

CPA Board Elections 2025/26

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 election statements from the various candidates.

Nikita Sellers, Town Legal LLP



I am a Senior Associate at Town Legal, a specialist planning and compulsory purchase law firm. I have specialised in CPO and have particular expertise in managing contested land compensation disputes – all of which (so far!) have resulted in successful settlements. I primarily act for landowners and occupiers affected by compulsory purchase, including Curzon Park Limited in their ongoing claim against HS2.

I have been an active CPA member for six years and am now seeking to contribute at Board level. I was part of the working group that developed the revised Land Compensation Claims Protocol, published in 2024, and I spoke about this at the National Conference. I've also presented at numerous other CPA events on proposed reforms to the CPO – if you've attended a "Talking Heads" or "Upskilling" session, you may have seen me there.

I'm passionate about making things happen. I helped launch Town Legal's podcast "Planning Law (With Chickens)" and CPO blog "Compulsory Reading". If elected, I would bring that same creativity and drive to the CPA - championing fresh initiatives that raise our profile and engage members.

Above all, I care deeply about promoting best practice and ensuring that claims are resolved fairly and efficiently. That's what I try to do for clients every day and I would be honoured to support the CPA's ongoing efforts in this area; as well as contribute thought leadership on legal and policy reform.

Thank you for considering my nomination and I'd be grateful for your vote!

Rob Quaile, Ardent



I am a chartered surveyor and registered valuer and a Director of Regeneration and Development at Ardent, specialising in land assembly, compulsory purchase, valuation, and development consultancy. However, I began my career as a solicitor in real estate and dispute resolution. With qualifications as a surveyor and a solicitor, I believe I can offer a well-rounded legal and surveying perspective on the industry.

My passion lies in promoting and executing regeneration and infrastructure projects. I've worked on diverse projects, from town centre and estate regeneration to major infrastructure expansions like Heathrow 3rd runway, HS2, and Silvertown Tunnel. I also work on claimant cases and compensation expert witness work.

I prioritise transparent and fair practices, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative efforts for transformative change. As a Mental Health First Aider, I'm committed to mental well-being and empathetic practice. I advocate for training and development, for both professionals and those interested in the field. I therefore run a training academy at Ardent for professional qualifications and I have presented at a number of CPA events, including leading a CPA Upskilling session, presenting at a number of Talking Heads events and at the CPO Convention. Your vote will enable me to represent and support these principles, promoting reform, good practice, and a positive sector image.

Juan Lopez, 39 Essex Chambers



I am a practising infrastructure and planning barrister of around 20 years, hopefully known to many of you, based at 39 Essex Chambers. I commonly represent high profile infrastructure bodies and developers across various jurisdictions, including on compulsory purchase and compensation matters. Transportation, energy, waste/minerals schemes (...and BNG) so happen to be occupying my time presently but I generally work across the full spectrum of development matters. Over recent years I have found that my work and more so, my interests, are integrating increasingly with compulsory purchase and compensation issues and development, some involving the Lands Chamber references but also other tribunals, which I believe have offered me a helpful and wider perspective on best and efficient tribunal practices, and opportunities for achieving welcome improvement and reform.

I am keen to seek appointment as Board Member, not having previously served the CPA, in order to follow-up on all of the solid achievements delivered by the CPA to date, not least with the shaping and implementation of seemingly endless reform, by offering a perspective from a practitioner seasoned in the law of compulsory practice but who also has good experience of a wider practice, with particular commercial and landowner implications (which still flag many disadvantages, disincentives and much delay) as well as horizon topics such as the growing significance of ADR for all practitioners.

And enough about me.

Sam Dobney, Bruton Knowles



As Head of Utilities & Infrastructure for the South East, and Technical Lead for Compensation within the National Utilities & Infrastructure team at Bruton Knowles, I am responsible for advising on the delivery of nationally significant infrastructure projects across a wide range of sectors.

My career began in East London during the post-Olympic regeneration period, where I worked on estate and town centre renewal schemes alongside major infrastructure projects. This early exposure to high-profile, complex cases enabled me to build a strong technical foundation and gain a lasting appreciation for the profound impact that compulsory purchase can have on individuals and communities. A key lesson that has stayed with me since that time is the importance of approaching our work with compassion and empathy. In a process-driven environment, it can be all too easy to lose sight of the personal realities faced by those affected. I firmly believe that by prioritising meaningful engagement, demonstrating genuine empathy, and fostering collaborative relationships, we can deliver infrastructure that not only meets strategic objectives but also respects and supports the people and communities it impacts.

Over the past decade, I have gained extensive insight into the industry whilst leading land assembly and compensation strategies for nationally significant infrastructure projects across sectors including regeneration, renewables, rail, housing, and digital infrastructure.

Recently, I have been working in close partnership with National Grid to secure development consent for the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement Scheme, a key component of the Great Grid Upgrade. This nationally significant project is essential to enabling the UK's transition to a low-carbon energy network, supporting connections from Sizewell and future offshore renewable generation. I also continue to advise on the Hinkley Connection Project and support Network Rail on the Cambridge South Station development. In addition, I act for range of local authorities across the South, East, and Midlands, providing strategic advice as they progress major infrastructure improvements across their regions.



The CPA has been a consistent source of professional support and engagement throughout my career, and I have greatly valued the opportunities I've had to contribute to its work. Having seen firsthand the vital role the Association plays in shaping best practice and supporting professionals across the industry, I am eager to give back in a more formal capacity. If elected to the CPA Board, I would be honoured to support its continued leadership in driving policy and legal reform, promoting excellence in practice, and advancing key initiatives around Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion. I am also particularly passionate about supporting mental health and wellbeing across the profession and would welcome the opportunity to contribute to this important area of work.

Samantha McMahon, Keith Murray Consultants



I have been working in compulsory purchase for over 15 years. I started my career at Transport for London in 2007; working on all property aspects required in the promotion and delivery of major transport schemes; such as Victoria Station Upgrade, Crossrail and Barking Riverside Extension. In 2018 I joined Keith Murray Consultants to have both the opportunity to work with my father, but also to work with those affected by compulsory purchase, and truly understand the impacts they face as a result of both the consenting process, and subsequently the implementation of powers.

Having worked for many years advising acquiring authorities I'm now able to utilise this experience in my career to foresee issues that may arise for those affected by compulsory purchase, and advise clients on how to proactively manage these impacts to minimise the effect on them. Conversely, I am also able to use my experience of acting for claimants to advise acquiring authorities of the importance of engagement; to seek to improve relationships between the parties, reduce mental health impacts that can arise during the CPO process, and also mitigate costs.

I was elected to the CPA board in 2023 and have helped to set up the Acquiring Authorities working group which seeks to ensure acquiring authorities have their needs represented by the CPA, and also looks to share knowledge between acquiring authorities to develop ways of working that promote best practise to ensure improved relationships between those promoting the schemes that utilise compulsory purchase, and also those whose land is affected by the proposals. I am now seeking support to continue to utilise my experience to contribute to the CPA's work with legislative reforms and good practise within the compulsory purchase community. I welcome the opportunity to be elected and am grateful to all that feel able to support my application to become a member of the CPA board.

James Boddington, Fisher German



I am a Chartered Surveyor and Associate Partner at Fisher German, where I lead the firm's Compulsory Purchase & Compensation service line. Originally qualifying as a rural practice surveyor, I quickly developed a keen interest in the complexities of land acquisition and rights negotiation for infrastructure delivery — now the principal focus of my professional practice. As many members will no doubt agree, the phrases "every day is a school day" and "no two days are the same" couldn't be more true in our industry — making it an exciting space to work in, while also highlighting the important role of the CPA in supporting its members in promoting best practice, education, debate, reform, collaboration and raising standards.

My experience spans acting for both acquiring authorities and claimants, including local and national government bodies, private landowners, and developers. I've advised on a wide range of schemes, including highways, railways, flood defences, and district heating projects. Most recently, I supported North Somerset Council on the Banwell Bypass, providing strategic



advice from early scheme design through to public inquiry and statutory processes, while leading a team negotiating land and rights acquisitions.

I also represent numerous landowners affected by HS2 and have experience in both Part 1 and Section 10 claims on highway schemes. My dual perspective — representing both acquiring authorities and claimants — allows me to bring balanced insight and practical understanding of the challenges that come with compulsory purchase. This perspective aligns with the CPA's impartial status and its objective of working for the benefit of the public — an approach I will continue to advocate for, if elected.

Within the CPA, I've contributed to the LURA Working Group, presenting at the 2024 Annual Conference, and previously served on the Professional Fees Working Group. I am also a Fellow of the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV) and recently helped establish the CAAV's Claimant Professional Costs for Infrastructure/Utility Projects Working Group.

If elected to the CPA Board, I would aim to strengthen both rural practice and surveying representation, foster collaboration between professional bodies, and support the Association's mission to promote best practice, influence policy and represent the profession.

Anastasia Antoni, Burges Salmon LLP



I am an Associate in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase team at Burges Salmon, and I would like to put my name forward for a position on the CPA Board.

By way of background I trained in local government in London working for number of local authorities and spent my first two years post qualification in-house at a London Borough working solely on large CPO estate regeneration schemes and compensation cases where I witnessed the following challenges (which I still encounter in my practice today) all of which I am particularly passionate about and would want to focus on if I were elected to the Board:

- the lack of representation and access to training for acquiring authorities (particularly local government);
- the lack of diversity and inclusion and representation in the industry (for both practitioners and affected parties);
- the drastic need to modernise the CPO process and the law;
- the mental health effects and lack of training and support for both affected parties and practitioners; and
- the difficulties of starting as a junior in the industry and barriers to entry and consequently the potential to utilize CPAF to effect change and provide outreach.

Since joining Burges Salmon I have been lucky enough to have had the opportunity to work alongside and opposite some of the leading professionals in the industry on a number of CPO schemes and compensation cases (both inside and outside of the Upper Tribunal) as well as advising on compulsory acquisition in relation to DCOs in the energy sector. My simultaneous membership of the CPA (encouraged by my firm) has given me access to knowledge (through training events, the Upskilling Programme, and Talking Heads), the opportunity to participate in networking events, as well as be involved in all the important work and initiatives being undertaken by CPAF and the working groups I am part of – all of which have undoubtedly not only made me a better CPO lawyer but more importantly has confirmed to me the power the CPA has to influence the future of the industry.

I am an active member of the working groups for diversity and inclusion and charities, some of my highlights have been to help prepare the slides for last year's IRWA presentation on D&I, and organise as well as design the leaflet for



the first CPA silent auction at this year's CPA dinner for Crisis homelessness charity. I am a keen member of the CPAF Committee and since joining the Committee last year I have both organised and attended events, promoted various initiatives, encouraged more socials and in person Committee meetings and spoken on a panel for a CPAF event in Scotland. I am also an active member of the Women in CPO initiative and have hosted and chaired a regional panel event in Bristol last autumn and this June organised and co-chaired a panel event in collaboration with CPAF where we invited Scottish Government to present their work on CPO Reform in Scotland.

I have a lot to be grateful to the CPA for in my career so far and I would really appreciate the opportunity to be in a position to give back and help the industry reach its potential to deliver the critical housing, services and infrastructure this country so desperately needs whilst becoming a more representative and welcoming, diverse and inclusive, collaborative and considerate place for affected parties and practitioners alike. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Megan Hembrow, Tideway



Since January 2018 I have held the role of Senior Manager, Property on the Thames Tideway Tunnel. Prior to relocating from Australia to the UK, I advised claimants and completed independent expert determinations of compensation in compulsory acquisition matters on behalf of the NSW Valuer General. I have been a Registered Valuer since 2012 and have a Bachelor's Degree in Property Economics and Development, a Masters of Business Administration specialising in International Business (with Distinction) and a Diploma in Project Management. I am a current Board Member of the CPA.

I feel that my diverse experience provides me with a unique perspective and the ability to effect positive change.

Having recently submitted a response to the Law Commissions review of compulsory purchase legislation (available on LinkedIn), I believe more can be done to achieve best practice in our industry.

Should I be re-elected to the Board, I would seek to lead the Acquiring Authority Working Group. This is where we can affect change and identify and promote best practice at an industry level. My aims would be to;

- Improve the process and experience for individuals who are faced with the threat of compulsory purchase
- Promote greater sharing of lessons learnt between Acquiring Authorities
- Seek to have claims settled in a more transactional and timely manner.

These industry changes are timely and pertinent in the wider context of the government's ambition to deliver infrastructure at scale and attract private investment.

Felicity Wimbush, Walker Morris LLP



I am a Senior Associate solicitor at Walker Morris LLP with 7 years post qualified experience specialising in planning and infrastructure consents and development planning. To date, my practice has been focused on promoting Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO's) for Local Authorities including for highways schemes, housing regeneration and for planning purposes and advising on the compulsory acquisition element of Development Consent Orders (DCO's).

My work has covered the full CPO life cycle including; the initial strategy of a project and advice on the planning permissions required, the making and confirmation of a CPO, the vesting of the land and rights compulsorily acquired (through serving General Vesting Declarations and related notices or the Notice to Treat and Enter), compensation claims and references to the Upper

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Tribunal (Land Chamber) and the delivery of the scheme on the ground. Notable work includes:

- The dualling of the A1237 York Outer Ring Road (A19 Little Hopgrove) on behalf of York City Council (currently unmade)
- The A614/A6097 Improvement Scheme on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council (CPO made and confirmed)
- Acting for Northern Powergrid to secure their access rights and protect their apparatus from being adversely affected by or acquired under DCOs and CPOs.
- Representing individual landowners and businesses on compensation claims made to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) following the compulsory purchase of land under the Metropolitan Borough of Stockport (Hazel Grove) (A6) to Manchester Airport A555 Classified Road Compulsory Purchase Order and HS2.

My experience in CPO work has given me a detailed understanding of the legal and practical challenges facing a wide range of parties involved in the CPO process including, Acquiring Authorities, applicants / developers, affected landowners and statutory undertakers. It has also involved understanding specific technical elements such as mines and mineral rights, the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, demolition notices to remove the right to buy in a social housing and CPO context, acquiring special category land and the acquisition of statutory undertaker's land.

The Compulsory Purchase Association ('CPA') is the leading forum for technical updates, debate and knowledge sharing and I have been an active member of the CPA for several years, particularly regionally across the Northwest. I have enjoyed the legal expertise, updates and knowledge sharing aspect of the CPA and the network with a range of technical experts involved in this work stream. By being on the Management Board, I am keen to develop and further the collaboration between the numerous disciplines involved in CPO / DCO work regionally and nationally, encourage strategic thinking, knowledge sharing and involvement and participation from junior professionals and / or those who are relatively new to this area of work and build a friendly support network for all involved.

I am also an advocate for and an active member of Women in Law and Women in Planning and I mentor law students at Lancaster University. I strive to encourage, support and educate all ages, genders and professions.

Christina Gavin,



Christina is the Head of the Transport Sector at the VOA, leading a nationwide team specialising in all aspects of compulsory purchase and compensation. Christina's career has been rooted in the public sector, having worked for the VOA for over 13 years during which time she has held various roles relating to compulsory purchase work including:

- Complex Caseworker
- Contract Manager for HS2
- Compulsory Purchase Guidance Specialist
- Contract Manager for National Highways

In addition to leading a nationwide team, Christina continues to maintain an active caseload, working on various projects including HS2 Phase One, A57 Link Roads Scheme, A585 Windy Harbour to Skippool and the M60 Simister Island improvement scheme.

Christina has worked with the RICS to develop a case study for their Compulsory Purchase and Compensation learning module and is heavily involved in training the next generation of surveyors within the VOA. She takes an active role in mentoring and working with candidates as they prepare to sit their APCs. She presented to the CPA Conference in 2024 on the topic of



improving diversity and inclusion within the surveying profession, a subject which is she is extremely passionate about.

Christina champions the aims and objectives of the Compulsory Purchase Association throughout her day-to-day work. She is a strong advocate for ensuring landowners are well supported by the professionals with whom they engage throughout the process to ensure that fair compensation is payable as quickly as possible.

If elected to the Board, Christina would be able to further the CPA's objectives by offering insights from her work with acquiring authorities. She would continue to advocate for high standards and better collaboration across the various disciplines involved in the process with the ultimate aim of improving the experience for affected parties.

Jonathan Smith,Dalcour Maclaren



My name is Jonathan Smith , I am a member of the Royal Institution of Charted Surveyors and a Fellow of the Association of Agricultural Valuers and past chairperson and examiner of my local valuers association.

I qualified as a rural practice surveyor initially focussing on the broader associated professional work but soon found a keen interest in compulsory purchase and compensation. Whilst I come from a rural background, and the majority of my work has been in the rural sector I have experience of many different asset types.

I have now worked in the area of Compulsory Purchase and compensation for over 20 years, acting on behalf of both developers and acquiring authorities. My experience has ranged from working on transportation projects including East West Rail and HS2 to working on energy infrastructure including The Hinkley C connection project and Sizewell C nuclear power station.

I have supported clients in the consenting process of major projects including giving evidence at Public Inquiry and Development Consent Order(DCO) hearings.

I have worked for Dalcour Maclaren (DM) since 2020. Founded in 2003, DM has seen substantial growth with now over 600 employees working in the Utilities and Infrastructure sector.

Throughout my career, I have very much enjoyed working as part of a wider team collaborating with other delivery partners including lawyers and planners to deliver infrastructure.

Role as CPA Board member:

As part of my role as a CPA board member, I will be very interested to support and understand how we are going to attract future talent into the association and sector, to help deliver the dramatic scale of infrastructure that will be required over the next 10 years and beyond.

As part of this, I am also keen to contribute in relation to avoiding conflict and stress for those working within the industry, as well as helping to reduce the impact on individuals who are directly affected by schemes . I am particularly concerned about potential mental health impacts and the implications of members leaving the industry /sector.

Outside work:

I live in the countryside near Cheltenham in Gloucestershire and enjoy getting out in the countryside including clay shooting with my son and walking my dog Trubble, but most of all, I enjoy having a pint in a decent pub with friends -discussing the details of the Point Gourde case!

Hugh Flanagan, Francis Taylor Building



I am a barrister at Francis Taylor Building and I have been practising since 2009 in compulsory purchase and compensation law and related fields. It would be an honour to serve as a Board Member of the CPA.

I know the work of the CPA well, having attended many of its events and dinners. Earlier this year I chaired the CPA's Annual Law Reform Lecture 2025 on the Law Commission's proposals to reform the law of compulsory purchase and compensation. In my view the CPA has an enormously important role to play in bringing together the knowledge and expertise of those professionals who work in the field, in making their voices heard, and in promoting best practice. If elected as a Board Member I would aim to make sure that the CPA continues to fulfil those roles as effectively as possible.

Given that my primary expertise is legal, I would aim to contribute particularly in that respect, including by assisting in responding to Government consultations and participating in seminars and training, but I am also willing to get stuck in wherever required. This is a particularly important time for the CPA in light of the proposed reform of compulsory purchase and compensation and also because of its prominence on the political agenda as a tool to facilitate development and economic growth. I would aim to assist the CPA with both the challenges and opportunities that this context presents.

My experience of compulsory purchase and compensation work is broad and deep. I have worked on a significant number of major projects involving compulsory purchase and compensation over the last 15 years or so, including Compulsory Purchase Order and Transport and Works Act Order inquiries into the redevelopment of London City Airport, the Oxfordshire HIF1 road scheme, the redevelopment of Oxford Station, the Ferrier Estate in Kidbrooke, and various other road schemes, along with compulsory acquisition issues arising in various Development Consent Order applications (including recently Sizewell C, the East Anglia One North and Two and Outer Dowsing offshore wind farms, and Stonestreet Green Solar). I am an editor of the Encyclopedia of Compulsory Purchase and Compensation. Finally, I am a member of the Attorney General's 'A' Panel of Counsel, in which capacity I act for the Government in cases within my expertise, including relating to compulsory purchase and compensation.

James Dewey, Gateley Hamer



I am a chartered surveyor who has a strong belief that everyone is entitled to the highest standard of advice from all compulsory purchase professionals, whether acting for an acquiring authority, development partner or claimant.

A bit about me:

I started my career in compulsory purchase over 25 years ago when I first worked for Leeds City Council. Since then, I have developed my skills and knowledge acting for acquiring authorities, developers and impacted landowners. I currently head up the land assembly and compensation team at Gateley Hamer, spending half my time acting for acquiring authorities and the other half acting for claimants. I have also appeared as an Expert Witness in the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) and I am on the RICS ADR Panel for Compulsory Purchase.

What do I hope to achieve if successfully appointed?:

1. Ensure anyone affected by compulsory purchase has access to experienced professionals.

One principal goal would be to work towards ensuring everyone involved in the compulsory purchase process – whether a claimant, acquiring authority or development partner – has access to professionals with the right skill sets and experience to provide the best possible advice. Alongside – and in support of – this goal would be a focus on ensuring that acquiring authorities recognise



the importance of this when considering not only their own appointments but also those appointed to assist landowners impacted by compulsory acquisition.

I believe this will support the excellent work already undertaken by the CPA in respect of mental health and support for those impacted by CPOs.

2. Develop the future talent the industry needs.

I am concerned about the low number of new professionals coming into the industry. We need to make sure we protect the future and continue to grow and develop the skills of those that do decide to work in this area.

The CPA does an excellent job of offering training, with many members giving up time to support this. In addition to this, I feel the CPA could also be an effective marketing vehicle to entice more people into the industry, not only at a junior level but also those who may be looking for a change in career. I would, therefore, want to work with the CPA to see how the CPA can be utilised to help deliver growth amongst experienced practitioners as well.

3. Facilitate knowledge sharing across regimes

As well as advising on traditional CPOs, I also advise numerous clients in respect of the promotion of compulsory acquisition powers through the DCO regime. To this end, I am also a member of NIPA and, if elected, I would like to see the CPA and NIPA work more closely together to consider how best practice and lessons learnt from within both regimes could be shared to mutual benefit.

I hope this summary demonstrates my sincere interest and commitment to supporting CPA members; advocating for the profession to the benefit of practitioners and stakeholders alike; and facilitating further development and change within the industry.

Toni Weston,Gowling WLG (UK) LLP



I am a solicitor and partner in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Team at Gowling WLG with over 20 years' experience of advising on all aspects of the compulsory purchase process.

I am a longstanding member of the CPA and a strong supporter of its aims and objectives, and was delighted to be elected to the Board in 2023. I am particularly interested in the reform of the compulsory purchase process and the Compensation Code and, as a Board member, have actively participated in reform working groups to coordinate the CPA's response to various reform proposals. I am also committed to promoting the CPA including by creating opportunities for engagement and knowledge sharing amongst the CPA membership, including by promoting the implementation of a mentoring scheme and the reintroduction of regional events.

If appointed to the Board, I would hope to continue to take an active part in delivering the CPA's objectives, particularly that of promoting the best practice in all aspects of compulsory purchase. My time spent advising both acquiring authorities and claimants means that I am well placed to do this, having indepth experience of some of the key issues and challenges facing those engaged in or affected by the compulsory purchase process. The projects I have advised on include the CPO for the regeneration of the 900 acre former Redcar Steelworks site; the CPO for the regeneration of the former Southall Gasworks site; the CPO for the Bicester town centre scheme; DCOs for National Highways for the A585 Windy Harbour, M54 to M6 link road and M60 Simister Island schemes; implementation of CPO powers on behalf of National Highways 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.

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