

2024/2025 Activity Summary

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Manufacturing

November 2024

Event: APMG Winter reception

Host: Lord Bilimoria of Chelsea

Speakers:

- Sarah Jones MP, Minister of State at the Department of Business and Trade
- Stephen Phipson, Make UK

Winter reception, co-organised with Make UK to foster the APMG's stakeholder network and to set priorities for a forthcoming Industrial Strategy

March 2025

Event: Industrial Cooling

Chair: Bill Esterson MP

Speakers:

- Lord Bilimoria of Chelsea
- Jenni McDonnell MBE, Innovate UK
- Professor Judith Evans, London South Bank University
- Tom Southall, Cold Chain Federation
- Dr Rob Lamb, Star Refrigeration
- Bob Long, Organic Heat Exchangers

Parliamentary seminar to discuss the challenges associated with the need for cooling solutions in industry and what policy intervention is required to overcome these challenges.

April 2025

Event: Defence spending

Chair: Bill Esterson MP

Speakers:

- Mike Reader MP
- Ben Carpenter Merritt, Babcock International
- Brandon Minichiello, Rolls Royce
- Simon Cook, Mid Kent College

Parliamentary roundtable to discuss the Government's commitment to increasing defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by April 2027, with a further rise to 3% in the next Parliament.

May 2025

Event: Audience with Minister Jones

Chair: Antonia Bance MP

Speakers:

- Sarah Jones MP – Minister of State at the Department for Business and Trade

The Minister set out her priorities for the forthcoming Industrial Strategy. A question and answer session with APMG members followed.

May 2025

Manufacturing Commission inquiry scoping session

Chair: Lord Bilimoria of Chelsea

Speakers:

- Catherine Atkinson MP
- Antonia Bance MP

A scoping session to inform the Manufacturing Commission's forthcoming inquiry on SME manufacturing for Industrial Strategy

July 2025

Event: APMG Summer Reception

Host: Lord Bilimoria of Chelsea

Speakers:

- Bill Esterson MP
- Lauren Edwards MP
- Blake Stpehenson MP
- Katherine Bennett, High Value Manufacturing Catapult
- Andrew Churchill OBE, ERA Foundation

Summer reception to foster the APMG's stakeholder network and to discuss the newly published Industrial Strategy.

July 2025

Manufacturing Commission inquiry scoping session

Chair: Bill Esterson MP

Speakers:

- Catherine Atkinson MP
- Antonia Bance MP
- Andrew Churchill, ERA Foundation

A second scoping session to inform the Manufacturing Commission's forthcoming inquiry on SME manufacturing for Industrial Strategy

December 2025

Event: APMG Winter reception

Host: Lord Bilimoria of Chelsea

Speakers:

- Chris McDonald MP, Minister of State at the Department of Business and Trade
- Catherine Atkinson MP
- Stephen Phipson, Make UK

Winter reception, co-organised with Make UK to foster the APMG's stakeholder network and to review the progress of the Industrial Strategy – one year on.

March 2026

Event: Manufacturing Commission report launch: Small Means Essential

Chair: Lord Bilimoria of Chelsea

Speakers:

- Bill Esterson MP
- Catherine Atkinson MP
- Antonia Bance MP
- Lord Harrinton of Watford
- Andrew Everett, ERA Foundation
- Professor David Seall

Event to launch the Manufacturing Commission's yearlong inquiry into SME manufacturing for Industrial Strategy. Informed by evidence sessions held in October 2025, November 2025, and January 2026.

APHG Media Outputs

June 2025 – Guardian article on skills gaps in UK manufacturing by Policy Connect and Mike Reader MP.

March 2026 – Online article published on Manufacturing Commission inquiry by Policy Connect and Lord Bilimoria.

Submissions

Policy Connect submitted a response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper (November 2024) and the British Industrial Competitiveness Scheme Consultation (January 2026) on behalf of the APMG.

Correspondence

APMG Chair, Bill Esterson MP, had correspondence on behalf of the Group with Sarah Jones MP (Minister of State at the Department for Business and Trade) and James Murray MP (Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury) in summer 2025.

Wider Promotion

Policy Connect participated in a panel event at the 2026 MACH exhibition and conference.

Forward Programme

MedTech circularity – evidence session and roundtable with the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group and the University of Loughborough (11th June 2026)

Suggested topics of inquiry for 2025 include:

Robotics and automation – how can this help improve productivity and deliver on the Industrial Strategy's aims.

Foundation industries – what support is required in order to maintain sovereign foundation industries such as steel, chemicals, ceramics, paper, glass etc?

Industrial Strategy Bill – what should be included?