


Election 2025

There is an election for board members through September. Members will receive an invitation to vote.

To assist members decide who to vote for, here are CVs and election statements from the various candidates.

<p>Michele Vas, Dentons UK and Middle East LLP</p> 	<p>As a partner in Dentons' Planning and Public Law team, I bring over 20 years experience in compulsory purchase and compensation matters.</p> <p>I have guided clients through the complexities of compulsory purchase on a wide range of uses, from local authority regeneration projects to major infrastructure and energy schemes under Transport and Works Act Orders (TWAOs') and Development Consent Orders (DCOs). Currently, I am advising on a DCO for a hydrogen powered station and working with Network Rail on a TWAO for the next phase of the TransPennine upgrade. I thrive on this work, and particularly enjoy collaborating with multidiscipline project teams and fostering relationships within the CPO community.</p> <p>The landscape of compensation is evolving, and the new government's growth agenda suggests a continued shift, particularly with the promotion of New Towns and enhanced land acquisition powers. I have a keen interest in New Town delivery models and believe the CPA has a vital role in advancing these new developments, I am eager to contribute to and support the CPA's efforts in this area.</p> <p>I am a strong advocate for diversity in the workplace, especially by championing more women in the industry and advancing them into senior leadership roles. I am committed to support the CPA's initiatives in improving diversity in the CPO community and believe I can make a valuable contribution.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
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**Toni Weston,
Gowling WLG (UK) LLP**



I am a solicitor and partner in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Team at Gowling WLG.

I have over 20 years' experience of advising on all aspects of the compulsory purchase process, with particular expertise in working with landowners, developers and public bodies to deliver major regeneration and infrastructure through the use of compulsory purchase powers.

Regeneration projects where I have advised the acquiring authority on the making, confirmation and implementation of a CPO include: the 900 acre former Redcar Steelworks site; the former Southall Gasworks site; Bicester town centre; Shirley town centre; Wokingham town centre; Northampton St Peters Waterside. Infrastructure projects I have advised on include: advising Crossrail on its land acquisition strategy; advising Transport for London on a CPO for the A406 Bounds Green improvement scheme; advising National Highways on securing compulsory purchase powers as part of a DCO for a new bypass at Windy Harbour and the M54 to M6 link road; and advising National Highways on the exercise of compulsory purchase powers to enable the M42 J6 improvement scheme and the A428 Black Cat scheme.

In addition, I regularly act for acquiring authorities and claimants on compensation claims, through negotiated settlement, in proceedings before the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) or by ADR. Examples include: advising the GLA on claims relating to the London Olympics; National Highways on claims relating to a number of DCO and CPO schemes; and landowners on claims against HS2.

I am a longstanding member of the CPA and a strong supporter of its aims and objectives. I was elected to the CPA Board in 2023 and have really enjoyed becoming more actively involved in promoting the CPA. I am particularly interested in CPO reform and have been involved in the working group considering updates to CPO guidance and changes made by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. Being based in Birmingham, I am also keen to promote the CPA in the regions and, through the regional events working group, I have been organising regional events including the first event in Birmingham for some years which took place in April. I would really welcome your support in being re-elected so that I can continue to build on my past involvement.

**John Webster,
DWF LLP**



I'm a Partner in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase team at DWF and I specialise in regeneration, development and infrastructure.

I'm standing for the CPA board as I believe CPO reform is critical. Although I'm an optimist, I don't see how the Country can address the urgent annual need for 300,000 new homes, with the roads and grid infrastructure required to support them, without a more effective CPO regime.

I see the challenge of delivering housing and infrastructure over the next few years as not only providing workable schemes for promoters, but giving a sound outcome for those impacted. I know from experience that bringing forward schemes is not an easy task, nor is reaching an acceptable deal for claimants. I think the CPA is a body which can and does effect meaningful change towards achieving this, through its engagement with government and development of industry protocols.

What I can offer the CPA is my hands-on experience and knowledge of where the CPO regime works well, but also where it's underperforming. I've promoted major strategic land sites and urban regeneration schemes, which required CPOs and use of appropriation powers to unlock sites. I've also objected to schemes, acting for charities and churches threatened by compulsory purchase, so I'm absolutely aware of the imbalance in power felt by some participants in the system. My experience extends to compulsory acquisition in the promotion of DCOs for rail and energy projects and acting for host authorities for DCO road schemes. I think a lot can be learnt from the NSIP process, particularly concerning consultation, which can be transferred across to the CPO regime.

My own involvement with the CPA began in 2015, joining the Young CPA (as it was then) and subsequently getting invited to that year's CPA dinner on a spare seat. As the first time, it was quite an event, with several of the people I met have since become professional colleagues and friends. Therefore, I recognise the value in the CPA as a professional network for both junior and senior practitioners, which should continue to be maintained. I'm also a speaker in the CPA's Upskilling Professional Development Programme, which I think is a vital initiative given the need for holistic training in the industry. Before moving to London, I was an active member of the South-West Branch of the CPA, where I co-authored and presented a CPA guide promoting the use of CPO powers by Local Authorities.

I'm prepared to dedicate the time and effort needed if I am elected to the CPA Board. After benefiting from CPA membership for the past 10 years, I feel it's time to put more back into the organisation. Many thanks for reading this.

David Baker,
Baker Rose Consulting LLP



I specialise in major projects, market development and conflict resolution. I am a Chartered Surveyor, fellow of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport; and a member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Mediator) - I am also a RICS Accredited Mediator and on the President's Panel for CPO Mediations.

I am actively involved in promoting two SRFI DCO's, advising on both the logistics needs cases and strategic commercial matters, including the use of CPO powers. I also represent affected parties impacted by hydrogen pipeline schemes and other infrastructure and regeneration developments, covering the full gamut of authorising powers.

I have been on the Board for two years and wish to serve another two to see through to the next stage, the work I have initiated and which is starting to see results, particularly in the context of mental health and wider change.

Conversations had with multiple parties suggest that there will be step change in approach now, for everyone's benefit.

The current context of the use of compulsory purchase is critical to the delivery of housing and infrastructure. The CPA needs to continue to be a forum for debate and shared understanding, to enable us all to benefit and the sector to evolve and recruit successfully, positively influencing change in the process.

I hope you will support me. Thank you.

**Richard Guyatt,
Womble Bond Dickinson
(UK) LLP**



I am a solicitor and partner in the planning and infrastructure team of Womble Bond Dickinson.

I was a committee member and then board member of the CPA for a decade, including a year as Chair in 2016. I stepped down from the CPA Board a few years ago but am hoping to rejoin to contribute the learnings from my previous CPA Board experience in dealing with central government, at a time when legislation affecting the Association's members is once again being contemplated.

Whilst a CPA Board member, I was on various sub committees of the CPA Board dealing with legislative reform. I worked with DCLG on behalf of the Association in relation to the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013, Infrastructure Act 2015, Housing and Planning Act 2016 and Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. I hope that my previous experience dealing with the CPA's responses to the passage of bills through parliament will benefit the CPA Board and to the wider Association. It seems very likely that compulsory purchase and compensation law will be the subject of considerable parliamentary scrutiny in this Parliamentary session. Whilst a CPA Board member previously I had several meetings with the then shadow ministers when Labour was in opposition, as well as Treasury and DCLG officials. I hope the links forged with the Labour Party will provide the Association an additional way of making contact with Government at this very significant time for CPO related reform. The CPA was successful in promoting some significant changes to CPO law through its engagement with Government previously and I hope my input can contribute to this being repeated.

I first dealt with compulsory purchase matters as a trainee solicitor in the mid 1990s and have specialised in compulsory purchase and infrastructure law since qualifying in 1996. I have led on the promotion of development consent orders and am promoting several Transport and Works Act Orders with extensive compulsory acquisition provisions. In terms of compulsory purchase orders, I have acted both for acquiring authorities and the claimants, including promoting orders under highways, town and country planning and listed buildings legislation.

I have acted for numerous claimants on compensation claims, including landowners affected by the London 2012 Olympics as well as landowners and infrastructure providers impacted by development consent orders. I have also acted as a Roll B agent in respect of several hybrid bills in their passage through parliament.

When on the CPA Board previously, I forged strong links with the International Rights of Way Association, which I have maintained since leaving the board. I am always keen to learn about the ways other jurisdictions approach the land assembly process. It benefits us to understand what others do well (and also benefit from the lessons learned where things have not gone to plan). Having an international perspective at a time when domestic law is under such scrutiny, and providing concrete examples of best practice will be something that I hope the Association, and the wider community, can benefit from.

**Caroline Daly,
Francis Taylor Building**



I am a barrister at Francis Taylor Building, specialising in planning, compulsory purchase and compensation work. I have been a member of the CPA Board since 2020 and would be grateful for your support so that I can represent the membership for a further two years.

Before becoming a Board member, I was a member of the CPA Future committee, acting as its chair in 2019/2020.

I am currently the Honorary Secretary of the CPA and would wish to continue in that role if I am re-elected.

During my time on the Board, I have also been the co-chair of the CPA's Diversity and Inclusion Working Group. The Working Group has been taking a range of steps to promote and encourage a more diverse Board and membership, as well as seeking to encourage new recruits to CPO-related professions. In my view, there is plenty more that the CPA can do in this area and my wish would be to continue in this role if I am re-elected.

Through re-election to the Board, I wish to ensure that the interests of the Bar, and the wider legal profession, are well represented.

**Tom Aslin,
Moore Kingston Smith LLP**



I am a Chartered Accountant, and a partner in and head of the forensic accounting team at the accountancy firm Moore Kingston Smith.

I qualified with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales (ICAEW) in 2002, since which time I have specialised in forensic accounting. Much of my work involves business/share valuations and the quantification of loss of profits, in a wide range of contentious settings, including in particular disturbance claims by businesses following the compulsory acquisition of their premises.

I have extensive experience of acting for both claimants and acquiring authorities, in cases where the disturbance compensation being claimed has ranged from a few tens of thousands of pounds to £100m+. I have given evidence in the Lands Tribunal, as well as in the High Court, Family Court and Crown Court on non-CPO matters. In addition to being a Fellow of the ICAEW, I am also a full member of the Academy of Experts and the Expert Witness Institute.

As a multi-disciplinary organisation, I believe that the Board of the CPA should have representation from all of the professions which make up its membership. As an accountant I am able to bring a perspective which will be different to its members from the legal and property professions.

I have experience of Board membership and governance at a senior level in my role as a department head and equity partner at Moore Kingston Smith, from my position as a committee member of the Forensic Special Interest Group at the ICAEW, and my experience as a school governor and head of the finance committee at my local school.

I have served for two years on the CPA board, in addition to which I am also the honorary treasurer, and I am keen to continue contributing to this effective and essential organisation.

**Debbie Reynolds,
TLT LLP**



I am a solicitor, Partner and Head of Compulsory Purchase in the Future Energy, Planning & Environment Team at TLT LLP.

I have been working in compulsory purchase for the last 17 years, with my primary area of specialism being CPO promotion, particularly for local authorities. This has included a number of regeneration and road projects involving the use of compulsory purchase powers, including Warrington Time Square town centre regeneration, Middlewich Eastern Bypass, Warrington Centre Park Link and the Oxfordshire Access to Didcot scheme, currently being considered by the Secretaries of State for Transport and MHCLG.

My work involves an active compensation caseload, including having acted for Castlefield Property Ltd in the notable Cheshire Lounge case, advising Stockport MBC in relation to volume compensation and Part 1 claims arising as a result of the A6 Manchester Airport Relief Road project, and advising claimants impacted by Crossrail and HS2.

I am an active and longstanding member of the CPA, having spoken at the CPA Conference in 2023 and being a regular panellist in the 'Talking Heads' series. I devised and delivered a statutory blight training session for members, and most recently, I have chaired the sub-working group on CPO Procedural Reform, working closely with the Law Commission.

Having not stood for election to the CPA Board previously, I now understand where my experience can be utilised to support the CPA's ambitions and aims. I believe that one of the barriers to entry into the CPO profession, and also one of the impediments to the use of powers, is the fear of the complexity of the area and the lack of education in relation to CPO and compensation within the wider property sector. As a result, I am passionate about delivering training on CPO and compensation matters, particularly to public sector bodies, with an ambition to improve accessibility and understanding of all elements of CPO, from strategic inception of a scheme, through to land referencing, land assembly, funding and, ultimately, scheme implementation and compensation.

This education work is also key to bringing more diversity into the profession and I am keen to champion and further the work being undertaken by the CPA in relation to social mobility, as well as promoting the work being done in the regions, to increase presence and uptake. I feel that my own experiences and geographic location in the North West are valuable, and I would welcome the opportunity to be elected as a Director of the CPA Board to take an active role in contributing to and promoting the future activities of the CPA.

**Rahil Haq,
BDB Pitmans LLP**



I am a solicitor in the Planning, Infrastructure and Public Law team at BDB Pitmans. I am a member of the CPA Future board.

I work on a wide range of infrastructure projects involving compulsory purchase. This includes work on Development Consent Orders, Compulsory Purchase Orders and Transport and Works Act Orders. I have been involved with all elements of the compulsory purchase process, from scheme inception and initial negotiations to implementation and dealing with compensation claims.

As part of my work, I have spent a lot of time speaking with those working within the compulsory purchase sector. I act for both acquiring authorities and individual landowners. I work closely with agents, landowners, developers, and local authorities. I understand the balance that must be struck between the need for development and the rights of landowners. Acting for promoters, I have also worked closely with valuation experts, land referencers, and environmental specialists who often help shape the use of compulsory powers from behind the scenes. I would like to use this knowledge to help the CPA membership and ensure all those involved in CPOs are represented.

I am running to be on the CPA Board because I am passionate about this industry and shaping its future. It is essential that the CPA continues to lead the way as a voice for CPA reform, driving policy reforms that make the law clearer and more certain for members and the people they represent. It is also essential that the CPA Board effectively communicate with and reflect the views of its membership. I am eager to bring a fresh perspective to the board, representing a new generation of compulsory purchase professionals. I hope that by standing, I can encourage others to become more involved with the CPA and the compulsory purchase industry.

**Liz Paraskeva,
Burgess Salmon LLP**



I am a Senior Associate at Burgess Salmon and have been working in compulsory purchase for twenty years, acting predominantly for acquiring authorities on large-scale development schemes around the country, including on housing, highways, energy and transport projects, as well acting on behalf of objectors. This has included acting for LB Enfield on the Meridian Water CPO for strategic infrastructure works to facilitate a £6billion 25-year regeneration project, Nemo Link Limited for its cross-channel interconnector energy project, plus numerous Estate Regeneration and Housing schemes. I have also advised on the promotion and implementation of compulsory acquisition powers on a number of DCOs, including for National Highways and National Grid, and have successfully resolved compensation claims, including by reference to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).

I am keen to join the Board in order to represent the voice of local authorities, particularly as I am mindful of the many practical limitations they face, having worked in local government for a number of years. I am a member of the working group for acquiring authorities, and feel that I can add value to the Board and its members by providing a valuable insight and representation. Furthermore, I wish to play an active role and contribute to our Association's continued success, particularly in respect of improving mentoring and training, plus to promote reform, diversity, equality and inclusion.

I am passionate about CPO and the transformation it can make to places and lives and am keen to offer my expertise and support to the Board. I would be grateful for your support in allowing me to continue contributing to our Association's success on your behalf, including in supporting young professionals into careers in the world of compulsory purchase and the initiatives of women in CPO.