



What is the role of the Client Design Advisor?

Any client thinking about a project in the built environment needs to make early decisions on what the project is about, how to set up their own team and how to procure design and construction. An advisor with 'design thinking' skills can be invaluable in identifying the 'value proposition' and the way to achieve this.. They can facilitate productive discussions between all stakeholders and see that the built asset will meet the clients' requirements.

RIBA Client Design Advisors (CDA) have a strong sense of how successful projects are forged, making design requirements clear and achievable at every stage. At the early stages they will assist with the development of the brief. With a thorough knowledge of procurement, the CDA will support the client, knowing which questions to ask and when, giving independent advice on the selection of design and construction providers and whether a proposed design fully meets the brief.

CDAs are highly skilled and knowledgeable built environment professionals adept at inspiring shared vision and confidence. Performing the key role of stakeholder engagement, with: the client, users, facility managers, investors, suppliers and authorities in order to align objectives and develop agreed outcomes.

Where it is likely that the client will choose not to appoint an architect directly, perhaps because of the use of a competitive or design-build process, there will be a lack of early and client-focussed advice. The CDA fills that gap, guiding and advising clients through procurement and supporting them in getting the value and quality they seek. . Once construction is underway the CDA can continue, to support the client in maintaining quality through the building process and feeding back lessons learned when the building is in use.