

Peter Ainsworth MP

Conservative Member for Surrey East, Peter Ainsworth was first elected in 1992. He was appointed Shadow secretary for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs after David Cameron took over as Leader of the Opposition in 2005 (a post he also held back in 2001-2002 under Iain Duncan Smith), and chaired the Environmental Audit Committee 2003 - 2005.

Peter Ainsworth started his career as a research assistant for Sir John Stewart-Clark, MEP for Sussex East. He went on to work for stockbrokers Laing & Cruickshank and later SG Warburg Securities where he became a director of Corporate Finance in 1989. His political career began in 1986 when he was elected a councillor in Wandsworth Borough.

Environmental and conservation issues are a long-standing interest for Peter Ainsworth, shown from the outset with a maiden speech campaigning to save hedgerows. He has been named 'Country Parliamentarian of the Year' (Country Life) and 'Campaigning MP of the year' (Green magazine) in the past, for his opposition to the enlargement of the M25 and a Private Members Bill to preserve hedgerows. He has also been joint Secretary of the All Party Conservation Group and is a Director of Plantlife International, which works to preserve wild plants in their natural habitat (www.plantlife.org.uk). In 2005 he was awarded the Public Affairs News 'Politician of the Year' award in recognition of his work on the environment. He was appointed treasurer of the All-Party Climate Change Group in 2005.

While he was chair of the EAC, Ainsworth led the committee's enquiry into nuclear renewables and climate change 'Keeping the Lights On' – the attached article in Nuclear Engineering International magazine provides an interesting comment:<http://www.neimagazine.com/story.asp?sectionCode=76&storyCode=2033813>

Politically, Ainsworth has been described as 'centrist', and he has been a member of the centre right think tank the Bow Group since 1983.