

Westminster eForum policy conference
Next steps for the UK drone industry - policy, regulation, investment, innovation and growth

Timing: Morning, Thursday, 23rd April 2026

Taking Place Online



WESTMINSTER
eFORUM

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Next steps for the UK's regulatory framework for drones**
Sophie O'Sullivan, Director, Future Safety and Innovation, Civil Aviation Authority
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **Priorities for drone sector policy and regulation - UAS regulatory review, implementation of the BVLOS roadmap, and wider system modernisation**
regulatory clarity, approvals and oversight | transition from trials to routine BVLOS operations | rollout of BVLOS operational environments and scenarios | application of UKSORA and compliance expectations | implementation of Remote ID and approaches to monitoring and enforcement | allocation of responsibilities across operators, service providers and UTM/CIS providers | interoperability with manned aviation and emerging UAS traffic management services | alignment of airspace modernisation with autonomous and semi-autonomous operations | supporting SMEs and new entrants | developing viable commercial use cases
Andy Sproson, Co-Founder and Director, AutoSpray Systems
Praveen Raju, Senior Manager, Policy and UAS Ecosystem Development, Wing
Harry Plested, Senior Solutions Engineer, Europe, Shield AI
Senior representative, legal
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.20 **Liability, accountability and governance for autonomous and semi-autonomous aviation**
Senior representative, legal
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.50 Break
- 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Viscount Astor
- 11.05 **Delivery of airspace modernisation - OpenAir, digital integration, and the future operating environment for drones**
Andrew Sage, Director, Safety Transformation, NATS
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 **Strategic approaches to scaling drone operations - investment, innovation, and market access**
continuation of the Future Flight Programme and lessons from evaluation | attracting private investment and approaches to predictability in regulatory pathways | scaling UK-based manufacturing and service provision | regional testbeds, delivery capacity and supply chain development | procurement pathways and SME participation | insurance, risk allocation and confidence in deployment at scale | economic and licensing models for digital infrastructure | cybersecurity, data integrity and privacy expectations | community engagement, transparency and public acceptance | improving trust in routine operations | cross-border interoperability and alignment with international frameworks | positioning the UK relative to EU, US and Asia-Pacific markets | factors influencing decisions on where operators and innovators base activity and investment
Dan Stembridge, CEO, WholeShip; and Founder, National Drone Hub
Rory Daniels, Head, Emerging Technology and Innovation, techUK
Dawn Gillies, Sustainable Aviation Development Manager, Highland and Islands Transport Partnership
Alberto Fernandes, Head, Spectrum Authorisation Policy, Ofcom
Senior representative, investment
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Priorities for supporting innovation, growth, and wider routine drone use across the economy**
Senior representative, drones
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster eForum closing remarks**
Viscount Astor
Thomas Howard, Westminster eForum