



Industry Forum September Newsletter

Celebrating 30 Challenging Years

The Industry Forum was set up in 1993 for businesses to talk to progressive politicians without funding a political party. The founding business people were led by the late Gerald Frankel, a successful businessman, who saw clearly that making innovations in business is much like making changes in government. For success, both require vision, investment, consistency and cooperation. Assuming this, it was a natural to set up a forum where politicians could talk freely to businesses about practical ways to tackle the many problems facing business and the economy as a whole.

The four years preceding the New Labour victory of 1997 were hectic and energising. They involved many meetings throughout the country, and included some of the infamous City meetings in the 'prawn cocktail offensive'. When Labour came to power, some of the ideas discussed at Industry Forum meetings were reflected in new legislation. There was a welcome emphasis on science and R&D investment, bridging the so-called investment gap, pensions reform, education and training; the health service also received priority treatment.

None of the Industry Forum founders thought that it would be needed after the 1997 election, but our members thought otherwise. They have supported the Industry Forum through a tumultuous period spanning the 9/11 attack on the twin towers, the dotcom crash, the 2008 banking crisis, austerity, Brexit, and Covid 19. In its current form, the Industry Forum invites progressive politicians from all political parties to give their views, and does not seek to represent the viewpoint of individual members. It has consistently focussed on the need for policies favouring a close relationship with the EU, clear and ambitious industry and trade strategies, strong public services, rapid action on climate change, and improvements to corporate governance in the private and public sectors.

Now, with a political and economic landscape not unlike that of the 90's, we are celebrating the wonderful events and speakers we have had at over 500 meetings since 1993. Our House of Commons 30th anniversary reception will take place on 19th September to allow us thank members, speakers and friends of the Industry Forum. We hope some of the

young MPs and prospective MPs who will steer the future of the country in the next 30 years will also join us.

Speakers will be introduced by Industry Forum Executive Chair, Rod Dowler and will include the parliamentary reception host, Bill Esterson MP, the Labour Shadow Business Minister; James Johns, a long-term friend of the Industry Forum, and Head of Corporate Affairs for the reception sponsor, Workday, a leading cloud based enterprise software provider; and Sarah Howard MBE, Chair of the leading voice for UK Business, the British Chambers of Commerce.

Our next three events are as follows:

Getting serious about saving energy in housing



12 September 2023

Speaker: Bill Esterson MP, Shadow Business and Industrial Strategy Minister

The UK has some 28 million homes most of which are notoriously energy inefficient. This means that we waste money on increasingly expensive fossil fuels and add to carbon emissions unnecessarily. While we gradually transition to renewable energy, there is, thus, an urgent need to make all our homes, not just new-build homes, more energy efficient. This roundtable will focus on how policy measures can help make our legacy housing stock more efficient. It will be led by Bill Esterson MP, Shadow Business and Industrial Strategy Minister and will include industry experts on design, retrofitting, insulation, and new materials.

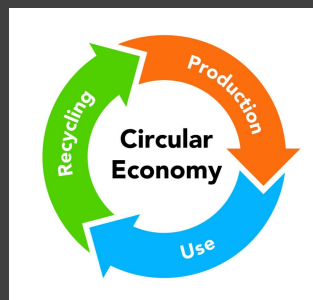
Industry Forum 30th Anniversary Reception



19 September 2023

To celebrate our 30th Anniversary we are holding an evening reception at the House of Commons hosted by Bill Esterson MP, Shadow Minister for Business and Industry, and sponsored by Workday. The Industry Forum was founded in 1993 and, ever since, has been bringing together leading progressive policy-makers with people from business, diplomacy, academia, and the unions. With the UK now facing unprecedented challenges, there has never been a greater need for business and government to work together, cooperatively, to provide the prosperity on which society depends.

Delivering a circular economy



26 October 2023

Speakers:

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
Other speaker: TBC

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.

Other meetings, currently in planning include:

- Policy priorities for the water sector
- Improving government performance on procurement and value for money
- Key issues for UK transport
- Improving our digital infrastructure would be a win/win for businesses and the economy
- Reforming UK corporate governance
- Implications of the changing nature of work for offices, transport, and pensions
- Steps needed to make the UK a science superpower
- Achieving public sector transformation
- Harnessing the power of artificial intelligence
- 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.'

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, or give us a call to find out more on 0207 434 0090.



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