



**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
WELSH PARLIAMENT BRANCH EXECUTIVE**

**REPORT TO THE SENEDD BRANCH FOR THE PERIOD
22 November 2022- 5 December 2023**

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 another productive year for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. And whilst the lack of formal Commonwealth Women and Youth Parliamentarian Conferences in 2023 has in some ways meant a lighter programme, there have still been many opportunities for members to partake.

This has included our participation in a Regional Conference in Westminster as well as at the annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Accra, Ghana.

We have been represented at Women Leadership Programmes in Brussels and Reykjavik and have continued to participate in the CPA's Members with Disabilities and Climate Change related programmes.

The Senedd has been pleased to welcome High Commissioners and delegations representing a number of Commonwealth parliaments, including New Zealand, St Helena, Namibia and, notably, two delegations from the federal parliament of Canada during this past year.

2024 promises to be a busy and exciting year for our Branch with planned conferences in Malta, St Helena, Sydney (NSW), and New Zealand as well as anticipated inward visits to the Senedd from a range of Commonwealth Parliaments; from Quebec to Fiji. I look forward to your continued interest and engagement in these and many other CPA opportunities.

Rhun ap Iorwerth MS.

CPA Senedd Branch Chair.

SELECTED ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD OF THE REPORT:

1. **Participation in CPA Conferences and Seminars**

CPA UK Trade Workshop for Overseas Territories, Crown Dependencies and Devolved Legislatures.

Westminster

February 2023

Alun Davies MS was selected to participate in this programme. [Report](#).

71st Westminster Seminar

March 2023

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS represented the Senedd at this year's Westminster Seminar. [Report](#) (external)

52nd BIMR Conference (hosted by CPA UK)

Westminster

April 2023

This year's Regional Conference was held in the UK Parliament and was attended by the Chair as well as by the Branch Vice-President David Rees MS, Rhianon Passmore MS and Joyce Watson MS. The conference covered several themes on which our Region had been focussed on in recent years, including the importance of diverse and inclusive parliaments, standards of behaviours as well as the Climate Emergency.

[Report](#) (external)

66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC)
Accra, Ghana
October 2022

Adam Price MS and Carolyn Thomas MS represented the Senedd at this year's flagship CPA conference, attended by over 500 Commonwealth Parliamentarians. Plenary and workshop sessions included discussions on numerous issues, including LGBTQ+ Rights and Gender Equality within the wider context of the Conference theme "*The Commonwealth Charter 10 years on: Values and Principles for Parliaments to Uphold*".

[Report](#)

2. Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP)

Whilst there has, disappointingly, not been a formal Regional Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians conference during this reporting period, Senedd Members have participated in a number of CWP Steering Committee meetings as well as other related activities.

Notably, Rhianon Passmore MS was re-elected as Vice Chair of the BIMR CWP and was selected to represent our BIMR Region at the [Women Political Leaders Summit in Brussels](#) (June 2023) as well as at the [Reykjavik Global Forum -Women Leaders](#) (November 2023)

Women Members of the Senedd's Branch Executive Committee have also played an active role in the [Senedd Women's Caucus](#) which was launched in June of this year. In November 2023, Delyth Jewell MS, Carolyn Thomas MS and Joyce Watson MS participated in a joint session with a visiting delegation from the Canadian Parliament to discuss and exchange best practice, as well as personal experiences on "Women in Parliament".

3. Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD)

Mark Isherwood MS has continued to play an active role in the CPwD network. A recent webinar, the latest in a series of Disability related presentations, included a presentation on [SEE Around Britain](#) – a project to support accessibility for people with disabilities had been

suggested by Mark Isherwood who also discussed the work of [Learning Disability Wales](#).

4. Notable visits and other activities.

[Visit by CPA Secretary General, Stephen Twigg](#) (June 2023).

The Senedd Branch was pleased to have facilitated a comprehensive programme for the Secretary General's visit to the Senedd. This included meetings with Office Holders and Branch Secretariat and also with Huw Irranca-Davies MS and Mark Isherwood MS. A Branch hosted lunch provided the opportunity to discuss a range of issues from LGBT Rights, Parliamentarians with Disabilities and the CPA's legal status.

**[CPA webinar on SDGs: Beyond 2030](#) (August 2023)
(Participation by Huw Irranca-Davies MS)**

Huw Irranca-Davies MS was one of five panellists, representing a range of Commonwealth Parliaments, who contributed to this webinar.

The webinar explored a roadmap to forecast sustainable development post-2030, looking at the positives and negatives of the current SDGs and identified important lessons learned to overcome future risks and exploit future opportunities.

Link to webinar recording [here](#).

BIMR Working Group on "Climate Emergency"

This Working Group has held several sessions over this reporting period. These have included a webinar hosted by Westminster on the topic of "*Equinor and the Norway story*" and "*The Ocean - Our Climate Ally*" led by the Isle of Man, which examined "blue carbon' ecosystems".

The Senedd CPA Branch will look to enhance opportunities for more Members to participate in the programme of this Working Group, in going forward.

5. 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 Canada, New Zealand, St Helena (PAC Committee) Namibia and India.

6. Forward Look

2024

- 72nd Westminster Seminar (March)
- BIMR CWP Conference, Malta (March)
- BIMR Conference, St Helena (May)
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Sydney (NSW, Australia) (November)
- Commonwealth Youth Parliament, New Zealand (Autumn - TBC)

December 2023