

**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION  
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES BRANCH EXECUTIVE**

**REPORT TO THE AGM FOR THE PERIOD  
1 NOVEMBER 2007 – 31 DECEMBER 2008**

**Background**

The National Assembly for Wales unanimously agreed a motion signed by the four party leaders to apply for admission to membership of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) on July 7 1999. Wales was formally welcomed into the CPA at the General Assembly meeting in Trinidad on 19 September 1999.

The Branch Executive meets at least once a term, on the basis that any other Branch Members who wish to be present are welcome to attend. An AGM of the whole Branch is usually held each autumn. Due to restructuring and personnel changes within the International Relations Team it has been necessary to delay this year's AGM – as a consequence this report covers a 14 month period.

**Branch Structure**

**All Assembly Members**

President: The Rt. Hon the Lord Elis-Thomas PC AM

Vice President: Rosemary Butler AM

Chair: Janet Ryder AM

Vice Chairs:

Jeff Cuthbert AM

Mike German AM

Alun Cairns AM

Secretary:

Claire Clancy, Chief Executive and Clerk to the National Assembly for Wales

Secretariat:

Al Davies

## **CHAIR'S REPORT**

The Branch has maintained its position as an active Member of the CPA. It has sent delegates to conferences and seminars in the UK and overseas. It has built on the links established with the Parliament of Lesotho and has developed further experience in the provision of parliamentary strengthening programmes. The Branch has hosted a range of visitors from across the Commonwealth visiting the Assembly.

## **ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD OF THE REPORT:**

### **2007**

#### **November**

##### **Climate Change Seminar.**

Darren Millar AM represented the Branch at a seminar on Climate Change at the Westminster Parliament hosted by the CPA UK Branch.

#### **December**

Brynle Williams AM visited the New South Wales Parliament in Australia, building upon the long standing links with the National Assembly for Wales. The programme arranged for Brynle Williams between the respective branches of the CPA included high level meetings with the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Hon Richard Torbay MP, Government Ministers, opposition leaders and a Committee Clerk. A tour of the extended Parliamentary estate was given as well as the opportunity to view Question Time in the Legislative Assembly.

### **2008**

#### **Commonwealth Day, 11 March 2008.**

Commonwealth Day was celebrated in the Senedd and Tŷ Hywel with this year's theme being "**The Environment, Our Future**". A seminar was held for the young people and a Commonwealth day debate was held in the Siambr over the final hour of the day's plenary meeting, observed by some 80 guests from a range of organisations linking Wales and the Commonwealth.

The President of the CPA Wales Branch, the Rt Hon the Lord Elis-Thomas AM then hosted a reception held in the Cwrt.

At the invitation of the CPA Headquarters Secretariat, the Branch also sent two young people from Wales to attend the Commonwealth Day Observance in London, held on the previous day.

The National Assembly for Wales provided a training programme for two members and a clerk of the **Lesotho Senate's HIV/AIDS committee**, which coincided with the Branch's Commonwealth day.

**38<sup>th</sup> British Isles and Mediterranean Region Conference, Gibraltar  
11-15 May 2008.**

The CPA Wales branch was represented by a full delegation, consisting of Rosemary Butler AM, Janet Ryder AM, Mike German AM, Jeff Cuthbert AM and Alun Cairns AM as International Executive Committee Representative. The conference plenary and workshop sessions focused upon the themes of:

- **Energy conservation and generation;**
- **Tourism and the Environment**

The conference theme provided an opportunity to highlight a number of areas in which Assembly Members were directly engaged. The theme of "Energy Conservation" in particular related directly to the work of the Sustainability Committee. Members of the other eleven branches present at the conference were particularly interested in the incorporation of the principle of sustainability within the Government of Wales Acts of 1998 & 2006.

**54th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference - 4-10 August 2008.**

The Branch Chair Janet Ryder AM, and Nerys Evans AM represented the National Assembly for Wales at the conference which was held in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**. Also present was Alun Cairns AM as Regional Representative. The theme for this year's Plenary Conference was **'Expanding the Role of Parliament in Global Society: Environment, Development and Security**. The Conference was attended by over 600 parliamentarians from all 9 regions of the Commonwealth, with 50 countries and over 160 parliaments and legislatures represented.

**Parliamentary Strengthening with Lesotho,**

**16-20 September 2008.**

Mike German AM attended a post election seminar, held in the capitol Maseru, during which he gave presentations on "Parliamentary Democracy" and "Ethics and Accountability of Members of Parliament"

**November 12 2008**

The "**Promises Auction**" held at the St David's Hotel in the presence of His Majesty King Letsie III was a great success, raising some £7000 for the Dolen 25 appeal which will contribute towards building and supporting a modern training and cultural centre in Lesotho.

**November 13 2008**

The National Assembly for Wales welcomed His Majesty King Letsie III of Lesotho to the Senedd on this his first historic visit to Wales. The visit, part of His Majesty's four day tour of Wales, provided an opportunity to build upon the longstanding strong links which have already been established between Wales and Lesotho, not only for the past nine years since the formation of the Assembly, but with the range and scope of Dolen Cymru's excellent work over the last twenty five years

**Miscellaneous Commonwealth Visitors to the Senedd.**

The Branch provided Members to assist in the provision of programmes for Commonwealth visitors to the Assembly:

- Hon Simon O'Brien MLC, Parliament of Western Australia – November 07
- Hon Nick Griffiths MLC, President of the Legislative Council, Parliament of Western Australia – February 08
- Hon (Richard) George Richard Torbay, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Parliament of New South Wales together with Russell Grove, Clerk to the Parliament – April 08
- The Hon Don Harwin Member of the Legislative Council, Parliament of New South Wales – April 08
- Hon Don Wing President of the Legislative Council and Mr David Pearce Clerk of the Legislative Council Parliament of Tasmania – May 08
- Hon Hlomohang Morokole Vice-President of Lesotho Senate – November 08

**DEVELOPMENTS:**

**Change of Branch Secretariat.**

After seven years in the role, Peter Kellam the Branch Secretariat, transferred to a new post with the Assembly Government in June of last year. The Branch wishes to put on record its gratitude to Peter for his service and significant contribution to the development and success of the Branch.

**FORWARD LOOK:**

**Branch Sponsorship Scheme, (ongoing).**

Members are reminded of the availability of this scheme and encouraged to look for opportunities to apply for support for study visits to other Commonwealth Parliaments and Assemblies. Members interested in this opportunity should in the first instance email the Branch secretariat Al Davies ([al.davies@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:al.davies@wales.gsi.gov.uk)) with a brief outline and business case of their proposed study visit.

**British Isles and Mediterranean Region Conference. 15 – 19 June 2009.**

The Guernsey Branch of the CPA will host the 40<sup>th</sup> BIMR Conference

**Commonwealth Day, 10 March 2009.**

Commonwealth Day will be celebrated with an evening reception at the Senedd. Furthermore, this year's Commonwealth theme, "The Commonwealth@60 – Serving a New Generation" will be incorporated into the National Assembly's 10<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary celebrations in the Autumn.

**Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, September 2009.**

The 55<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference will be held in Arusha, Tanzania, 21 - 29 September 2009.

**Note:** The CPA Wales branch has been invited to submit suggestions for the conference theme and topics for discussions, as follows:

- (i) the overall theme of the 2009 Conference;
- (ii) the workshops – to include suggestions from the Host Branch, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians and Small Branches;
- (iii) Plenary Session

Members are encouraged to submit suggestions to Al Davies by 17 February 2009