

## Events Industry Alliance End of Week Report *Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May*

### EIA update

Hi all,

The big political news of this week is the local elections. Full results are not yet in, but early signs point to significant Labour losses in traditional strongholds such as Tameside, Hartlepool and Wigan, alongside major gains for Reform following their surge since the 2024 General Election. The Greens have underperformed in some key targets including Hammersmith and Fulham and Reading, though several central London battlegrounds are still due later today, while the Conservatives have held Westminster and Bexley but are otherwise facing broader losses. Labour is also on track to lose control in Wales after more than a century in power. The Prime Minister defended his leadership this morning in Labour-held Ealing. The results suggest a fragmented political landscape, with votes increasingly split across five parties and growing evidence of tactical and cross-party voting. Further declarations are expected through the afternoon.

Back in Westminster, with Parliament in prorogation and political parties focused on the local elections, Henham has used the lighter cycle to prepare for the new Parliamentary session and MPs' return on Wednesday.

We have finalised our submission from the EIA to the CMS Committee's tourism inquiry call for written evidence, focusing on the Importance of business events to business tourism, and the impact business tourism has in regions, on the IS-8 growth sectors, and for the Government's 50 million visitor target.

We have also progressed engagement with DBT, meeting with **Isabel Stephen (Director-General, DBT)** and receiving a reply from **Chris Bryant (Minister for Trade)** who indicated a recognition that the department's current approach to ministerial attendance at major industry events lacks sufficient strategic planning and early commitment. We have agreed to develop a concise best-practice briefing for DBT setting out a clearer, earlier-commitment model for ministerial attendance, drawing on proven examples to support further senior-official engagement.

Correspondence has now also been sent to our 'MP champions' representing constituencies with major venues. This will position us for more meaningful engagement once MPs return and we look to build Parliamentary support ahead of the summer recess.

**Thank you to those who have continued to respond to our ministerial attendance survey this week.** If you haven't yet had a chance to complete it, you can find the survey [here](#), or for AEV members, a survey [here](#). Please do take a few minutes to respond, as the insights will help us better understand current government involvement in the events sector.

Best,  
Alexander

### Government this week

*Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May*

- DBT and the Cabinet Office trailed ‘[Greater Together LA](#)’ the largest ever UK trade mission to the United States, taking place 18<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Hundreds of UK business leaders will travel to Los Angeles, led by **Peter Kyle (Secretary of State for Business and Trade)** with senior business leaders representing each of the eight modern industrial strategy sectors. The press release noted they will “showcase where this government is backing industry with a deliberately more active state.”

#### *Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May*

- **Peter Kyle** [attended the G7 Trade Ministers’](#) meeting in Paris to discuss how the UK can strengthen the multilateral trading system, build resilient supply chains and promote fair and sustainable global trade, alongside engagement with business leaders and strategic investors.

#### *Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May*

- The UK and European Commission co-chaired a Specialised Committee on the [Implementation of the Windsor Framework in Brussels](#). The joint statement confirmed “robust ongoing preparatory work for the interplay between the Windsor Framework SPS provisions and the future EU-UK SPS Agreement”, building on the Common Understanding from the May 2025 UK-EU Summit. The session feeds directly into the dynamic-alignment narrative widely expected to feature in next week’s King’s Speech.

## What happened in Parliament

Parliament is currently prorogued; both Houses will return on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May for the State Opening and the King’s Speech.

## Regional news

#### *Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May*

- Yesterday, over 5,000 councillors were elected across 136 councils in England as well as representatives to the Welsh and Scottish parliaments. Full results will not be known until later today, but the predictions of a Labour collapse are already manifesting, with Reform the biggest winner.

## Week ahead

#### *Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April*

- The State Opening of Parliament will commence with the King’s Speech in the House of Lords - written by the government to outline its policies and proposed legislation for the new parliamentary session. Recent signalling from Ministers suggests there will be several new legislative pushes including powers to grant Mayors greater control implementing Visitor Levies to fund regional growth as well as legislation that will enable “dynamic alignment” with certain European Union laws if it is in the national interest.

#### *Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April*

- The House of Lords will commence its first of five days debating the King’s Speech, focusing on economic growth, trade and EU partnership.

## Media snapshot

*Three in ten SME traders expect to reduce or stop EU trade*

The Federation of Small Businesses published [Ticket to Trade: Making EU trade easier for SMEs](#), finding that three in ten SME traders expect to reduce or stop EU trade if current rules do not change, as red tape, compliance costs, VAT complexity, and border delays continue to make EU trade increasingly difficult for small firms. The FSB is calling for reforms including mutual recognition of standards, a single digital customs system, and simplified VAT and low-value trade rules to restore EU market access for small businesses.

#### *New Research into Value of UK Outdoor Events Sector – £25 billion and Counting*

New research by [The Power of Events](#) estimates the UK outdoor events sector generates at least £25bn annually, making it the largest segment of the wider events industry. The report finds events deliver significant wider economic impact, with every £1 of organiser revenue generating roughly £1.50–£2.80 in additional spending across local economies. It also argues the sector is undervalued and under-recognised by government despite its scale, community reach, and economic contribution.

#### *Excel London attracts almost 250,000 visitors in a single week*

Excel London [hosted nearly](#) 250,000 visitors across one week in April, with events such as AWS Summit London, TCS London Marathon Running Show and the Retail Technology Show, marking one of its busiest periods since the 2012 London Olympic Games. Despite transport strikes, strong international turnout and this mix of major events highlighted London's continued strength as a global hub for business and live experiences.

#### *Event industry skills gap being tackled by new training initiative*

TEMBO [has launched in-person training programmes](#), arguing the events industry faces a skills gap rather than a talent shortage. The courses focus on event marketing, content production and leadership, offering practical frameworks for teams managing more complex, multi-channel delivery with tighter resources. The move builds on work with organisers including Informa and RX Global, as demand grows for stronger in-house capability amid rising pressures.

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

[Get in touch](#)

*If you would like to unsubscribe from these updates, please email [alexander.edwards@henhamstrategy.co.uk](mailto:alexander.edwards@henhamstrategy.co.uk)*