

## Events Industry Alliance - End of Week Report

### Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April

#### EIA update

Hi all

This week, Henham continued our efforts to secure parliamentary allies for the EIA, alongside our broader campaign to promote the sector's impact within government. Meanwhile, the EIA has gained great press with the launch of the SASIE report last week with strong coverage across trade publications.

As mentioned last week, a survey should have gone out to members on ministerial attendance for their 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. AEV members will have had a separate survey sent out to them, focusing more on venues, which can be filled out [here](#).

Ahead of next Tuesday's Culture, Media and Sport Committee session on major events, where **Stephanie Peacock (Tourism Minister)** will give evidence alongside senior DCMS officials, we have been finalising a short briefing for Committee members and allies, drawing on SASIE data and setting out the business events agenda. As some of you may remember, the EIA was able to give oral evidence to the committee on this inquiry late last year, raising the issue of business events needing to be treated differently to cultural events. For committee inquiries, the ministerial evidence session is often the final stage of oral evidence gathering, meaning the committee will then begin writing their report and presenting recommendations to Government. That makes feeding into this session all the more important.

In parallel, we are preparing a short submission from the EIA to the CMS Committee's tourism inquiry call for written evidence, focused on the role of business events in supporting the Government's 50 million-visitor target and the IS-8 growth sectors.

Finally, work continues on other ongoing activity. We are continuing to draft correspondence to our 'MP champions' who have major venues in their constituency. These will go out in the next week and will set us up for meaningful engagement in the period between Parliament's return in May and summer recess. Both Houses are scheduled a break between 30<sup>th</sup> April and 5<sup>th</sup> May, although we are expecting Parliament to be prorogued on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> which would mean it instead returns on 13<sup>th</sup> May. Alongside this, we are continuing with our evidence pack looking to demonstrate the industry's alignment with core IS8 sectors.

#### Government this week

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April

- **Chancellor Rachel Reeves** [updated Parliament](#) on the UK's economic response to the Middle East conflict, stressing a focus on stability, diplomacy, and avoiding inflationary "knee-jerk" measures. She highlighted support for households through measures like fuel duty cuts and energy bill reductions, while noting that global energy shocks are expected to dampen growth and raise inflation. She also announced steps to strengthen energy security, including accelerating renewables and increasing the Electricity Generator Levy to help manage energy price volatility. The statement

set the tone for a week in which ministers spoke repeatedly about the pressure volatile energy prices and conflict-related disruption are placing on British business.

*Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April*

- **Peter Kyle (Secretary of State for Business and Trade)** delivered the keynote address to *TheCityUK International Conference*, setting out the Government's plan to reinforce the UK's positioning as a world-leading international financial centre "in a new age of global competition". The conference – a major event for the financial and professional services sector – reinforced the centrality of conference infrastructure to Industrial Strategy delivery.
- The DCMS [released data](#) showing that DCMS-sponsored museums and galleries in England received around 42 million visits in 2024/25, a slight (1.3%) fall on the previous year but still below pre-pandemic levels, alongside continued long-term declines outside London and reduced educational and outreach activity in several categories. The data is likely to feed into the forthcoming Visitor Economy Growth Strategy.

## What happened in Parliament

*Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April*

- The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Events (APPG) [announced it has re-elected Martin Rhodes \(Lab, Glasgow North\)](#) as its Chair following its AGM last week. **James Asser (Lab, West Ham and Beckton)**, **Douglas McAllister (Lab, West Dunbartonshire)** and **Jack Rankin (Con, Windsor)** were also re-elected as the groups Officers. In the announcement **Rhodes** acknowledged the role of events in driving growth, trade and investment across the UK.

*Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April*

- At a European Affairs Committee session [on 'Dynamic alignment'](#), **William Bain (Head of Trade Policy, British Chambers of Commerce)** and **John Foster (Chief Policy and Campaigns Officer, CBI)** said that the proposed SPS, ETS and electricity agreements with the EU would be the most significant post-Brexit steps to reduce trade frictions. They argued these measures would cut costs, paperwork and border delays - particularly for agri-food, logistics and energy firms - delivering modest overall GDP gains but meaningful benefits for exporters if implemented with sufficient depth and clear transition arrangements.
- **Ignacio García Bercero (Former Director, DG Trade, European Commission)** explained that "dynamic alignment" is mainly used for countries closely integrated into the EU single market and requires ongoing alignment with evolving EU rules. He said it is fundamentally different from mutual recognition, would require strong governance and consultation structures, and would limit the UK's regulatory flexibility in exchange for deeper market access.

## Written questions

*Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April*

- **Andrew Bowie (Conservative, West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine)** [asked](#) the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many hospitality venues have permanently closed in the current financial year, and what the projected closures are for next year.
  - **Dan Tomlinson (Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury)** replied that, according to ONS data, there were around 1,600 more net hospitality business openings in 2025 compared to 2024 (indicating growth rather than decline). He assured that the Government is closely monitoring the health of the hospitality sector and engages regularly with industry stakeholders.

*Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April*

- **Jack Rankin (Conservative, Windsor Commons)** [asked](#) whether the Treasury has modelled the impact of an overnight visitor levy on high street footfall, empty shops, and social mobility.

- **Dan Tomlinson** replied that the Government is developing powers for Mayors to introduce a visitor levy on short-term stays. A consultation on design and impacts has closed and a response will follow. He said the final impacts will depend on local decisions, with evidence suggesting modest rates have little effect on visitor numbers, and that Mayors will consult locally and publish impact assessments if they proceed.

## Regional news

*Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April*

- At the Good Growth Foundation’s National Growth Debate in London, **Mayor of West Yorkshire Tracy Brabin** [spoke on “Stadiums as Civic Anchors”](#), highlighting how stadiums can be a catalyst for infrastructure and growth as well as drivers of local visitor economies. She was later joined on a panel on “Capital outside the Capital: Cracking Growth Through Devolution” by **Mayor of South Yorkshire Oliver Coppard, Mayor of the West of England, Helen Godwin** and **former Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street**.

## Week ahead

*Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April*

- HMT OPQs. **Henham to monitor.**
- The Culture, Media and Sports Committee will hold a session on ‘Major events’. Witnesses include **Stephanie Peacock (Minister for Sport, Tourism, Civil Society and Youth), Jonathan Martin, (Director for Project Delivery and Major Events)** and **Michael Livingston (Director for Major Sporting Projects Delivery, Department for Culture, Media and Sport)**. **Henham to monitor transcript for comments.**
- The Business and Trade Committee will hold a session on the ‘Industrial Strategy’. Witnesses include **Leonie Lambert (Director, Industrial Strategy Council Secretariat, DBT), Kate Bell (Member, Industrial Strategy Advisory Council)** and **Dame Clare Barclay DBE (Chair, Industrial Strategy Advisory Council)**.
- The European Affairs Committee will hold a session on ‘Dynamic Alignment’. Witnesses include **Lord Bew (Professor Emeritus, Queen’s University Belfast), Professor Jo Hunt (Professor of Law, University of Cardiff)** and **Dr Lisa Claire Whitten (Research Fellow, Queen’s University Belfast)**

*Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April*

- PMQs. **Henham to monitor.**

*Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April*

- DBT OPQS. **Henham to monitor.**
- If Parliament is not already prorogued, both Houses will rise for the May Day recess. Both Houses are scheduled to return on 5<sup>th</sup> May. However, it is more likely they will return on 13<sup>th</sup> May.

**N.B** Although this is the current Parliamentary schedule, we are expecting Parliament to be prorogued on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April. This would signal the end of the current parliamentary session and bring nearly all parliamentary business – including most bills and all motions – to a close. MPs will reconvene when a new parliamentary session, marked by the state opening of parliament and the King's Speech, begins (this would likely be the 13<sup>th</sup> May).

## Media snapshot

*IPA’s Q1 ‘Bellwether Report’ shows strongest uplift in planned expenditure for the Events sector*

According to [research by S&P Global](#), on behalf of the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, Events emerged as the clear frontrunner for increased marketing investment, significantly outperforming every other segment, with a Q1 net balance of +14.7% compared with +1.4% last quarter. This exceeded 2026/27 budget forecasts and reflects a shift towards client-focused marketing, with events valued for direct engagement and relationship-building.

#### *IMEX Frankfurt 2026: Strong Global Demand Signals Resilient Events Market*

IMEX Frankfurt (19–21 May) is showing [strong forward indicators](#), with attendance expected to exceed last year's total with 4,000 buyers from over sixty countries. Supply-side momentum is equally robust, with exhibitors from over one-hundred countries and notable footprint expansion across Africa, Asia and the Americas. This points to the sustained resilience of the events industry despite macro uncertainty: international demand remains broad-based, and the event is reinforcing its role as a key platform for both near-term pipeline generation and longer-term partnership building.

#### *IMEX launches sustainability strategy*

IMEX has [published its first sustainability strategy](#), setting out a practical framework to reduce environmental impact across its events and the wider meetings industry. The plan focuses on four areas: cutting emissions (including reducing travel impact), improving circularity in exhibitor materials, strengthening leadership engagement, and linking sustainability to commercial resilience. Overall, it marks a shift from broad commitments to more measurable, action-driven targets.

#### *ExCeL London joins The Business of Events as new partner*

ExCeL London [has joined The Business of Events](#) as a strategic partner, adding a major international venue to its growing think tank and advocacy network. The group now includes a mix of tourism bodies, venues, and industry organisations working together on policy, insight, and sector-wide challenges. The partnership reflects a broader push to strengthen collaboration and present a more unified voice for the events industry.

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

[Get in touch](#)

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