

# CAVENDISH

Insight. Influence. Creativity.

**Weekly Monitoring**  
**Friday 30th May**



## **EIA Update**

EIA has used the time during Parliamentary recess to finalise our evidence base and tactical approach to advocating for a mutual recognition agreement between the UK and the EU, following the EU–UK Trade Deal.

We are also looking forward to our meeting with Shaun Davies, Chair of the APPG for Events, who we are due to meet next week. We hope to share our insights with him and find discover how he plans to advocate for the industry via the APPG.

## **Political Update**

Parliament has been in recess this week and is set to return on Monday, 2nd June. During this time, Prime Minister Keir Starmer delivered a speech likening Nigel Farage to Liz Truss, warning that Reform UK's economic plans would “crash the economy”. He criticised Farage's “fantasy economics” and unfunded tax proposals, while Reform dismissed the remarks as a “desperate attack” and continues to advocate for policies such as scrapping the two-child benefit cap and raising the income tax threshold.

This marks the second speech in as many weeks by the Prime Minister aimed at countering the perceived rise of Reform. Meanwhile, Conservative Leader Kemi Badenoch accused both Labour and Reform of engaging in “fantasy economics” in her Daily Mail column, following indication that both parties would remove the two-child benefit cap. However, Badenoch had her own troubles this week after Boris Johnson's former-aide Dominic Cummings described her as a “goner” who would “be out by the end of the year” in an interview with Sky News.

Elsewhere, Health Secretary Wes Streeting has urged doctors not to support strike action after the Government announced a 5.4% pay rise for junior doctors, 4% for teachers and doctors, and 3.6% for nurses and midwives.

---

## News

### London Growth Plan

London's business events sector is entering a new phase of growth, driven by the city's London Growth Plan, which aims to boost sustainability, productivity, and opportunity across the capital and sectors. The capital has been named Europe's top meetings and events destination for the third year running by Cvent. Infrastructure investments, including Olympia London's £1.3bn redevelopment and Excel London's expansion, are set to further strengthen the city's global appeal.

### Investment announced into arts and culture

The Government has announced an £85 million Creative Foundations Fund to support vital repairs and upgrades for arts and cultural venues across England. Aimed at boosting local economies and expanding access to creative opportunities, the fund will help theatres, galleries, music venues and arts centres modernise infrastructure, improve accessibility, and reduce energy inefficiencies. Part of the wider £270 million Arts Everywhere Fund, applications for up to £10 million per organisation opening via Expressions of Interest on 30 June 2025 through Arts Council England.

### South Western Railway returned to public ownership

South Western Railway (SWR) has become the first operator to return to public ownership under new legislation. The move aims to end decades of fragmentation and poor performance, with operators required to meet strict standards to earn the Great British Railways name. Public ownership is expected to improve reliability, restore public trust, and save taxpayers up to £150 million annually.

The transition began with a symbolic first publicly owned SWR service departing from Waterloo on 25 May 2025, accompanied by new branding and announcements across the network. Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander described the moment as a "generational opportunity" to rebuild national pride in the railways and deliver a world-class public service.

### Scotland urged to change legislation around the Visitor Levy

The Scottish Government is facing calls to amend the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act, with nearly 80 tourism and hospitality groups writing to Minister for Public Finance Ivan McKee to express concern. They warn the current legislation risks harming small businesses and pushing operators over the VAT threshold. The industry has proposed a simpler, fixed-fee model and digital payment system, but say the Government has shown little interest in reform—despite Edinburgh preparing to introduce a 5% tourist tax from July 2026.

### **Employers forced to backdate failure to pay minimum wage**

Nearly 60,000 underpaid workers will receive over £7.4 million in repayments, as the Government enforces the biggest upgrade to workers' rights in a generation. This follows a rise in the National Living and Minimum Wage, adding £1,400 to full-time workers' pay. Employers found in breach have faced penalties of up to 200%, with a list of 518 employers named on the Government website having failed to comply.

---

## **Parliament**

### **House of Commons**

#### **Written Questions: Events Industry and Publicity**

Shaun Davies, Labour MP for Telford, asked the Secretary of State for Business and Trade:

*"What steps he is taking with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to promote the UK business event sector?"*

Gareth Thomas, Minister for Services, Small Business and Exports responded:

*"Government recognises that the business events sector is a machine for economic growth, local prosperity and international importance, helping to enhance the UK's global reputation and foster international business relationships."*

*"The Business Events Growth Programme (BEGP) supported across government, including by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Business and Trade (DBT), and led by VisitBritain, forms part of the UK Government's commitment to grow the business events sector across Britain. Every pound invested in the programme supported £33 of revenue being generated for the British economy through new events secured, or in additional delegate spend, during the five-year review period from 2018 to 2023."*

#### **Written Questions: Visas**

Shaun Davies, Labour MP for Telford, asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department:

*"How many applications for visas for business events her Department has received in each of the past 3 years; how many of those applications were successful in that time period; what the (a) shortest, (b) average and (c) longest time was for a visa to be processed in that time period; and how much revenue was raised from those applications?"*

Seema Malhotra, Minister for Migration and Citizenship responded:

*"The requested data is not centrally held by the Home Office, and could only be collated and verified for the purposes of answering this question at disproportionate cost."*

---

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

**Get in touch**



**[cavendishconsulting.com](https://cavendishconsulting.com)**