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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Goodson Thomas 

Candidate Brief

Closes 17/09/2025

Chair, The Disused Tips Authority for Wales



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An Introduction from Huw Irranca-Davies MS, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Across Wales, our landscape is marked and moulded by our centuries of mining history. A history that shaped and touched the lives of people throughout the twentieth century, as our Welsh coalfield communities fuelled the industrial revolution. Today, those same communities are left with the difficult legacy of disused coal and non-coal tips.



*Huw Irranca-Davies,
Deputy First Minister and
Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs*

This is a unique opportunity to play a key leadership role in the establishment of the Disused Tips Authority for Wales (the Authority), a new Welsh Government Arm's Length Body that will become operational on 1 April 2027. It will have functions to deliver a proactive management regime for disused coal and non-coal tips to protect human welfare, safeguard communities and protect Wales's critical infrastructure.

The Authority will provide a consistent proactive approach for the assessment, registration, monitoring and management of disused tips in Wales. A central component of the regime is a duty on the new body to develop and to maintain a national register of disused tips that pose or could pose a threat to human welfare.

For thousands of people, these tips are an ever-present reminder of what can go tragically wrong. As a nation, we will never, and should never, forget the tragedy of Aberfan. As we know, the risks are growing as we feel the impacts of the climate emergency.

Storm Bert in 2024 provided another stark warning of the damage rainfall can cause, and how vulnerable disused tips can be to extreme weather conditions. I saw the frightening impact in Cwmtillery myself and as the climate changes, we can expect more storms and wetter winters. That means we must be ready to adapt and to respond.

The role of the Chair is a high-profile and influential one in delivering the Authority's main purpose, to ensure that disused tips do not threaten human welfare by reason of their instability to make sure that our communities will be safer, both now and in the future.

They will work closely with the Board and Chief Executive to provide strong strategic direction and play a vital role in steering and developing the Authority and its functions.

We are looking for someone innovative and ambitious with significant leadership experience gained in an executive or non-executive role and ideally with some previous chairing experience.

We welcome individuals who can offer fresh perspectives, strategic thinking and a commitment to delivering high-quality outcomes, with a strong desire to make a positive impact. We are committed to diversity and inclusion and encourage applications from individuals from all backgrounds.

Background

The Coal Tip Safety Task Force ('the Taskforce') was established by the First Minister immediately after the Tylorstown landslide. It was charged with delivering the following programme of works:

- Identify the location and status of all disused coal tips
- Establish a programme of inspections and maintenance of tips
- Ensure legislation is fit for purpose

This information could then be used to develop a future programme to remediate disused tips to address long-term stability issues and to deliver potential opportunities, which could be derived from disused tips.

There are over 2,500 disused coal tips in Wales, 360 of which are classified as category C and D, those that have a higher level of potential threat. Over 90% these higher-risk tips are located in the South Wales Valleys, disproportionately affecting communities that experience high levels of deprivation.

Our industrial legacy extends beyond coal tips and there are a considerable number of non-coal tips in Wales, it is estimated that there could be more than 20,000 across our nation. These remain a significant and visible legacy of Wales's proud mining past.

Recent landslides in Tylorstown in February 2020 and Cwmtillery in November 2024, are attributed to a period of intense rainfall, the frequency and intensity of which impacted the engineered drainage systems, some of which were not designed to cope with current and predicted climate conditions.

The Taskforce has delivered a wide-ranging programme, from mapping the scale of the challenge and conducting inspections, to piloting new technologies that monitor ground movement and water flow.

Since 2020, the Welsh Government has funded the Mining Remediation Authority (formerly the Coal Authority) to carry out periodic inspections of all category C or D tips and to collate data on disused coal tips more broadly. The inspections were extended to cover category B tips in 2024 and category A tips will be inspected in 2025-2027.

Tip inspections help to identify maintenance and remedial works required on tips, including whether drainage systems are blocked or not functioning effectively. Since late 2020, a Welsh Government grant scheme has been in place to enable local authorities to undertake these works and tip inspections to identify maintenance, including remedial works on tips which

have known stability issues.

To support the coal tip safety programme, the Welsh Government committed £44.4 million capital investment over three years (2022/23 to 2024/25), with a further £34 million announced for the 2025-26 financial year. Together with a £25 million allocation from the UK Government in its recent Autumn Statement, over £100 million will have been invested in coal tip safety during this Senedd term.

This investment supports local authorities and Natural Resources Wales to carry out maintenance and remediation works on coal tips and our programme has now delivered more than 3000 coal tip inspections across Wales to date. Further funding has been committed up to the establishment of the body, when the work will be transferred to the Authority.



Role and Responsibilities of the Authority

The Disused Mine and Quarry Tips (Wales) Bill provides for a new system of regulation for disused spoil tips in Wales. The Bill – which is expected to receive Royal Assent in September – creates a statutory body which will have functions to deliver a proactive management regime for coal and non-coal tips. Its core purpose is to protect human welfare, safeguard communities and protect Wales’s critical infrastructure. The Authority will provide a consistent approach for the assessment, registration, monitoring and management for disused tips in Wales.

The Authority will have responsibility for the implementation and oversight of the new disused tips regime and will work within a framework of powers and duties to ensure that disused tips do not threaten human welfare. The Authority will be operational on 1 April 2027 and will have a workforce of around 75 when fully established.

Principal Responsibilities of the Authority

- ▶ **Developing and maintaining a national register** of disused tips that pose, or could pose, a risk to human welfare.
- ▶ **Introducing a new national categorisation system**, supported by full assessments of each site that passes an initial screening. This assessment will account fully for the hazards a tip may pose to people, property, and infrastructure.
- ▶ **Implementing a tiered monitoring regime**, with proportionate requirements based on the risk category of each tip. This includes a duty to ensure robust management arrangements are in place for the highest-category tips.
- ▶ **Fulfilling a general duty** to ensure that disused tips do not threaten human welfare due to instability.
- ▶ **Exercising civil enforcement powers**, including the authority to request information, access sites, and conduct inspections.
- ▶ **Utilising criminal enforcement powers** where necessary.



Role and Responsibilities of the Chair

The Chair of the Disused Tips Authority for Wales will play a pivotal role in overseeing the Governance and performance standards of the Board and the organisation's ability to provide a proactive management framework for the safeguarding of communities. The role is offered subject to Royal Assent. The core responsibilities are as follows:

Principal Responsibilities

The successful postholder will be responsible for:

- ▶ **Leading the Board:**
Chair Board meetings and provide clear, strategic leadership to ensure the Authority operates effectively and delivers on its objectives.
- ▶ **Executive Appointments:**
Participate in the recruitment and appointment of the CEO and Board Members.
- ▶ **Strategic Implementation:**
Collaborate with the CEO and the Welsh Government Programme Board to oversee the Authority's establishment and ensure it is operationally ready by day one.
- ▶ **Assurance and Oversight:**
Provide high-quality, evidence-based assurance on the Authority's operational effectiveness in delivering the requirements of the Disused Mine and Quarry Tips (Wales) Act 2025.
- ▶ **Stakeholder Engagement:**
Represent the Authority at senior levels, building strong relationships with key stakeholders, including government and industry leaders.
- ▶ **Strategic Planning:**
Lead the Board in setting the Authority's strategic plan and oversee the development and delivery of its business plans and performance objectives.
- ▶ **Governance and Accountability:**
Ensure the Authority upholds the highest standards of governance, compliance, and transparency, and hold the CEO to account for performance.
- ▶ **Board Development:**
Ensure all Board Members have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, particularly in relation to the Authority's transition and strategic development.
- ▶ **Performance Management:**
Contribute to the performance appraisal of the CEO and oversee the effectiveness and development of the Board.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

- ▶ **Leadership:**
You will be a highly experienced and skilled leader with a strong track record in governance, strategic leadership, and stakeholder management.
- ▶ **Strategic Influence:**
You will be a visible and influential presence, capable of building consensus and driving high-level strategic decision-making. You will be adept at navigating complex stakeholder environments, managing risk, and ensuring robust corporate governance.
- ▶ **Stakeholder Engagement:**
Exceptional communication and relationship-building skills, with the ability to earn the trust and confidence of Ministers and senior stakeholders. You will be able to establish proportionate, evidence-based approaches and build consensus around high-priority interventions.
- ▶ **Risk and Resilience:**
A clear understanding of risk identification and management, including emergency response and recovery arrangements. Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to propose practical, solutions or improvements.
- ▶ **Inclusive Leadership:**
Demonstrated experience in building and sustaining an inclusive, diverse organisational culture. You will have a track record of breaking down barriers to opportunity, engaging constructively with employees and trade unions, and fostering a respectful, collaborative working environment.
- ▶ **Public Service Values:**
Clear understanding of and commitment to Nolan's 'Seven Principles of Public Life'.
- ▶ **Desirable**
Experience of operational delivery would be advantageous but not essential

Ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh

Candidate Journey

At Goodson Thomas, we value the relationships we develop with candidates and want to ensure your experience is the best it can be. As you move through this recruitment process we want you to be clear about the key milestones you will encounter, our role in exploring your experience and answering your questions, and what to expect post-application.



Step 1: Advert Live and Application

19th August – 17th September 2025

To make an application please visit the [Welsh Government's public appointment website](#)

Step 2: Shortlisting

The advisory assessment panel will assess candidates' personal statements and CVs to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the roles and who will be invited to interview. The panel will rely only on the information you provide in your CV and personal statement to assess whether you have the skills and experience required.

Step 3: Client Interview

16th October 2025

Interviews will be held in-person at the Welsh Government, Cardiff Office.

Step 4: Outcome

Ministerial Decision: Early / Mid November

Candidates who the panel believe are 'appointable' will be recommended to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs who will make the final decision. He may choose to meet with appointable candidates before making a final decision.

Remuneration

Salary: £337 per day, plus travel and other expenses within reasonable limits.

- ▶ **Location:** The location of the post is expected to be in the South Wales Valleys, however the exact location has yet to be determined. Hybrid work arrangements are envisaged with an expectation that the successful candidate will spend some time at the Authority as appropriate.
- ▶ **Time Commitment :** Up to 4 days per month for the first 2 years, which is then expected to reduce to 2 days per month.
- ▶ **Terms of Appointment:** Initial appointment of 5 years, unless otherwise terminated before the date giving three months' notice in writing. Similarly, the Minister may terminate the appointment at any time. The appointment is non-pensionable.

Application Deadline

- ▶ Midnight, 17th September 2025

Final Panel Interview

- ▶ 16th October 2025

How to Apply

To support in the search and appointment of this role, we have exclusively retained Goodson Thomas, an Executive Search consultancy.

For an informal discussion, please contact the Goodson Thomas team on 029 2167 4422 or info@goodsonthomas.com

To make an application please visit the Welsh Government's public appointment website. For queries about the roles please email the Welsh Government's Public Appointments Unit via publicappointments@gov.wales.

To apply for this role, go to the Welsh Government's public appointments website and click on the vacancy you are interested in. Click on 'Apply' at the bottom left-hand corner. If you'd like to apply for this vacancy in Welsh, please use the 'Newid Iaith / Change Language' link at the top right-hand side of this page, to take you to the Welsh version of this advert, from where you can apply in Welsh.

The first time you apply for a post, you will need to complete a registration form for the Welsh Government's online application system. You will only need to register once, and you can use this to keep yourself updated on the progress of this or any other applications you make.

Once you've registered, you'll be able to access the application form. To apply you will need to upload a CV and personal statement.

Diolch
Thank you

