

## Industry Forum October Newsletter



### Change is in the air, again!

In September, we spent a wonderful evening celebrating 30 years of the Industry Forum at a reception in the Terrace Pavilion of the House of Commons. Thanks to our guest speakers on the night, Bill Esterson MP, Shadow Transport Minister, our parliamentary host; James Johns, Head of Public Affairs at Workday the sponsor of the reception; and Sarah Howard MBE, Chair of the British Chambers of Commerce.

Thanks, too, to all our members, friends and past speakers who joined us or sent greetings. We were delighted that Sarah & Gordon Brown who helped set up the Industry Forum, sent their good wishes from New York, where they were at the UN General Assembly meeting on climate change.

It is impossible not to recognise some similarities between 2023 and 1993. Then, as now, the country faced an uncertain economic outlook with no clear plans and a divided administration led by an ex-banker prime minister. Thus, it is clear that the work of the Industry Forum, in bringing policy-makers and business together in constructive dialogue, is still not yet done!

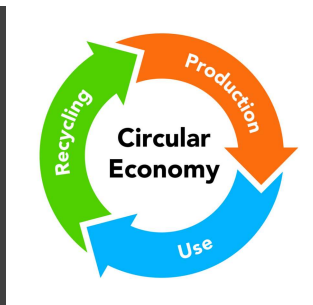


Rüdiger Bohn, Minister, Deputy Head of Mission at the London German Embassy, Rod Dowler, Co-founder and Executive Chair, Industry Forum, Bill Esterson MP, Shadow Transport Minister, Sarah Howard MBE, Chair of the British Chambers of Commerce, James Johns, Head of Public Affairs, Workday, Jo Wyer, Director, Events and Administration, Industry Forum



Our next events will be:

*Delivering a circular economy*



**26 October 2023**

***Speakers:***

***Kerry McCarthy MP, Shadow Minister for Climate Change***

***Jacob Hayler, Executive Director, Environmental Services Association***

***Thomas Birk, Vice President/Managing Director, BASF UK & Ireland***

***Scott White, Founder & Executive Director, Strategic Initiatives, Pragmatic Semiconductor***

For many practical and intuitive reasons, the goal of a circular economy is highly attractive, but it is hard to deliver. Such an aim needs to be achieved in steps and each step depends on a range of technologies as well as a suitable policy and regulatory framework, and also initial investment. To help clarify this process, this workshop will bring together experts from the chemical sector, the waste disposal sector and the semiconductor sector to discuss an integrated approach to [some] recycling, the actions needed and the potential benefits.

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***Improving government performance in procurement and value for money***



***Date TBC***

***Speaker:***

***Dame Meg Hillier MP, Chair of the Public Accounts Committee***

The government, and particularly the Treasury, prioritises budgetary control but too often, once initial contracts have been awarded, costs escalate without adequate cost or quality control. Whatever the cause, it is clear that improving government

performance on procurement, and ensuring suppliers deliver good value for money, would bring big benefits. Meg Hillier MP, Chair of the Public Accounts Select Committee, who has extensive experience of overseeing public expenditure, will lead a discussion on how government procurement could be improved to provide better value for money and contract control.

Other meetings, currently in planning include:

- Policy priorities for the water sector
- Fallout from the HS2 decision
- Improving our digital infrastructure would be a win/win for businesses and the economy
- Reforming UK corporate governance is key to invigorating the UK economy
- Funding radical change
- Implications of the changing nature of work for offices, transport, and pensions
- Making the UK a science superpower
- Building a new positive relationship with Europe

These are all major topics which we hope to cover in some depth at meetings and policy workshops. We are also keen to talk to members interested in working with us to produce policy action reports. Please let us know if you would like to sponsor and work with us on these or other topics.

In addition to members, we invite diplomats, academics, union representatives, and business guests to participate in our meetings.

Our most recent Industry Forum meetings have focused on Labour policies for housing and defence procurement.

### ***Adjusting to new defence procurement priorities***



***14 June 2023***

***Speaker: Chris Evans MP, Shadow Minister for Defence Procurement***

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has completely changed the European defence landscape, and UK defence priorities. Providing weapons and munitions to Ukraine and strengthening UK capability in the European theatre will require budget



increases and the increased speed and volume of new defence equipment availability. This means that defence equipment manufacturers will need to rapidly increase capacity to supply to Ukraine and countries who wish to increase stocks and modernise equipment. This, in turn, will put pressure on the procurement capabilities of the Ministry of Defence to make good value purchases of reliable equipment with appropriate interoperability and maintenance characteristics. Shadow Minister for Defence Procurement, Chris Evans MP led this Industry Forum roundtable on 'Adjusting to new defence procurement priorities.'

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### ***Real solutions to UK housing problems***



***12 June 2023***

#### ***Speaker: Matthew Pennycook MP, Shadow Minister for Housing and Planning***

As the government focuses on its five core missions, it is clear that long-term problems remain in the provision of adequate housing in the UK. For example: First time buyers find it hard to afford housing, particularly in the south east, rental costs and tenancy terms make long-term family renting difficult, and the provision of social housing has declined, but not the need. Together, these cause serious inequality and also impact UK economic performance. Matthew Pennycook MP, Shadow Minister for Housing and Planning, led an Industry Forum roundtable on 'Real solutions to UK housing problems'.

### ***New members welcome***

The Industry Forum was established in 1993, and has held over 500 meetings with top policy-makers since then. It is one of the most experienced, and well-networked, business policy think tanks in the UK. If you're not already a member, and would like to help shape our agenda, host events, and receive invitations to all meetings, get in touch by email at [info@industry-forum.org](mailto:info@industry-forum.org), or give us a call to find out more on 0207 434 0090.



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