

CAVENDISH

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**Weekly
Monitoring
Friday 28th
March**



EIA Update

This week, we were delighted to meet with civil servants from the Department for Business and Trade as part of our regular meetings to discuss our industry. We also recently met with civil servants from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and look forward to our next meeting with them.

As part of our work on the Mutual Recognition Agreement, we are looking to gather information from our members on specific questions around trade. We will be in contact with the relevant stakeholders shortly and encourage you all to respond to ensure our work is as productive as possible.

Political Update

The Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, delivered her Spring Statement this week, outlining the Government's response to slow economic growth, increasing borrowing costs, and a deteriorating fiscal position. She signalled the possibility of further departmental spending cuts in the forthcoming Spending Review and Autumn Budget. During the Statement, Reeves announced additional welfare cuts after the OBR indicated that the initial cuts did not generate the expected savings. This decision has been defended by the Prime Minister, Keir Starmer, who stated that 'people are afraid to work' and reiterated the Government's commitment to helping people return to work.

More on the Spring Statement can be found below.

Elsewhere, Starmer announced a further £2 billion investment into the transport system in the North, which he described as being 'held to ransom by a Victorian-era transport system'. He clarified that this was additional investment following previously announced funding for transport in the North. This investment includes £415 million for the Transpennine route.

This week also saw the final stages of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, also known as Protect Duty, pass through Parliament. The Bill will now be sent for Royal Assent. More on the final debates can be found below.

News

Spring Statement

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves, delivered her Spring Statement on 26 March, outlining significant measures to address the UK's economic challenges. Initially billed as a 'Spring Forecast,' the event was rebranded due to the growing impact of the economic and geopolitical environment. Reeves emphasised the need for an active government to navigate these challenges, citing the escalating threats following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and increased borrowing costs.

Reeves highlighted achievements since the Labour Government took office, including stabilising public finances, lowering interest rates, and increasing investment in public services. She reaffirmed the Government's fiscal rules, contrasting them with the previous administration's mishandling of public finances. The measures introduced aim to create a budget surplus of £9.9 billion by 2029/30.

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) issued a pessimistic economic forecast, revising the expected UK growth rate for 2025 from 2% to approximately 1% just before the Statement. Despite this, the OBR upgraded their growth forecast for subsequent years due to reach 1.8% by 2029. Key announcements included spending cuts, welfare reforms, and a crackdown on tax evasion. Defence spending will rise to 2.5% of GDP, with significant investments in novel technologies and public sector efficiency reforms.

Cavendish's full briefing can be found [here](#).

£1.35 million investment for the visitor economy in North East and West Midlands

The North East and West Midlands will receive a £1.35 million funding boost to enhance their visitor economies over the next year. This initiative, part of the Government's Plan for Change, aims to attract 50 million international visitors annually by 2030. The funding supports Destination Development Partnerships, which have already shown success in increasing tourism, investment, and job creation in these regions. For instance, the North East saw 11 new attractions and 60 new bars and

restaurants, while the West Midlands' visitor economy grew by 15%. The extension will further test regional approaches to managing the visitor economy.

Statistics of public attitudes towards trade

The seventh wave of the Public Attitudes to Trade Tracker has been published, the research was conducted by BMG Research for the Department for Business and Trade from May to July 2023 and published in March 2025. It reveals that 68% of respondents are interested in the UK's trade with the EU, and 67% with non-EU countries. Support for Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) remains high at 65%, with key reasons being economic strengthening and improved trade opportunities. However, concerns include reduced safety standards and environmental impacts. Awareness of specific trade deals varies, with the Windsor Framework being the most recognised

Visa fees

The Home Office have published a list of visa fees for the UK effective from 9th April 2025. For Visa applications made outside the UK for electronic travel authorisation (ETA) fees will increase from £10 to £16. Visit visas for short term up to 6 months will increase from £115 to £127.

UK inflation rate

UK inflation fell from 3% in January to 2.8% in February, this above the Bank of England's 2% target. The Bank has cut interest rates three times since August 2024, with the latest cut in February. Despite the drop for inflation from 3% in January, inflation could rise again in 2025.

Parliament

House of Commons

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill

The final House of Commons debate was held on the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill. Dan Jarvis, Security Minister, introduced the Bill Martyn's law—highlighting that it returned to the House in good shape with only a few amendments made by the Government. He expressed gratitude for the collaborative approach in scrutinising the Bill across both Houses.

Jarvis discussed Lords amendments 1, 2, 10, 11, 12, and 13, which were brought by the Government to clarify conditions for qualifying premises and events, ensuring private events like weddings and office parties are out of scope.

He then addressed Lords amendment 5, tabled by Baroness Suttie of the Liberal Democrats, which places a statutory duty on the Secretary of State to consult before publishing guidance under clause 27. Jarvis confirmed the Government's acceptance of this amendment, emphasising the importance of proper consultation and the need for those responsible for qualifying premises and events to have the time and information needed to plan, prepare for, and implement the requirements.

Jarvis moved on to Lords amendments 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9, brought by the Government to strengthen safeguards on Henry VIII powers. These amendments consolidate powers into clause 32 and place conditions on the Secretary of State's use of these powers, ensuring they are used appropriately for public protection.

Finally, Jarvis paid tribute to Figen Murray for her inspiring campaign following the loss of her son, Martyn Hett, in the Manchester Arena attack, and expressed pride in the Government's delivery of the Bill.

The Bill will now move towards Royal Assent.

House of Lords

Written Question: Policy reviews in DCMs

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay, Conservative asked His Majesty's Government:

"How many policy reviews and consultations the Department for Culture, Media and Sport has launched since the General Election on 4 July 2024; what the subject of each review is; and what the anticipated timescales are for their completion?"

Baroness Twycross, Lords Minister for the Department of Culture Media and Sport responded:

"Following the election, this Government has outlined its ambitions through the Plan for Change, which sets out an ambitious set of milestones - across the missions - for this Parliament.

"As the House would expect, the Government continually reviews its work to ensure that it is delivering the best outcomes for the people of the United Kingdom, and that its policies continue to represent the best value for the taxpayer.

"Public reviews will be available on gov.uk as they are published."

**For any queries regarding this round-up
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