

CAVENDISH

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Weekly Monitoring
Friday 21st
November



EIA Update

This week, we conducted a review of our political engagement over the past 12 months to assess our achievements, and we look forward to sharing a summary with you soon. We also took a closer look at our political strategy for the remainder of this year and up to March 2026, as we prepare for the upcoming Local and Devolved elections in May 2026.

Political Update

As Budget Day approaches next week, the Government have announced a series of reforms to the UK asylum system, sparking significant debate within the Labour party. Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood has defended the changes, describing current arrangements as “out of control and unfair” and warning they risk fuelling division. The proposals, including temporary refugee status, the end of guaranteed housing support, and capped safe and legal routes, have attracted criticism from Labour MPs, currently 22 have publicly voiced concerns, and charities, while Conservatives and Reform UK have offered cautious support.

A new FindOutNow poll has placed the Green Party in second place nationally, ahead of both Labour and the Conservatives, with 18% support, one point above the Tories and two ahead of Labour, who have dropped to fourth whilst Reform UK leads the poll with 32%.

Meanwhile the Covid 19 inquiry found Boris Johnson’s Government fostered a “toxic and chaotic” culture that undermined decision-making and delayed urgent action during the

pandemic. Baroness Hallett's report criticised Johnson's leadership and communication, highlighted Dominic Cummings' destabilising influence, and noted that poor planning and over-optimism led to avoidable deaths.

News

Budget Speculation

With just over a week to go until the Autumn Budget is unveiled on Wednesday 26th November, Cavendish have prepared a concise briefing note on what to expect.

This year's Budget is widely expected to be one of the most consequential in recent memory. With national debt approaching 100% of GDP and a £20bn gap in the public finances, Reeves must strike a delicate balance between reassuring the bond markets, satisfying Labour MPs eager for good news, and winning over voters wary of further tax rises.

Current speculation most relevant to the EIA:

- New powers for Mayoral Combined Authorities to raise visitor levies on overnight stays
- Expected rise in the National Living Wage, with possible extension to younger workers.
- Business Rates reform to support high streets and SMEs, though rates may increase for warehouses.
- Increase in Air Passenger Duty

Cardiff to potentially introduce tourism tax

Cardiff could become the first Welsh city to introduce a tourism tax, charging £1.30 per person per night for most paid overnight stays and 75p for campsites and shared rooms. Expected to raise £3.5 million annually, the levy would fund local improvements and marketing. If approved, a public consultation will begin in December, with the tax applying from April 2027. While some business leaders welcome the move, others warn it could burden small firms amid ongoing economic challenges.

Government Bans Ticket Touting

The Government have announced that they intend to make it illegal to resell tickets for live events above their original price, aiming to end exploitative ticket touting. The rules will cap service fees, require resale platforms to enforce compliance, and ban individuals from reselling more tickets than initially purchased. These measures, backed by artists and industry leaders, are expected to save fans £112 million annually and improve access to concerts, theatre, and sport. Offenders could face fines of up to 10% of global turnover.

New Chair Appointed to the British Tourist Authority Board

Harris Bokhari has been appointed Chair of the British Tourist Authority Board for a three-year term from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2028. Bokhari brings experience from major UK non-profit and cultural institutions, including the Natural History Museum and National Trust Council as well as advising leading firms and entrepreneurs in tourism and travel.

Contactless Ticketing Expands for Easier Train Travel to London Airports

Train travel to London airports will soon be simpler and more flexible, as tap-in, tap-out contactless ticketing expands to Stansted and Southend Airport stations from 14 December. Supported by £18.7 million in Government funding, the technology upgrade covers 50 stations across south-east England, allowing passengers to use bank cards or devices for easier journeys and best fares. This rollout is part of the move to Great British Railways and is part of wider aims to modernise ticketing, boost accessibility, and support economic growth.

New Business Growth Service Roadshow Launches in Newcastle to Boost North East SMEs

The Government's Business Growth Service roadshow has launched in Newcastle, bringing together national, devolved, and local support for over 100 small businesses in the North East. The purpose of the roadshows are to offer advice, funding, and tailored growth programmes to make it easier for SMEs to access help and improve productivity.

Eurotunnel change plans for UK investments

Eurotunnel has announced it will halt future UK investments, citing a proposed 200% rise in business rates and "unsustainable" taxation, which it claims makes projects "non-viable". The operator criticised the government for undermining economic growth and said the tax hike could push its total UK tax rate to 75% of earnings. As a result, Eurotunnel will freeze plans for new railway assets, including reopening a Barking freight terminal, and called on the government to provide certainty on business rates ahead of the Autumn Budget.

Skills England Launches Roadmap to Boost Local Skills and Drive Growth

Skills England has unveiled new guidance for the second round of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), empowering local leaders, employers, and educators to tailor skills training to regional needs. LSIPs aim to bring together key stakeholders to identify skills gaps, develop three-year plans, and support the Government's ambition for two-thirds of young people to participate in higher-level learning by age 25.

Parliament

House of Commons

Written Question on Local Visitor Economy Partnerships

Andrew Snowden, Conservative MP for Flyde, asked the Secretary of State for Business and Trade:

"Pursuant to the Answer of 28 October 2025 to Question 79081 on Tourism, how many Local Visitor Economy Partnerships have been accredited; and what assessment she has made of the adequacy of their geographic distribution."

Stephanie Peacock, Minister for Sport, Tourism, Youth, and Civil Society responded:

"The purpose of the LVEP programme is to attract investment and ultimately drive growth, training, and help places tell their own unique stories to visitors. Through a collaborative approach that unites local authorities, businesses and regional partners, LVEPs enhance the quality of the visitor offer and ensure that the positive impacts of tourism are distributed widely across communities. economy together.

"37 Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) are currently accredited across England, covering a broad mix of urban, rural and coastal destinations. In some other places, such as Bedfordshire, LVEPs are still in development. These areas are still working through how best to organise their destination management functions, align multiple local authorities, and secure the long-term funding and governance arrangements required for accreditation.

"The current geographical distribution reflects a strong spread of partnerships across regions, and the Department continues to work with VisitEngland to provide guidance, regional development support and resources to all destinations. VisitEngland offers dedicated assistance through Regional Development Leads and programme tools to help local areas strengthen governance, build capability and work towards accreditation. This support is available to both accredited and aspiring LVEP areas, including Bedfordshire.

"LVEP performance is monitored locally through delivery plans and nationally through evaluation by VisitEngland. VisitBritain/VisitEngland's Business Plan 2025-26 allocated £1.5 million to supporting regional and local growth. This includes working with LVEPs to achieve local growth strategies and supporting the LVEP structure. VisitEngland's regional leads and the regional pilots in the NorthEast and West Midlands have also benefited from a direct £1.35 million funding boost in 2025/26 to help the regions attract even more tourists and investment to the UK."

For any queries regarding this round-up
please get in touch.

Get in touch



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