

David Irwin is a social entrepreneur – and a consultant in enterprise and economic development working with clients such as DANIDA, Department for International Development, Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts, World Bank, Gates Foundation and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. He was awarded the Queen’s Award for Enterprise Promotion in 2009.

He is non executive Chairman of Cobweb Information Ltd, a business which researches, publishes and markets business information. He is a trustee of Sunderland Youth Enterprise Trust. He is judge for the Ashden Awards for Sustainable Energy and a member of the Investment Committee of Oxfam’s Enterprise Development Programme. He is Chairman of the International Association for Enterprise Promotion and an Honorary Fellow at Teesside University Business School.

From early 2000 till 2002, he was Chief Executive of the Small Business Service, an executive agency of the Department of Trade and Industry, with responsibility for managing all of the UK Government’s small business support programmes and a role as the “strong voice for small business at the heart of Government”. Before joining SBS, he co-founded Project North East (PNE), one of the UK’s leading enterprise and economic development agencies, and was its chief executive for 20 years.

David has an Honours Degree in Engineering Science and Management from Durham and then completed the Advanced Course in Production Methods and Management at Cambridge University. He completed his MBA in 1986. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Business Consultancy and a Fellow of the RSA.

Occasionally, he finds time to play squash and take photographs, though does not devote sufficient time to either.

