

Events Industry Alliance End of Week Report

Friday 5th June

EIA update

Hi all,

Parliament returned this week following its brief recess. Discussion has largely been dominated by the fallout from the tragic death of Henry Nowak, and the political response across parties. This comes alongside the ongoing release of government officials' communications with Peter Mandelson, and the upcoming Makerfield by-election. In Makerfield, Andy Burnham has now confirmed that he would enter any leadership contest should he become an MP. While this had been widely expected, it is the first time he has publicly stated his intentions.

On the events front, VisitBritain has disappointingly confirmed that it will reduce its dedicated business events team from nine staff to two, alongside the Government's decision to end ring-fenced funding for the Business Events Growth Programme. The EIA, alongside The Business of Events and 29 other industry bodies, has submitted a joint response outlining the negative impact this will have not just on events, but on the British economy as well. We also continue to await publication of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee's report on the major events inquiry. This has been further delayed, potentially in light of the VisitBritain announcement, and we will update members once the report is released.

The Event Supplier and Services Association (ESSA) board met this week, and we were pleased to present our work to date and strategic direction. If you have any questions following the session, please do get in touch.

We have also progressed engagement with key government stakeholders this week. We are currently finalising timings with the offices of several MPs who have venues in their constituencies, with a view to discussing the impact events have on their local areas. Earlier in the week, we met with part of the DBT external affairs team, the group responsible for coordinating ministerial attendance at events. This discussion provided useful insight into how events are positioned to ministers to encourage attendance, as well as how the Industrial Strategy is being considered at that level, which will inform our ongoing work to link events more closely to the Strategy.

Finally, we would like to give one last push on the ministerial attendance survey which have yielded some really interesting results. The link to the survey is still live for any members yet to fill it out. For organisations who wish to list multiple events please use the [venue's version](#) of the survey and stipulate that you are an organiser instead. The standard survey for organisers can be found [here](#). This will be members' last chance to fill out the survey!

Best,

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Government this week

Monday 1st June

- **Lord Livermore (Financial Secretary to the Treasury)** said [he believed](#) the UK will eventually rejoin the EU, calling it “an inevitability” driven by national economic interest, marking the first time a serving minister has openly suggested reversing Brexit. His comments, which came during a debate on the Middle East, go beyond Labour’s official stance under Starmer, which focuses on improving EU relations without rejoining, and hint that the current “reset” with Brussels could be a step toward membership.

Thursday 4th June

- The Treasury [announced](#) a £4 million funding boost for business debt advice services to help small businesses and the self-employed struggling with their finance.
- Minister for the Constitution and European Relations Nick Thomas-Symonds spoke at Enterprise Forum Business Discussion on [UK and EU Strategic Partnership](#).

What happened in Parliament

Monday 1st June

- Senior leaders from across the UK events industry, accessibility sector and Parliament gathered at Portcullis House, Westminster, to discuss the development of a more consistent and effective approach to accessibility across the UK events sector. The discussion followed the recent publication of the landmark Access All Areas: Closing the Accessibility Gap in Events [report](#), which revealed one in three event delegates identifies as having a disability, yet 93% continue to experience barriers when attending events. **Martin Rhodes (APPG Chair)** committed to asking for a meeting with the relevant Ministers to explore how policymakers can support the industry’s ambitions and help create greater alignment around accessibility standards.

Wednesday 3rd June

- The Lords held the First Reading of the Backbench ‘European Union (Withdrawal Arrangement) Bill, brought forward by **Lord Dodds (DUP)**. This is a purely procedural step with no debate or voting.
- The Lords also held the Second Reading of the Sporting Events Bill. The debate highlighted how large-scale sporting events act as platforms to showcase the UK’s wider offer – including culture, hospitality and tourism – bringing international visitors and spend. There were some debates around balancing economic benefits and protections, as well as the wide ranging powers it gave ministers.

Thursday 4th June

- The Lords debated a Parliamentary Question put forward by **Baroness Caine (Lab)** on ‘securing better cultural exchange arrangements between the creative sectors of the EU and the UK’. This largely focused on dancers; however, several members raised the issues of what roles count as a high skilled and how that limits workers’ ability to qualify for future visas.

Written Questions

Monday 1st June

- **Alison Griffiths (Conservative, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton)** [asked](#) several questions to the Chancellor of the Exchequer about the proposed overnight “visitor levy”. She inquired what assessments HM Treasury has made of the levy’s potential impacts small and medium enterprises in the hospitality and tourism sectors, as well as domestic tourism and employment in those sectors.
 - **Dan Tomlinson** noted that a public consultation on the design of these powers closed on 18th February 2026, and the Government will publish its response in due course. He emphasised that the details and impact of any visitor levy will depend on local decisions by mayors, who are expected to consult businesses and communities and produce impact assessments for their proposals.
- **Andrew Rosindell (Reform UK, Romford)** [asked](#) the Secretary of State for Business and Trade what assessment he has made of how proposals for closer regulatory alignment with the EU might affect the UK’s ability to negotiate trade agreements with other countries.
 - **Chris Bryant (Minister for Business and Trade)** replied that the UK is committed to honouring its existing trade agreements and that it’s not unusual for a country to have various trade deals and deeper regulatory ties with close neighbours. He stressed that talks with the EU on regulatory alignment are ongoing, but the Government is confident it can continue to meet its international trade obligations under any outcome. He also noted that closer alignment in certain areas is in the national interest, citing ongoing negotiations on a UK–EU food and drink agreement which could add about £5.1 billion annually to the UK economy.

Tuesday 2nd June

- **Sojan Joseph (Labour, Ashford)** [asked](#) the Chancellor what assessment she has made of the potential merits of extending business rates relief to small businesses that are not in the retail, hospitality or leisure sectors.
 - **Dan Tomlinson (Exchequer Secretary)** explained that the scope of those reliefs was designed to match that of earlier RHL relief, which focused on premises “reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public”. He added that around one-third of properties pay no business rates at all thanks to full Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR), with around 85,000 more receiving tapered relief.

Thursday 4th June

- **Steff Aquarone (Lib Dem, North Norfolk)** [asked](#) the Foreign Minister several questions about the rescheduling of the Illicit Finance Summit to December.
 - **Stephen Doughty (Minister of State for Europe, North America and Overseas Territories)** responded that the Summit had been moved due to scheduling issues in the international calendar.
- **Dame Harriet Baldwin (Conservative, West Worcestershire)** [asked](#) the Secretary of State for Business and Trade what discussions he has had with businesses on the potential impact of the Employment Rights Act on entry level jobs, part time roles, and workforce headcount.
 - **Kate Dearden (Minister for Employment Rights and Consumer Protection)** responded that there have been a number of impact assessments published for the Employments Rights Act, which were conducted in consultation with experts and businesses.

Regional news

EVENTIT comes to the South West

EVENTIT is bringing its EXPERIENCEit learning forum to Bristol for the first time on 7 - 8 July 2026, expanding into the South West after previous editions in Edinburgh and Manchester. The two-day event focuses on professional development for MICE professionals, combining workshops, networking and industry insight. A key feature is a bespoke Behaviour Lab developed by the Event Academy, adapted from its student programme for a wider industry audience. Using C-Me behavioural profiling, the session helps participants understand their own working style and adapt communication with colleagues, clients and suppliers, with practical tools designed for immediate use.

Week ahead

Tuesday 9th June

- The Economic Affairs Committee will discuss 'Fiscal devolution in England' with witnesses including **Philippa Childs (Deputy General Secretary, Bectu)**, **Jack Gamble (Director, Campaign for the Arts)** and **Ed Shedd (Chair, Create Central)**.
- The European Affairs Committee will discuss 'Dynamic alignment' with witnesses including **The Earl of Kinnoull (Former Chair of the Lords European Affairs Committee)**, **Professor Holger Hestermeyer (Professor of International and EU law, Diplomatic Academy, Vienna)** and **Sir Bill Cash (Former Chair, House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee)**

Wednesday 10th June

- PMQs. **Henham to monitor.**

Media snapshot

UK services firms post first drop in activity since April 2025

UK services sector activity contracted slightly in May, with the S&P Global PMI falling below 50 for the first time in over a year, as rising costs linked to the Iran conflict hit demand and business confidence. Firms faced strong inflationary pressures - particularly from energy, transport and wages - and passed these on through higher prices, even as hiring continued to decline for a 20th consecutive month. Despite this, the Bank of England is expected to hold interest rates steady for now, balancing persistent inflation against weakening growth and demand.

Hyve Group announced acquisition by Hellman & Friedman

Private equity firm Hellman & Friedman (H&F) has agreed to acquire global B2B events business Hyve Group from Providence Equity Partners and Searchlight Capital Partners, marking a new phase in the company's growth strategy. Hyve has built a portfolio of market-leading event brands across sectors including

healthcare, ecommerce, education technology, supply chain and marketing technology, connecting businesses, investors and decision-makers globally. In partnership with H&F, the business is expected to focus on accelerating international expansion, launching new events and broadening its range of adjacent products and services, while continuing to grow through acquisitions in high-growth markets. The deal comes amid increased mergers and acquisitions activity across the global events industry, as investors respond to strong demand for in-person networking and sector-specific business ecosystems.

Global Exhibitions Day marks the sector's economic footprint

The global exhibitions industry marked the 11th Global Exhibitions Day on Wednesday 3 June under the theme 'Exhibitions Drive Opportunities', with leading organisers including Clarion Events, Informa Markets, Messe Frankfurt and RX highlighting the sector's role in trade, investment and supply-chain formation

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

Get in touch

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