

Political Economy – Possible Topics 26/27

Some initial thoughts on possible topics for consideration at July meeting. Comments and ideas for other topics please.

Someone suggested we look at infrastructure issues, we could also revisit topics discussed pre June 2025 (5 folk have joined the group since then); Mark asked if we could look again at *Future UK relationship with the EU*.

EH June 8th '26

Possible future topics

Health Policy	<i>Impact of de facto rationing, new anti-obesity drugs, sugar tax, dental/optical services effectively non NHS services</i>
Recreational Drugs	<i>What is the best policy? status quo, de criminalisation, controlled access, is the "war on drugs" ever winnable.</i>
Infrastructure project completion in UK	<i>Why does it take so long and cost so much? HS2, runway 3 at Heathrow, Lower Thames crossing (allegedly created 360,000 pages of documentation in the planning stage), but Elizabeth Line considered a success.</i>
Defence policy	<i>What is UK policy? Can the two aircraft carriers be an effective force in a small navy (totalling 60 ships and 29 admirals), Why trident? An army that can fit into Wembley stadium. Procurement; the £6bn Ajax armoured vehicle botch-up.</i>
UK's world standing	<i>George Younger, recently deceased former head of MI6, worried about UK's diminished standing and heft in the new world order</i>
Further and Higher education	<i>Impact of Blair aim to get 50%(?) of young folk into university, proliferation of courses and institutions, grade inflation. Should there be more emphasis on vocational education/training and real jobs</i>

Topics to date

24/25		25/26	
		Sept	<i>Reform</i>
		Oct	<i>Taxation</i>
		Nov	<i>Identity Cards</i>
Dec	<i>Do we need a written constitution?</i>	Dec	<i>Woke</i>
Jan	<i>House of Lords reform</i>	Jan	<i>No meeting</i>
Feb	<i>UK voting systems</i>	Feb	<i>The Honours System</i>
Mar	<i>Future of the Union</i>	Mar	<i>American Power</i>
Apr	<i>The Monarchy</i>	Apr	<i>Housing – supply, affordability, quality</i>
May	<i>Future UK relationship with the EU</i>	May	<i>UK government spending</i>
Jun	<i>No meeting</i>	Jun	<i>Regulation</i>
July	<i>American politics today</i>	July	<i>Intergenerational fairness</i>