

29 October 2009

## **NEW PARLIAMENTARY GROUP TO PLACE HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE HIGHER ON POLITICAL AGENDA**

Following a debate on highways maintenance yesterday at Central Hall, Westminster, Christopher Chope MP hosted a reception to mark the launch of the All Party Parliamentary Group Highway Maintenance, of which he is Chairman.

The Group's objective is to "promote understanding and awareness of the fundamental importance of the highway network, and to promote the safety, environmental, economic, and social case for a properly maintained sustainable network in the UK".



**Mike Linley, Chairman of the Asphalt Industry Alliance (left) with Christopher Chope MP**  
(please contact 020 7730 1100 for hi-res file)

Christopher Chope explained the reasons behind forming the Group: "Our highways are one of our greatest national assets and this should be reflected in any Government priority to ensure that these assets are maintained and improved.

"Once again, this year's ALARM Survey<sup>1</sup> has shown that the issue of highway maintenance is not sufficiently high on the political agenda," he continued. "The All Party Parliamentary Group has been formed to raise the profile of these issues in Parliament and my colleagues and I look forward to working with Asphalt Industry Alliance members and other organisations concerned about highway maintenance to make a difference."

In response, Mike Linley, Chairman of the Asphalt Industry Alliance which is providing administrative support to the Group, welcomed the move.

"As an industry we are delighted that the highway maintenance service will receive the attention in political circles that it deserves," said Mike Linley. "Over the years we have all – customer, supplier and contractor alike – striven to improve the way the service is delivered but it is still hindered by under-funding. We hope that, aided by the expert advice of independent organisations such as the Institution of Highways and Transportation, this new Group will help to lift this service from its Cinderella status."

Christopher Chope was previously Minister for Roads and Traffic from 1990-92. The Group includes a number of members extremely well qualified to address this issue including current members of the Transport Committee, and members of related Groups such as the Transport Infrastructure and Trans-European Networks Group and the Lighting Group as well as previous Ministers and Shadow Ministers for Transport.

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**Further information:** AIA Press & Information Office, 020 7730 1100