

Events Industry Alliance End of Week Report

Friday 17th April

EIA update

With Parliament back from Easter recess this week, we have been busy across our core workstreams.

As mentioned last week, we have finalised a short member survey on ministerial engagement at UK events. If you have not already received it, you can find the survey [here](#). Please do take a few minutes to complete it, as the insights will help us build a clearer picture of current government involvement in the events sector.

We are also working to assemble an evidence pack to demonstrate business events' critical role in the UK's Industrial Strategy sectors. The team is gathering data and case studies to reinforce our message that supporting conferences and trade shows can bolster priority industries' growth, and progressing drafting.

As part of our stakeholder outreach, we met with Mims Davies MP on Wednesday to discuss the economic importance of the events industry. This was a really positive meeting, and we will follow up with Mims' office with some specific questions she may be able to ask in Parliament. In addition, we have also drafted initial outreach letters to a small set of priority MPs inviting discussions on how they can champion the events sector. These letters will be sent out next week; our goal is to secure a handful of new parliamentary allies who understand our industry's value and needs.

Finally, the EIA team launched the [Size and Scale Index for Exhibitions \(SASIE\) report](#) this week. It tells a compelling story about the size and significance of the UK events industry. The report provides in depth analysis of UK exhibitions and includes cumulative comparative data from the past 11 years which will further strengthen our advocacy materials. Importantly, it shows that sector has continued grow in the past year. Thanks to all who responded and made the report possible.

Government this week

Monday 13th April

- It emerged over the weekend that, as part of the government's planned "dynamic alignment" with the EU in certain regulatory areas later this year, **Keir Starmer** is [considering legislation](#) that would allow the UK to adopt some single market rules without requiring a parliamentary vote. The government will argue that closer alignment with the EU could reduce costs for businesses and ease the administrative burden created by post-Brexit regulations. The Labour manifesto states that the government will not seek to rejoin the EU's Single Market or Customs Union, but the new alignment is seen as a move closer to Europe. The legislation is expected to be unveiled in the King's Speech on 13 May, setting the agenda for the next Parliamentary session.

Tuesday 14th April

- The Department of Culture, Media, and Sport announced that 130 cultural venues, museums, and libraries are set to receive a £130 million funding boost to [improve access to arts and culture](#) across the country. Recipients include major cultural venues The Lowry Centre in Salford, The Hexagon in Reading and the Royal Shakespeare Company in Warwickshire.

Wednesday 15th April

- The government has [released Section 27 statutory guidance](#) for Martyn’s Law, alongside three supplementary documents covering assessment methods, scope examples, and further resources. The guidance sets out the Act’s requirements across nine chapters, including scope, responsibilities, legal duties, and compliance expectations for qualifying premises and events. There is currently no requirement to comply until the legislation comes into force, though organisations are encouraged to begin familiarising themselves with the guidance via ProtectUK.
- The Security Industry Authority has also [launched a consultation](#) on its draft Section 12 guidance, setting out how it intends to regulate and oversee compliance with Martyn’s Law when it comes into force in Spring 2027.

What happened in Parliament

Tuesday 14th April

- At a European Affairs Committee session on [dynamic alignment](#) with the EU, **Dominique Paravicini (Swiss ambassador to the EU)** noted Switzerland had developed a long-standing bilateral relationship with the EU based on over 120 sectoral agreements, including mutual recognition arrangements and key market access frameworks. He noted how important these were to decide which sectors can work closer with the EU.
- The APPG for Events hosted its Annual General Meeting (AGM). Minutes have not yet been released, but Henham will continue to monitor the Group’s outputs.

Thursday 16th April

- During DCMS Oral Questions, **Greg Smith (Con, Mid Buckinghamshire)** [asked](#) what steps the Department is taking to support the tourism sector, particularly in light of the “tourist tax” they have introduced.
 - **Lisa Nandy (Secretary of State)** responded that the government’s ‘Starring GREAT Britain’ campaign has already generated significant additional visitor spending. She also highlighted the upcoming ‘Visitor Economic Growth Strategy’, which will set out the government’s long-term plan to increase visitor numbers and support sustainable growth in the tourism sector. She added that the tourism levy is locally driven, giving individual areas the flexibility to decide how it should be applied.

Written questions

Tuesday 14th April

- **Sir Geoffrey Cox (Con, Torridge and Tavistock)** [asked](#) the Culture Secretary how the Government is supporting rural and coastal tourism businesses in the face of rising business rates, energy costs, and wage/National Insurance pressures.
 - **Stephanie Peacock (Minister for Tourism)** responded that the Government has introduced a £4.3 billion business rates support package to mitigate the impact of the recent revaluation: as a result, over half of ratepayers will see no increase in their bills (and around 23% will see their rates bills decrease) next year. She noted that the Government also doubled the Employment Allowance (from £5,000 to £10,500) to reduce the National Insurance burden on smaller firms.
- **Sarah Hall (Lab, Warrington South)** [asked](#) the Culture, Media and Sport Secretary what discussions have been held with the EU regarding the impact of the “90/180 day” Schengen visa rule on UK sports event haulage crews (e.g. F1 hauliers)
 - **Stephanie Peacock** replied that the 90-days-in-180 Schengen limit applies to all third-country nationals and it remains each business’s responsibility to comply with the relevant visa and work permit requirements when operating in EU countries. She noted a positive development: the EU’s recently published Visa Strategy (29 January 2026) includes a commitment to explore ways of simplifying entry rules for business travellers. This may

include new provisions to allow extended short-term stays for certain categories of professionals from outside the EU - such as touring performers, competitive athletes, and transport drivers.

- **Lee Dillon (LD, Newbury)** [asked](#) the Chancellor what discussions the Treasury has had with industry about alternatives to the current business rates system.
 - **Dan Tomlinson (Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury)** answered that the Government's Call for Evidence on business rates and investment recently closed after extensive engagement with industry representatives on how business rates influence investment decisions – covering the tax's overall structure and specific reliefs (for small businesses, property improvements, etc.). He said the Treasury is “carefully considering” all the input received.

Regional news

Thursday 16th April

- The SNP [launched their manifesto](#) ahead of the Scottish Parliamentary Elections in May. It pledges to invest over £110 million in “world-class events” through 2030, including hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games, the 2027 Tour de France Grand Départ, and UEFA EURO 2028, while supporting bids for future events. It also promises to expand the Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund to £2 million by 2031 and launch a new “Festival of Scotland” programme to showcase Scottish works at major festivals.
- The manifesto also, unsurprisingly, pledges to rejoin the EU as an independent Scotland “to guarantee free trade with the world’s biggest single market and higher economic growth.”

Week ahead

Tuesday 21st April

- The European Affairs Committee will discuss ‘Dynamic alignment’ with witnesses including **Sam Lowe (Head of Trade and Market Access Practice, Flint Global)**, **William Bain (Head of Trade Policy, British Chambers of Commerce)** and **Ignacio García Bercero (Senior Fellow Bruegel, and former Director in DG Trade, European Commission)**
- The Second Delegated Legislation Committee will consider Draft Major Sporting Events (Income Tax Exemption) for the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Wednesday 22nd April

- PMQs. **Henham to monitor.**

Media snapshot

Ticketmaster-owner Live Nation has operated as a monopoly, jury finds

[A jury has ruled](#) that Live Nation and Ticketmaster have been illegally operating as a monopoly, finding that the 2010 merger stifled competition and contributed to higher ticket prices and poorer customer service. The ruling could lead to major penalties, including a potential forced separation of Live Nation and Ticketmaster, though the company has said it will challenge the decision.

Informa appoints David Lynn as CEO of inD

Informa has [appointed David Lynn](#) as Chief Executive of its Dubai-based inD joint venture with Dubai World Trade Centre, where he will oversee the integration of both organisations’ B2B events businesses from May

2026. He previously led ViacomCBS Networks International and brings experience in major digital transformations, with a focus on developing inD's growth across the IMEA region.

Major new business conference coming to North East

A new PLATFORM Conference [is launching](#) in Newcastle on 28 April, bringing together founders, investors and scale-up experts for a full-day business event focused on growth, leadership and investment in the North East. It builds on a wider programme of PLATFORM events across the region, which have already attracted more than 2,000 delegates since 2024.

Agent Analog Launches the AI Concierge for Live Events

Agent Analog has launched an [AI-powered event concierge](#) for live events that delivers personalised guest support via SMS, removing the need for apps or logins. Built on over 20 years of event production experience, it allows attendees to access real-time assistance for schedules, directions, networking, ordering, and content in a single text thread tailored to their role and preferences.

If you have any questions regarding this update, please contact the Henham Strategy team

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