



**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
WELSH PARLIAMENT BRANCH EXECUTIVE**

**REPORT TO THE SENEDD BRANCH FOR THE PERIOD
6 December 2023 – 9 December 2024**

Background

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

Branch Structure

All Members of the Senedd are by default Members of the CPA Wales Branch

Office Holders:

President: Elin Jones MS

Vice President: David Rees MS

Chair: Rhun ap Iorwerth MS

Secretary: Manon Antoniazzi,
Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd

Acting Secretary:
Al Davies, Senior International Relations & Protocol Manager

Branch Executive Committee

Rhianon Passmore MS

Alun Davies MS

Natasha Asghar MS

Sam Rowlands MS

Delyth Jewell MS

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

This reporting period covers what has been a very positive year for the Senedd's Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

This has included our participation in a unique Regional Conference taking place, for the very first time, on the remote island of St Helena as well as at this year's annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, hosted by the New South Wales Parliament in Sydney, Australia.

It was great to see our Regional Women Parliamentarians' Conference resume with a programme hosted by the Maltese Parliament. The biennial Commonwealth Youth Parliament also took place this year and the Senedd was delighted to be represented at the conference, hosted by the New Zealand Parliament.

As well as being represented at CPA UK's flagship Westminster Seminar programme in London, this year saw the Westminster Seminar come to the Senedd for a day; presenting us with the opportunity to host over 30 Parliamentarians and Clerks from numerous CPA Branches and Regions to learn more about current development in our national parliament and of our innovative ways of working.

There was much interest in the CPA's Artificial Intelligence Conference hosted in partnership with the Parliament of Singapore at which we were successful in gaining a place.

A key milestone this year was the decision by our BIM Region to establish an LGBTQ+ Network and our Senedd Branch has been playing a leading role in the early stages of shaping this important work.

Looking ahead, 2025 promises to be a busy and exciting year for our Branch with planned conferences in Scotland, Quebec, Singapore and Barbados. The most exciting and eagerly anticipated programme of next year, however, will be our own – as we prepare to host (for the first time since 2014) the British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference at the Senedd in June.

Rhun ap Iorwerth MS.

CPA Senedd Branch Chair.

SELECTED ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD OF THE REPORT:

Participation in CPA Conferences and Seminars

BIMR CWP Conference

Malta

7-8 March

The Senedd Branch was represented by Rhianon Passmore MS and Janet Finch Saunders MS at the Regional Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference, hosted by the Maltese Branch.

[Report](#) (external)

72nd Westminster Seminar

London / Senedd

11-15 March

The Branch was represented by Carolyn Thomas MS at the Westminster Seminar – the CPA UK's Flagship annual programme aimed at new or recently elected Members and developing Clerks.

This year also saw the Seminar come to the Senedd for a day and the Branch noted how pleasing it had been to welcome some 30 Members and Clerks representing a range of devolved and smaller legislatures, including from Australia, Canada, the Caribbean and a number from our own BIM Region; including St Helena, the Channel and Falkland Islands.

[Report](#) (external)

BIMR Conference

St Helena, 18-25 May

Natasha Asghar MS represented the Senedd in this unique Regional conference.

[Report](#) (external)

*AI and Deepfakes Conference
Singapore
18-20 June*

Lee Waters MS was selected as the Senedd's delegate to attend this CPA conference, hosted in partnership with the Singapore Parliament.

[report](#)

*Commonwealth Youth Parliament
Wellington, New Zealand
2-6 September*

The Branch was pleased to have been represented at this year's CYP, hosted by the New Zealand Parliament, by Tegan Skyrme, former Member of the Welsh Youth Parliament.

[Report](#)

*67th CPC,
Sydney, New South Wales
3-8 November.*

The Llywydd and Branch Chair represented the Senedd at this year's CPC. The Conference, attended by over 500 parliamentarians from across the CPA's Nine Regions, was hosted in Sydney to mark the Bicentenary of the New South Wales Parliament.

Report in development.

Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD)

Mark Isherwood MS has continued to represent the Branch as our CPwD Champion. The CPA recently hosted a series of events to mark international day of persons with disabilities and an online webinar by our BIM Region on *"What are the barriers for disabled people standing for elected office and how*

can they be overcome?" was attended by the Deputy Presiding Officer.

Notable visits and other activities.

*Visit by Speaker-led Delegation from National Assembly of Quebec
11 June*

The Llywydd hosted the visit of Speaker Nathalie Roy and her delegation from the National Assembly of Quebec. A full programme was undertaken by the delegation which had included sessions on Official Languages, Women in Parliament and an overview of Senedd Business and current Reforms.

Commonwealth Visitors to the Senedd.

The Branch has assisted in the development of programmes for visitors to the Senedd including Speakers, High Commissioners, delegations and officials from Commonwealth countries and parliaments, including Fiji, Quebec and Australia.

Forward Look

2025

- 73nd Westminster Seminar (March)
- BIMR CWP Conference, Scotland (March)
- BIMR Conference, Wales (June)
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Barbados (October)

December 2024