



**UK
Parliament**

**COMMONWEALTH
PARLIAMENTARY
ASSOCIATION UK**



CPA UK STRATEGY

2026 - 2031

Introduction

Welcome to our Strategy 2026-2031!

The UK branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA UK) is one of the oldest and largest members of the more than 180 branches which make up the CPA. The branch is located in Westminster Hall and funded by the UK Parliament. Our members are UK parliamentarians from both the House of Commons and House of Lords. We are non-party political.

We are a registered UK charity for the “advancement and promotion of knowledge and education in the social, economic, cultural, constitutional and legislative systems within a parliamentary democratic framework.”

The overarching Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Vision

“That the work of the CPA enables:

- Commonwealth Parliamentarians and officials to uphold and strengthen parliamentary democracy, the rule of law, sustainable development and human rights.
- Mutual learning, dialogue, cooperation and networking across the Commonwealth to build strong, powerful and effective parliamentary institutions able to respond and adapt to the challenges of today and tomorrow.
- Partnerships with others to maximise our impact in line with the shared values which underpin the CPA’s mission”

As Secretariat for the CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Region we lead cross-regional work and represent our branches in the wider CPA organisation.

CPA UK's Vision, Mission, Purpose and Objectives

Vision

The outcome we seek

That the work of CPA UK enables:

Inclusive, representative and transparent Commonwealth Parliaments; fully effective in enforcing the accountability of the executive and representing the interests and concerns of the electorate.

To achieve this we want:

UK at the heart of a dynamic network of parliaments across the modern Commonwealth; supporting representative parliamentary democracy.

Mission

What we do

We support members to increase and share knowledge on parliamentary excellence; based on mutual learning and respect.

Purpose

Why we do it

Stronger parliamentary democracy leads to more effective legislation and scrutiny and better serves the people that parliamentarians represent.

Strategic Objectives

Objective 1: To link the UK and other Commonwealth Parliaments and parliamentarians



Promoting collaboration, understanding and cooperation, emphasising the role of Commonwealth parliaments in tackling common challenges relevant to future generations.

Objective 2: To Strengthen Parliamentary Democracy



Being responsive to the complex challenges of parliaments, new and emerging threats to democracy and facilitating access to knowledge and skills.

Objective 3: To deliver our work to a high standard as a trusted and credible partner



Being a great place to work; practising value for money, high standards of behaviour and evidence-based learning.

Scope and Focus

CPA UK's work is based on the key principles of effective parliaments:

- Good practices/procedures;
- Effective legislation/scrutiny;
- Representative/inclusive.

We use these principles and understanding of the geopolitical context to guide our geographical and thematic work.

Geographical Scope

Our geographical scope is working with Commonwealth legislatures, both national and subnational, on a bilateral and regional basis.¹

1. Asia Pacific
2. Africa
3. Americas, Caribbean and Europe
4. OTs (HMG funded project work)

To have clear outcomes and productive relationships, CPA UK prioritises where and with whom it works.

We devise forward plans and respond to programme requests based on a range of criteria. These include:

- the appetite, absorption capacity and electoral cycles of partner parliaments;
- the existence of clear learning opportunities for UK and/or partner parliaments;
- the strength of the existing relationship;
- our evaluation of previous programmes;
- the priorities of the Executive Committee and the UK Parliament more broadly;
- capacity and resources.

These factors are always changing so priorities are reviewed and refreshed regularly.

To achieve greater impact, we will have longer term partnership programmes with selected parliaments.

1. CPA HQ's 9 regions are Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean (BIM); Canada; Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic (CAA); India; Pacific; and South-East Asia

Thematic Focus

The focus of CPA UK's work is also guided by priority themes, around which we develop longer-term programmes of work to maximise impact.

The themes have been selected based on past work, and current international and domestic affairs. They are of interest to our members and members of other national and sub-national parliaments of the Commonwealth and prioritise their involvement.

The following four themes will be prioritised for the expected life of the current parliament.



Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls is a serious issue that undermines human rights, health, and social stability. CPA UK helps parliamentarians and officials learn how to develop networks, create strong laws, raise awareness, and galvanise work across agencies to tackle all forms of this violence effectively.



Digital Transformation

Fast-paced technological change affects all areas of our lives. As digital technologies rapidly reshape society, parliamentarians must stay informed of both their potential and their risks. CPA UK will support parliamentarians in strengthening knowledge, raising awareness and promoting good practice to ensure effective, forward-looking legislation and regulation, and the use of digital tools to support parliamentary work.

Trade and the Commonwealth



Parliamentarians are interested in international trade to benefit economies and societies. Through CPA UK, they will learn about complex trading relationships, building their capacity to hold the executive to account on trade negotiations and agreements. They will build relationships and networks with Commonwealth peers to promote Commonwealth trade.

Tackling Climate Change



Climate change is a global issue that affects all Commonwealth countries - impacting health, social justice, security, economies and ecosystems. Parliamentarians play an important role in holding governments to account in addressing climate change. CPA UK will facilitate involvement in multi-sector dialogue on the impacts of climate change.

The Wider CPA Network

We pay annual fees to the CPA Secretariat as part of a wider network of more than 180 CPA branches. We act as the regional Secretariat for the CPA British Islands and Mediterranean region. To facilitate cross-regional dialogue and effectively represent the region in the CPA we support the organisation of regular regional forums.

We support UK members' attendance at forums organised by CPA HQ Secretariat and at regional events bringing together national and subnational parliaments from across the British Islands and Mediterranean region. We are active participants in:

- the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians,
- Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities
- and other related bodies such as the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees.

In our capacity as the Secretariat to the BIMR we will continue to bid for funding (from HMG, some Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies) to organise Election observation missions staffed by parliamentarians from the Commonwealth to assess electoral processes against international obligations, commitments and standards for democratic elections. We will also arrange training for Commonwealth members to qualify as election observers.

How We Do It

Delivery Tools

We design and deliver bespoke programmes to bring together UK parliamentarians and parliamentary officials with Commonwealth counterparts to discuss issues of common concern. The participants, format and location of each activity will depend on its aims and objectives and how best they can be met.

They will include a balance of inward and outward delegations, workshops and conferences, hosted in Westminster or by a partner Commonwealth parliament. They may include study visits, election observation missions and post-election seminars.

They may have:

- a bilateral, regional or pan-Commonwealth reach.
- a thematic lens or be focussed on relationship building, parliamentary democracy or parliamentary strengthening.
- a fact-finding, information-sharing or knowledge and skills building agenda.

CPA UK's core suite of activities includes our longstanding annual Westminster Seminar, which explores approaches to parliamentary democracy, practice and procedure in the context of the Westminster System.

We consider geopolitical context and offer members opportunities to hear from experts to support interactions with other parliaments.

CPA UK will continue constructive engagement with FCDO, their overseas Posts and other parts of HMG. We will work closely with partner organisations in Parliament, the UK and internationally such as the Speaker's and Lord Speaker's offices, All Party Parliamentary Groups, the International Parliamentary Relations Offices in the House of Commons and House of Lords and other parts of the parliamentary service, The Westminster Foundation for Democracy and relevant Civil Society Organisations. Where appropriate we will draw on the advice and expertise of Select committees, with specific ongoing work with the Public Accounts Committee as a member of the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees.

Finance and Funding

CPA UK's core work is financed through its grant-in-aid from Parliament, made up 70% from the House of Commons and 30% from the House of Lords.

In this strategy period we expect to have flat or falling funding. In this context we will adapt our organisation and outcomes to ensure that we are demonstrating value for money and able to deliver excellent opportunities for our members.

CPA UK also bids for additional funding, from HMG and from other reputable national and international institutions, as agreed by our Executive Committee. For the period of this strategy the work is based on successful annual bidding to HMG for good governance in the UK Overseas Territories.² If this is ceased or reduced due to government budget cuts we will continue work with OTs through core-funded activities.

Measuring Impact

CPA UK is committed to being a learning organisation that continuously adapts to the evolving needs of our members. We strive to improve how we design and deliver our programmes to meet the high expectations of stakeholders in Westminster and across the Commonwealth. Feedback from our partners is central to this process. We actively listen, reflect, and adapt our approach to ensure our work remains relevant and effective.

We recognise that measuring impact and attributing outcomes to our programmes can be complex. This requires a nuanced and tailored approach to evaluation, which goes beyond simple metrics to capture the full breadth of our work's influence.

Our Monitoring Toolkit will enable us to better understand the outcomes of our activities, refine our programmes and enhance both what we do and how we do it.

2. FY 24/25 was the last year of FCDO Commonwealth Unit funding for parliamentary support for HMG's Commonwealth objectives on gender-based violence and modern slavery.

Monitoring and evaluation will be embedded across all areas of programme management to ensure good practice and accountability. A combination of quantitative and qualitative Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used to track progress against strategic objectives, ensuring our work remains aligned with our mission and continues to deliver meaningful impact.

We will also undertake periodic evaluations of our long-term programmes to assess their sustained outcomes, relevance, and effectiveness. These evaluations will help us to identify areas for deeper learning and improvement, strengthen our evidence base, and ensure our programmes continue to deliver long-term value for our stakeholders.

Communications

CPA UK uses communications as a strategic tool to achieve impact, celebrate achievement and ensure distinctiveness from other organisations working in the foreign affairs and parliamentary fields.

Communications are used to raise the profile of CPA UK, generating ongoing interest in and support for our work.

Our strategic aim is to reach a variety of stakeholders in Parliament, the UK and across the Commonwealth.

CPA UK's social media biography

We represent the UK Parliament in the Commonwealth. We bring together parliamentarians to share good practice. We strengthen parliamentary democracy.



@CPA_UK



@cpaukbranch



CPA UK



Commonwealth Parliamentary
Association UK

We communicate through in-person events, webinars, printed and digital content, our website, social media channels, newsletters, and via Westminster circulars, such as the All Party Notice and the International Relations list. Additionally, we create in-depth resources such as our E-Handbook on Modern Slavery.

Our Values

CPA UK operates under a framework of shared values identified as the most important and relevant by its staff. Members of the team are encouraged to enact these values through all aspects of their work. In summary they are:

Accountability

- We hold ourselves to account; maximise our resources; and learn from our work.
- We are open and transparent; ensure good practice and do what is right even when it is hard.

Commitment

- We are engaged and involved in our work; working hard and delivering as promised.
- We are collectively as well as individually responsible for our work.

Teamwork and Professionalism

- We proactively help our colleagues to achieve their goals; pay attention to each other's wellbeing; build trust and represent the organisation in a respectful, knowledgeable and ethical way.
- We collaborate and communicate, providing respectful and honest feedback.

Diversity and Inclusion

- We value difference and diversity in recruitment, delegations and speakers.
- We provide opportunities for everyone to participate and listen to a wide range of opinions to achieve innovative and measurable results.
- We treat each other fairly and with respect.

CPA UK

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