



Isle of Man Branch

Report of the Chair of the Branch Executive Committee for the period January 2025 to December 2025

Introduction

1. The aims of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) are to promote knowledge of the constitutional, legislative, economic, social and cultural aspects of parliamentary democracy. It does this among other things by arranging Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences, and other conferences, seminars, meetings and study groups; and by promoting visits between Members of the Branches of the Association.

Farewells & welcomes

2. In July 2025 former Member of the House of Keys, Tim Baker passed away. Mr Baker was a member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and attended the Westminster Seminar on Effective Parliaments in 2019 and the Small Branches Network Event in Malta in 2020.
3. In September 2025 former Member of the House of Keys and Member of the Legislative Council, Geoff Corkish MBE passed away. Mr Corkish was a member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and attended numerous study visits and a plenary conference in India. He also served as a Member of the Isle of Man Branch Executive Committee.
4. Mr Baker and Mr Corkish will be missed by their former colleagues.
5. The 2025 Legislative Council Election saw the departure of Peter Greenhill and Kerry Sharpe who had both been members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Mrs Sharpe had been a Branch Executive Committee member and our disability champion.
6. We welcome Gary Clueit, Kirstie Morphet and Peter Reid who were elected to the Legislative Council, joining Rob Mercer who was re-elected.

On-Island activities in 2025

7. In January, a delegation from the National Parliament of Solomon Islands completed a four-day study visit to Tynwald, described by Hon. Catherine Nori MP as a “non-stop learning trip,”. The delegation explored how the Isle of Man’s tricameral system, scheduled sittings, and committee processes support scrutiny,

representation and structured parliamentary work. Facilitated by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the programme included observing sittings, committee meetings - such as the Public Accounts Committee - and discussions with Members about balancing parliamentary, governmental and constituency duties.



The Speaker of the House of Keys the Hon. Juan Watterson SHK with, left to right, Vatina Devesi WFD Country Director, Hon. Catherine Nori MP, Hon. Choy Lin Yim Douglas MP and NPSI Clerk Jefferson Hallu

8. On Friday 7th March, in recognition of International Women's Day, we hosted an event in Legislative Buildings to focus on women in Manx politics, and encouraging more female participation in public office. A panel consisting of Ann Corlett MHK, Dr Catriona Mackie and Garff Commissioner, Melanie Christian, shared their views and experiences of challenges faced by women pursuing publicly elected roles.
9. This year, to mark Commonwealth Day, we held the annual Commonwealth Day Dinner at Douglas Golf Club on 14th March. I was delighted to welcome Dame Meg Hillier MP, Labour MP for Hackney South and Shoreditch, and Chair of the Treasury Select Committee, as our guest speaker. During her visit, Dame Meg also found time to meet with Tynwald's Public Accounts Committee and the Treasury Minister.
10. In April Tynwald hosted the CPA Small Branches Workshop which brought together parliamentarians from across small jurisdictions to explore strengthening parliamentary independence and effectiveness. Jurisdictions represented included Australian Capital Territory, Fiji, Guernsey, Jersey, Maldives, Northwest Territories of Canada, Samoa, Saint Lucia, Saint Helena, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Tasmania, and Tuvalu. During the session a video was filmed about the Latimer House Principles which has been shown widely around the Commonwealth.



CPA Small Branches delegates

11. In May Speaker Tara Carter of the Anguilla House of Assembly concluded a two-day study visit to Tynwald by highlighting significant opportunities for partnership between the two legislatures. Accompanied by Clerk Lenox Proctor, she praised the respectful and effective conduct she observed in Tynwald Court, noting it aligned with her commitment to strengthening debate, democracy and decorum in Anguilla's Assembly. Speaker Carter expressed interest in enhancing research services for Anguillan Members, inspired by Tynwald's comprehensive support. She also found Tynwald's Hansard system insightful, contrasting it with Anguilla's livestreamed proceedings, and suggested potential collaboration on AI-driven transcription or a hybrid Hansard model. The visit confirmed potential for a strong continuing partnership between Anguilla and the Isle of Man.



Speaker of the Anguilla House of Assembly Hon. Tara Carter (right) with the Speaker of the House of Keys, the Hon. Juan Watterson SHK and Deputy Speaker of the House of Keys, Ann Corlett MHK

12. Junior Tynwald was held on Friday 11th July, providing the opportunity for young people to experience and engage with parliament and participate in debates including voting in a democratic decision-making process. Questions submitted by the students were asked of and answered by actual Ministers and Department members. They included a wide range of topics from capital gains tax to the use of artificial intelligence in schools.
13. Two motions were moved during the sitting. The first, moved by Zara Jones from QEII High School, 'That Junior Tynwald is of the opinion that the Isle of Man Government needs to ensure that the education system deals with modern dangers and challenges faced from social media and its influences on younger generations.' was carried. The second motion, moved by Geoff Pryce-Jones also from QEII High School, 'That Junior Tynwald is of the opinion that wind turbines are essential to the future of the Isle of Man's drive to a greener, pollution free environment' was carried as amended. The motion as amended was 'That Junior Tynwald is of the opinion that in assessing whether wind turbines may contribute to the future of the Isle of Man's drive to a greener environment, an independent and thorough assessment of the implications, impact and benefits for the Island's electricity infrastructure and the consumer should be undertaken and published.'
14. The award for Most Outstanding Participant went to Conall Molloy from St Ninian's High School. I would like to congratulate Conall and all the students who took part in this year's Junior Tynwald for their well-considered, relevant and topical debating.
15. On 7th July at Tynwald Day the honoured guests included the following parliamentarians from CPA Branches:
 - The Rt Hon. Sir Roger Gale MP, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons
 - Mr Edwin Poots, Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly
 - Ms Annabelle Ewing MSP, Deputy Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament
16. With the support of the CPA Isle of Man Branch, Tynwald continued to welcome visiting groups from primary schools throughout the year. In 2025 this support enabled 16 primary schools to book a school tour leading to 344 pupils visiting Legislative Buildings. We also welcomed 18 students from Ramsey Grammar School and 18 exchange students from Instituto La Flota in Murcia, SE Spain, along with two teachers from each school.

Off-Island activities in 2025

17. In February Castle Rushen High School student Daisy Arnold represented the Isle of Man in a special sitting of the UK Youth Parliament, where she delivered a speech in the House of Commons on the Island's economy and the challenge of retaining school leavers. Selected through an open application process, Daisy joined other representatives from the Crown Dependencies and British Overseas Territories after being invited by Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP. She

highlighted the Island's efforts to engage young people in politics, including the voting age of 16, and spoke on the issue chosen by Manx students in the 'Make Your Mark' vote: jobs, the economy and benefits. Daisy described the experience as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, particularly enjoying meeting the Speaker and connecting with other young representatives.



Daisy Arnold with Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP

18. In March a delegation consisting of Ann Corlett MHK, Hon. Daphne Caine MHK and Tanya August-Phillips MLC attended the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference in Edinburgh.¹ The theme of the conference was 'A parliament for all: the importance of women in politics' and the delegates had the opportunity to attend sessions such as: how to promote inclusiveness in parliaments; overcoming the barriers to women standing for election from the lens of ensuring a work-life balance; and, how to retain women working in politics.
19. In March Dawn Kinnish MLC attended the 73rd Westminster Seminar on Effective Parliaments.² The Westminster Seminar is the largest activity delivered by CPA UK every year and welcomes around 70 delegates from across the Commonwealth, UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.
20. Mrs Kinnish praised the Westminster educational outreach team for their work in engaging young people in parliamentary democracy. She also valued the panel discussion with Layla Moran MP about her committee work on the Health and Social Care committee which she chairs, which now adopted a proactive, rather than reactive approach, identifying potential issues and topics which may arise. She heard

¹ [11th British Islands and Mediterranean Region Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians' Conference](#)

² [WestSem Report](#)

how at Westminster recommendations were 'set in stone' with no opportunity for amendment, which prompted her to reflect on our own processes.



Dawn Kinnish

21. In March the Clerk of Tynwald, Jonathan King, visited the National Parliament of Solomon Islands (NPSI) for an eight-day programme which included a Memorandum of Understanding signing ceremony, a workshop and a number of sessions that explored a range of parliamentary procedures and practices. The visit was funded by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy's long-term parliamentary strengthening programme in association with the UK government.



Jonathan King with NPSI Clerk, Jefferson Hallu

22. In March Hon. Tim Crookall MHK attended a Post-Election Seminar in Anguilla which followed the elections to the Anguilla House of Assembly which had taken place in February.³ The Seminar was designed to give new and returning elected Parliamentarians from the Anguilla House of Assembly improved knowledge and skills to undertake their parliamentary duties. The sessions covered topics such as conduct and ethics, public speaking, the role of parliaments in the 21st century and Ministerial governance.



23. In April Hon. Tim Johnston MHK joined eight other observers from Jersey, Scotland and Wales for an Election Observation Mission in the Cayman Islands.⁴ The observers assessed the general election against international standards, commitments and obligations, as well as domestic laws.

24. In June I attended the 54th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) British Islands and Mediterranean Regional (BIMR) conference in Cardiff along with Paul Craine MLC, Tim Crookall MHK and Kirstie Morphet MLC.⁵ This provided an opportunity to explore the needs of a modern parliament alongside other colleagues from across the region. Hosted by the Senedd, the conference brought together parliamentarians from Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Malta, Cyprus, Jersey, the Isle of Man and Gibraltar to discuss topics including digital transformation, wellbeing, and diversity and inclusion, with the launch of the BIMR LGBT+ network a key highlight. I would like to emphasise the value of sharing experiences on accessibility, youth parliaments, and representing underrepresented groups such as young people, persons with disabilities and the LGBT+ community. Mrs Morphet contributed as an excellent panellist on disability inclusion, noting the importance of learning from international best practice to strengthen equity and participation in future legislation.

³ <https://www.cpahq.org/media/1q3nraux/anguilla-pes-final-report.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.uk-cpa.org/media/3c5ltyk0/cpa-bimr-cayman-islands-2025-final-report.pdf>

⁵ [54th British Islands and Mediterranean Conference Report](#)



25. In June, Tanya August-Phillips was honoured to be asked to attend as a resource person for the Belize National Assembly CPA Post-Election Seminar, which CPA delivered in partnership with ParlAmericas in Belmopan, Belize. Mrs August-Phillips has a Belize heritage, which made it especially poignant.
26. In August, at one day's notice, Gary Clueit MLC stepped in to attend an Election Observation Mission in St Helena where he was swiftly promoted to Head of Mission whilst still in transit!⁶ He joined six other observers to assess the general election against international standards, commitments and obligations, as well as domestic laws.



CPA BIMR Election Observation Mission Team at The Castle, St Helena

(left to right: Stefan Szwed, Craig Whittaker, Deputy Chris Blin, Gary Clueit MLC, Minister Leslie Bruzon, Elinor Souch, Maggie El Beileidi)

⁶ [st-helena-eom-report-final.pdf](#)

27. The 68th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) was held in Barbados in October with the theme 'The Commonwealth: A Global Partner'.⁷ The flagship event brings together over 500 Parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and decision makers from across the Commonwealth for a unique conference and networking opportunity. The CPC offers the prospect of the coming together of the CPA's global membership to address the critical issues facing today's Commonwealth parliaments.
28. Tynwald was represented at the Conference by Ann Corlett MHK and I, accompanied by the Clerk of Tynwald, Jonathan King. We had the opportunity to attend workshops and discuss topics of interest including: Public Accounts Committees – roles, challenges and solutions; work-life balance, professional development and mental health; overcoming the barriers to the involvement of women with disabilities in politics; and, enhancing democracy through digital transformations and tackling the digital divide.
29. In October Clare Barber MHK and Rob Mercer MLC joined parliamentarians from 16 Commonwealth nations at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Climate Forum at Westminster, where discussions highlighted shared challenges such as rising sea levels, extreme weather, energy and food security, and the need for community-focused resilience.⁸



30. International Men's Day was marked on 19th November with an event at Legislative Buildings bringing together students, guests, and local organisations to highlight men's mental and physical wellbeing through stories of connection and support.

⁷ [68th-CPC-Conference-Concluding-Statement_FINAL_reduced.pdf](#)

⁸ [Climate Forum Programme Booklet](#)

Organised by John Wannenburg MHK, the event featured speakers from Ed Space, Next Level Fitness, mindfulness teaching, Manx Sport and Recreation, Live at Home's Men in Sheds initiative, and Active Souls, each sharing personal experiences and practical ways to promote wellbeing, reduce stigma, and build community across the Island. The sessions covered themes from mental health openness and mindfulness to physical fitness, play, and combating isolation, emphasising the importance of finding supportive spaces and sustainable habits that boost both physical and emotional resilience. Reflecting on the day, Mr Wannenburg highlighted the value of creating opportunities that encourage honest conversations, celebrate men's roles, and strengthen community support for wellbeing.

31. In November Deputy Clerk of Tynwald, Joann Corkish, and I attended the annual CPA BIMR Public Accounts Committee Network event held in Jersey. The programme included presentations and discussions on effectively tracking parliamentary recommendations and the impact of 20 years of the Jersey Audit Office; and breakout groups where experience of scrutinising capital expenditure, health expenditure and government annual reporting were shared.



32. In November, QEII High School student Jasper Emery represented Tynwald at the UK Youth Parliament sitting in the House of Commons, where he delivered a two-minute speech in both Manx and English highlighting the importance of young people's mental health. Jasper, who is a member of the Tynwald Youth Select Committee, joined youth representatives from across the UK, Crown Dependencies, and Overseas Territories at the Despatch Box—an opportunity granted through Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle's initiative to amplify young voices. His topic was chosen through the 'Make Your Mark' ballot, in which Island students identified health and wellbeing as their top concern.



Jasper Emery at the House of Commons

33. In December Rob Callister MHK represented Tynwald on an election observation mission to the Falkland Islands.⁹ He was one of three parliamentarians to serve as a member of the Election Observation Mission to the Falkland Islands to observe the UK Overseas Territory's General Election.



Rob Callister MHK, third left, with Vasil Vashchanka, Elinor Souch, Hon. Akierra Missick, Stefan Szwed, Alun Davies MS, and Magdalene El Beledi

34. During the year the Branch had representation on four CPA networks:

⁹ [cpa-bimr-falkland-islands-eom-preliminary-statement-2025pdf.pdf](#)

- I continued to act as Chair of the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees;
- Ann Corlett MHK sat on the BIMR Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Steering Committee;
- Dawn Kinnish MLC acted as the Tynwald representative for the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) network;
- Chris Thomas MHK and John Wannenburgh MHK sat on the CPA BIMR Digital Transformation Working Group.

35. It is essential that any legislature be open and transparent and for this reason the costs relating to any travel undertaken by Members are published on the Tynwald website.¹⁰

Virtual activities in 2025

36. Over two half-days in May Joney Faragher MHK and Paul Craine MLC completed a virtual CPA BIMR Election Observation training course which introduced the theory and practice of election observation. Completing this course allows Members to participate in future CPA BIMR election observation missions.

37. As part of its work with the National Parliament of the Solomon Islands, the Office of the Clerk of Tynwald continued to participate in a series of virtual workshops involving members of staff from across the Office to cover topics such as: Committee engagement (including remote evidence and travel); research (templates and structures); non-Government legislation (Bills and amendments); drafting of Committee materials (including through the use of AI); research (internal repository and use of SharePoint / developing a Research Practice Guide); and scrutiny in plenary: parliamentary Questions and backbench motions.

38. We continue to encourage our Members and officers to use CPA UK's online training resource, *The CPA Parliamentary Academy*.¹¹ This central learning hub contains extensive learning opportunities for parliamentarians, clerks and parliamentary officials on key thematic topics.

Conclusion

39. The education and training of Tynwald Members remains a key priority and thanks to our Branch membership we are afforded many opportunities by the CPA to develop and build our capacity. I am pleased that our Branch continues to support the CPA

¹⁰ <https://tynwald.im/members-officers/remuneration-and-allowances>

¹¹ <https://www.cpahq.org/parliamentary-academy/>

Regional and Plenary conferences and would encourage more Members to explore opportunities to represent Tynwald in other jurisdictions.

40. As a small nation that is not a sovereign state, the CPA provides an opportunity for the Island to step onto the international stage, to encourage our parliamentarians to look upwards and outwards at emerging practices around the world. The benefits may be indirect but I maintain the view that the small proportion of the 'Legislature' vote which is spent on CPA membership continues to be money well spent. It remains my aim as your Chairman to optimise the value we obtain from these opportunities.

The Hon. Juan Watterson SHK
Chair of the CPA Branch Executive Committee
February 2026