



The Investor Forum publishes White Paper: Bridging the Gaps between Companies & Investors: Shaping Tomorrow's Dialogues

(London, 7th March 2024)

The paper published today ([here](#)) presents the findings from a six month Investor Forum programme to identify and promote Best Practice Dialogues between corporates and investors. The goal was to create a comprehensive assessment of the state of the relationship between UK companies and investors, and to consider the changes necessary to allow more energy to be focused on value creation.

In conjunction with strategic partners, we organised individual conversations and hosted workshops over a six month period with experts from 28 UK listed companies and 25 investors. We assessed the health of the relationship and identified a series of practical steps which might enrich key elements of the dialogue.

Shaping the dialogue

The report focuses on the critical exchange between investment managers and companies, and specifically on a number of key dialogues that characterise the relationship:

- Investor Relations
- Sustainability
- Audit & Assurance
- Voting & Governance

Each of these dialogues is very different in terms of both maturity – ranging from well-established in the case of Investor Relations and Voting & Governance to nascent in the case of Sustainability and Audit & Assurance – and intensity, with Audit & Assurance being the least active dialogue by far.

Throughout the project, we uncovered several surprising misperceptions. Consequently, the report aims to debunk these myths.

We found that the foundations of the relationships between companies and investors are robust, with broad alignment on the key matters. In each dialogue we observed a commitment to honesty and openness and an appetite from participants to better understand the differing perspectives and to find ways to enhance communication.

By sharing a series of insights from participants on what works well, we set out a basis for enriched dialogue and focused engagement, and provide some tips, from one side to the other, on practical actions which would improve practice.

We believe that by addressing the concerns and opportunities which emerged during this project, companies and investors can reduce friction and strengthen relationships enabling them to focus their efforts on the issue of long-term value creation.

We view this report as just the beginning, not the end, capturing a specific point in time. Given the rapid pace of change, we envision it as laying the foundation to build and enhance relationships.

The project has been led by Sallie Pilot working with partners from The Investor Relations Society (IRS), Accounting for Sustainability (A4S), The Audit Committee Chairs Independent Forum (ACCIF), leading Company Secretaries and the Investor Forum's Senior Advisers.



Investor Forum

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

- The Investor Forum is an independent, not for profit organisation which was founded in October 2014. At the end of 2023, 55 organisations are Members, including asset managers, insurance companies, pension funds, and endowments.
- Members have ~£18trn in Global assets under management, and £580bn invested in UK equities, which represents ~27% of the FTSE All-Share market cap.
- The purpose of The Investor Forum is to position stewardship at the heart of investment decision making by facilitating dialogue, creating long-term solutions, and enhancing value.
- The Investor Forum has built a unique public record of 48 comprehensive collective engagements with the Boards of UK-listed companies since its inception, covering issues from succession and governance to the direction and execution of strategy.
- The executive team comprises senior professionals with international experience as portfolio managers, asset owners, or investment banking sales and research management.
- The Board is comprised of Directors with a range of stakeholder views, including representatives from Member firms.
- For more information go to the following link: [The Investor Forum](#)