

# FORGING AHEAD: LONDON'S FUTURE THE FORGE ANNUAL DEBATE

The Rt. Hon. Michael Portillo (Chair) Tony Travers (LSE London), Liz Peace (BPF), Bradley Baker (Knight Frank) and Helen Garthwaite (Taylor Wessing) look at London's future

“London's prominence as one of the two top global capitals is threatened by cities in other continents that are developing and building new infrastructure,” says Tony Travers of LSE London who will be the keynote speaker at the Forge Debate to take place from 4-7pm at the Congress Centre, 28 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS.

“Investment, competitive taxes and public services will all be key elements in determining London's future. On balance, the future is still bright. But there are a number of key challenges, including such issues as immigration policy and airport capacity. The city and its government need to keep on their toes,” adds Travers.

Travers will be joined on the stage by chairman The Rt.Hon.Michael Portillo and guest panelists Liz Peace, Chief Executive of the British Property Federation; Bradley Baker, Head of Central London Tenant Representation at Knight Frank and Helen Garthwaite, Partner Head of Construction & Engineering at solicitors, Taylor Wessing.

The debate, which is supported by the London Chamber of Commerce & Industry, and media partner the International Building Press will focus on the following questions:

- Is London's heritage as a 'world financial centre' being lost in the skyscraper boom at the expense of maintaining its status, or will it lose both?

- In the aftermath of recession is sustainability and its influence on the design of buildings a fad or is it here to stay?
- With the restricted lending environment how will this affect the future of the development industry and are we in a new age of collaborative developer relationships to spread risk?
- Why are most commercial agents saying that office rents in London will rise over the next few years when we are all enduring an unprecedented economic slump?
- Is London's creaking transport infrastructure damaging its image and prospects as a leading global city and how can the UK improve it?
- With the demographic wealth profile of London drastically widening between the most wealthy and the most poor can we expect the continued 'gentrification' of central London to result in the 'Ghettoisation' of the surrounding boroughs and north/south/east/west divides?
- What does the 'Big Society' mean for London and is there a risk that it will simply become a 'NIMBY's Charter'?

**Journalists are invited to attend the Forge Debate by registering with James Carnegie, Aylwin Communications on 020 7553 9330**

**For pre-debate interviews with panelists contact James Carnegie or Richard Aylwin of Aylwin Communications on 0207 553 9330**