the end users and invoiced to the ordering point. CFG does not order furniture on behalf of Member LA's or engage directly in the manufacture of products.

A design 'royalty' is paid at agreed intervals by manufacturers to CFG to cover costs only.

4. Board of Directors

The duties, appointment and removal from office of CFG's directors and the rules relating to the conduct of its meetings are governed by CFG's Articles of Association and by Company Law. The Articles are registered at Companies House and therefore are a document of public record.

Company Law requires every Private Company to have at least one director and a secretary. CFG duly complies with these minimum requirements by the appointment of between two and five directors and a Secretary. General invitations to stand for election as a Director are issued to Members electronically as required.

Directors receive no personal remuneration for the execution of their duties.

5. Officers

The day to day work and administration of CFG is carried out by individuals seconded on a part time basis with the permission of their employers, who are Member Local Authorities.

CFG Officers are required to have a clear view of the organisation of CFG, its structure, aims and objectives, and commitment to its future. Employing authorities are reimbursed for the time which Officers spend on CFG business.

6. Manufacturers and Contracts

There are presently 4 main CFG manufacturers.

Contracts are let within a Local Authority Standing Orders Framework. Tendering procedures comply with UK and European Public Procurement Directives.

7. CFG in the Marketplace

CFG Member Authorities enjoy access to 'ready made' contracts including professional advice covering the widest and most fully integrated range of education furniture in the UK. These contracts have been developed with their full involvement and observe the standards of statutory compliance and public accountability which they would have to meet if they chose to organise contracts independently.

The additional benefit of the aggregation of demand from our 82 Local Authorities is obvious, enabling low prices to be achieved without compromising on quality. Furniture ranges are tendered to comply with LA and LMS standing order requirements and the European Directive for public sector contracts.

8. CFG Ethos

CFG's commitment to its Membership is to make available, at competitive prices, furniture designed specifically to meet the rigours of the education market, with quality and performance informing the research, design and development process. This philosophy delivers real and lasting value for money and will remain the fundamental reason for the Group's existence.

9. Membership

Membership is available to all Local Authorities.

Members are encouraged to participate directly in the running of CFG. There is no fee required to join the Group. The current CFG Membership includes 82 Local Authorities and 1 Central Government Agency.

Members become Members of CFG for the purposes of Company Law and are therefore entitled to participate in CFG in accordance with CFG's Memorandum of

Association etc. There are no joining or membership fees incurred through Membership and liability to the Group is limited to one pound.

10. Obligations of Membership

Member Local Authorities are asked to nominate a representative to liaise with the Group and undertake the following activities:

- 10.1. Promote the aims and objectives of CFG by ensuring that schools receive professional advice and assistance in the selection of scholastic furniture with due regard to quality, ergonomics and value for money.
- 10.2. Understand the importance and application of the appropriate British and European Standards including sizing, fire and safety, product performance and durability when giving such advice.
- 10.3. Undertake the timely distribution of news and information regarding the activities of the Group to establishments within their authority. *(CFG generally distributes information electronically via email, PDF and web to member representatives).*
- 10.4. Ensure that the CFG range is considered in any new build or refurbishment project.
- 10.5. Provide CFG with information on projects requiring scholastic furniture, up to date schools lists and other useful contacts.
- 10.6. Participate via the Advisory Committee in the development of new items/ranges and in the management of CFG in so far as is compatible with the instructions of their own Authority.

Member Local Authorities and their representatives details are entered on the "Register of Members" maintained by CFG..

11. Benefits of Membership

For over 30 years CFG designs have made up the UK's premier range of educational furniture, meeting the most exacting quality, performance and safety standards. The following are just some of the benefits which CFG continues to provide its Members.

- The CFG design office provides free furniture layouts, cost schedules and product catalogues for member schools projects.
- Complete design and colour co-ordinated range of furniture. Comprehensive ranges for furnishing whole school environments, from general teaching and

- office areas to specialist curriculum areas.
- The furniture ranges are pre-tendered and comply with LA and LMS standing order requirements as well as the European Community Directive for Public Sector Contracts.
- Prices are continually monitored throughout the length of contract by a LA supplies officer ensuring best value pricing. The volume of sales enables the group to negotiate the very best prices for its Members.
- Because CFG is a not for profit Local Authority controlled company it understands the particular needs of individual Local Authorities.
- Members have a voice in the running of CFG through Advisory Committees.
- Priority delivery for CFG members.
- CFG officer support in representing Members interests. A small team of specialist officers seconded part time from member Authorities carry out the Group's day to day business keeping overheads to a minimum.
- Quality through design. All items are carefully researched and designed to meet the needs of the educational environment. Products are also designed to meet appropriate British Standards. CFG have been involved in setting standards for educational furniture through the British Standards Institute since its inception.
- Manufacturers to the Group are carefully chosen based on strict performance and tendering criteria.
- Quality products are made available through our manufacturers commitment to standards and quality performance.
- CFG and its manufacturers are fully committed to after sales service.

12. Further Information

For further information and any queries regarding membership, please contact:



CFG Design Office
The Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY2 6ND



01743 255671



info@cfg.design



@CFGdesign

Application for Membership Local Authorities only



Please sign this document below to indicate that you wish to become a Member of the Counties Furniture Group.

Signed

Name

Position within LA

Date

On behalf of (Local Authority)
.....

we wish to become Members of Counties Furniture Group.

The following are the details of nominated officer representing the above Local Authority to whom all future CFG correspondence should be addressed.

Title

Name

Position within LA

Address

.....

.....

Town

County

Post Code

Telephone

Email

I understand that the contact details of our member representative will be added to the CFG "Register of Members". These details will only be shared with other members of CFG and our contracted manufacturers.

Any changes of information regarding the nominated representative will be forwarded from this Local Authority to the CFG Design Office to maintain the register of members.

Please return the completed document to:



**The Secretary
Counties Furniture Group
% Helen Powell
Group Solicitor
Legal and Democratic Services
The Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY2 6ND**



01743 252712



helen.powell@shropshire.gov.uk