

CAVENDISH

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**Weekly
Monitoring
Friday 11th
April**



EIA Update

We were delighted to attend the Visitor Economy Engagement Forum at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery this week. Throughout the day, we enjoyed a talk from Sir Chris Bryant, Minister for Tourism, Arts, and Creative Industries, a session on the Government's support for the visitor economy, and discussions on sector strategy. Additionally, Sam Blackie presented the Visitor Economy Investment Thesis.

Rachel Parker, Director of AEV and EIA, received confirmation of membership for the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Events this week. The EIA has also scheduled a meeting with the Chair of the APPG, Shaun Davies MP, next month. We look forward to working more closely with him.

As mentioned last week, we recently discovered that Business Events had been chosen, among five other topics, for a special inquiry by Dame Caroline Dinenage's Culture, Media, and Sport Select Committee to better understand the sector. We will keep you informed as we learn more. We are excited to see how this progresses in the coming months.



Political Update

The House of Commons rose for Easter recess on 8th April and was set to return on 22nd April. However, there has now been an emergency recall of Parliament to sit tomorrow, Saturday 12th April, to discuss the UK steel industry.

This week, there has been huge focus on the impact of US tariffs on the UK. Despite the President's row back on his other planned tariffs this week, trade impediments remain in place for steel from the UK, prompting rising concerns that the last UK steel manufacturer, in Scunthorpe, could close due to a lack of raw materials and the uncertain global market. It is rumoured that the Government has offered to buy the coking coal essential to keep production going.

Elsewhere, it has been announced that the Cabinet Office is set to lose 2,100 civil service jobs or move them to other departments over the next two years. It is expected that this will save £110 million a year by 2028 and is part of the Government's plans to streamline the civil service.

As the May General Elections draw closer, there has been mounting speculation about whether Reform and Conservative councillors will be allowed to form coalitions. Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch said that Tory councillors could share power with Reform. However, Nigel Farage, leader of Reform, subsequently stated that they would not be forming coalitions, but there could be "working relationships" with other parties.

News

UK economy grew in February

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has said that the UK economy grew by 0.5% in February surpassing the predicted growth of 0.1%. The ONS attributed this growth to several factors, including increased manufacturing and production. Additionally, there is speculation that businesses may have accelerated their activities to avoid impending US tariffs.

£5 million for winning projects to improve rail

The Department for Transport (DfT) has launched the First of a Kind (FOAK) competition, offering £5 million in funding for winning projects to boost rail innovation and encourage people use rail travel. Projects will focus on passenger safety, accessibility, AI, and greener railways. Previous winners, like "Trains with Brains" and "One Big Circle," have improved efficiency and safety. The competition aims to enhance passenger experience and support economic growth. Applications are open until 28 May 2025.

Purpose of rail journeys

The Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned research by Savanta on rail ticket usage. Travel behaviours have changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and new technologies. Traditional season tickets are less popular, with flexible options like Advance and Off-Peak tickets now favoured. The study aims to understand ticket usage for commuting, business, and leisure journeys. Over half of respondents travelled for leisure, 30% for commuting, and 15% for business. Commuters travelled most frequently. In the Travelcard Area, commuter journeys dominated, while leisure travel was highest in other regions. Full tickets were most used by commuters, while business travellers preferred advance tickets. However, a key barrier remains the lack of consistency in reliable services, with delays and cancellations affecting passengers' daily lives.

Rachel Reeves said that UK-EU relationship imperative

Chancellor Rachel Reeves has emphasised the need for the UK to improve post-Brexit trade relations with the EU amid Donald Trump's trade war. While ruling out rejoining the EU customs union, Reeves insists on bolstering trade with European partners due to export difficulties faced by British firms. She sees the UK-EU summit on 19 May as an opportunity to refresh relations. Reeves also highlighted the importance of aligning UK regulations with Brussels to improve market access and stressed the UK's stability for investment amidst global trade challenges.

India - UK trade deal

The UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue has secured £400m in trade and investment wins, set to boost the British economy. Chancellor Rachel Reeves and Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced cooperation across various sectors, including defence, financial services, and education. The Government aims to

strengthen economic ties and secure a Free Trade Agreement. Key business leaders from both nations are driving growth. Despite global uncertainties, the UK is committed to supporting British businesses and improving trade relations with India to foster economic stability, growth, and opportunities for working people.

Parliament

House of Commons

Written Question: Touring musicians in the EU

Steve Darling, Liberal Democrat MP for Torbay asked the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport:

"What steps she is taking to support British musicians touring in the EU?"

Chris Bryant, Minister for Tourism, Arts, and Creative Industries responded:

"We are working closely with the music industry to tackle the challenges facing UK musicians and their support staff when touring in the EU. We remain in open and constructive dialogue with the EU, with a view to improve arrangements across the European continent without seeing a return to free movement. Most recently, on 7 April, I attended the Informal Meeting for EU Culture Ministers in Warsaw as a guest of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. This is the first time a UK minister has been invited since Brexit. Our aim is to identify practical solutions to ensure that UK artists can continue to perform across Europe with minimal barriers while respecting the regulatory frameworks on both sides."

**For any queries regarding this round-up
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