

At face value: The King's Speech and the future of ticket reselling in UK sport

The King's Speech on 13 May 2026 confirmed the Government's intention to reform the secondary ticketing market. Two measures were announced: a draft Ticket Tout Ban Bill which will be published for consultation and a Sporting Events Bill which will be brought forward as primary legislation, including measures to deter or prohibit ticket touting for major sporting events.

Together, they represent a significant regulatory shift for those involved in the business of sports, from ticket rights holders to ticketing partners and resale platforms. The bifurcated legislative approach means that major sporting events are likely to see earlier and more targeted intervention than non-major sporting events and the wider live events sector.

In this article, we examine what has been announced, how it fits into the wider regulatory picture, and the key actions that sports-sector stakeholders should be considering.

1. The road to the King's Speech

The Labour Government came to office with a promise to introduce consumer protections on ticket resale and "put fans back at the heart of events". As part of a public consultation in early 2025, it canvassed views on a range of options for the secondary ticketing market including a face-value price cap, service fee and bulk purchasing limits and new obligations on resale platforms. In November 2025, the Government confirmed that new laws addressing these measures would be introduced.

Against this backdrop and equipped with an enhanced enforcement toolkit under the Digital Markets, Competition

¹ The consumer law elements of the DMCCA came into force on 6 April 2025, enhancing the UK's existing consumer protection regime. The CMA can now issue infringement notices for breaches of consumer protection law and impose direct fines of up to 10% of a company's annual global turnover and/or impose other measures, e.g. to pay redress or remove or modify infringing conduct. See our publication [here](#) for more detail.

² More information on the CMA's investigation and Ticketmaster's undertakings is available in our publication [here](#).

and Consumers Act 2024 (DMCCA),¹ the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has been increasingly active in the ticketing space. In September 2025, it secured undertakings from Ticketmaster to improve ticket sales transparency following an investigation of complaints about Ticketmaster's handling of ticket sales for the Oasis 2025 reunion tour.² In November 2025, the CMA launched investigations into major resale platforms Viagogo and StubHub using its new direct enforcement powers, citing concerns about mandatory fees and pressure-selling tactics.³ The CMA has made clear that this is just the start of its enforcement work across the ticketing sector.

2. What the King's Speech announced

2.1 The draft Ticket Tout Ban Bill.

The centrepiece consumer and ticket resale measure coming out of the King's Speech is a *draft* bill. This will be subject to pre-legislative parliamentary scrutiny and further industry consultation before being formally introduced to Parliament. To the public disappointment of industry and consumer groups,⁴ final legislation and changes to the legal framework governing secondary ticketing therefore remain some time (potentially years) away.

Despite the procedural delay, the draft bill confirms the Government's 2025 commitments to "destroy the operating model of ticket touts" by making it unlawful to resell a ticket above its original price plus any unavoidable fees paid originally (e.g. service charges). The draft bill will also cap resale platform fees, prohibit the resale of more tickets than

³ More information on these investigations, the first under the DMCCA enhanced consumer protection regime, is available in our publication [here](#).

⁴ See, for example, [King's Speech leaves events industry frustrated by Government inaction on ticketing - Access All Areas \(13 May 2026\)](#), accessed 14 May 2026.

a buyer was originally entitled to purchase, and bolster compliance obligations on resale platforms.

2.2 The Sporting Events Bill.

In contrast to the draft Ticket Tout Ban Bill, the Sporting Events Bill is primary legislation and will proceed through Parliament more swiftly. In addition to ticket touting provisions for “major” sporting events⁵ that will operate alongside the draft bill, the Sporting Events Bill will contain a raft of powers designed to protect the commercial rights of event organisers and create a common legislative framework for hosting major sporting events in the UK, including ministerial powers to streamline approvals.⁶

3. What the reforms mean for the sports sector

3.1 Major sporting events are likely to be affected first.

A notable feature of the Government’s legislative package is the different treatment of major sporting events. Introducing measures to deter or prohibit ticket touting for major sporting events in primary legislation but confining broader reform of the resale market to draft legislation creates a bifurcated approach in which secondary ticketing for major sporting events is likely to see earlier – and potentially more targeted and prescriptive – intervention than other sporting events and the wider live events sector.

3.2 Ticket rights holders.

The anticipated reforms will significantly constrain the ability to monetise demand via secondary ticketing markets and use third-party resale platforms without enhanced compliance mechanisms. Rights holders may therefore wish to consider the extent to which current pricing and allocation models rely on secondary market dynamics and whether alternative strategies, including controlled resale mechanisms, could be desirable under the new regime.

For clubs and governing bodies that already operate official fan-to-fan exchange schemes, their platforms will need to be structured so that any resale does not exceed the statutory face-value cap. The definition of “original ticket price” will be critical as how hospitality bundles, booking fees, dynamic pricing tiers, and similar features are treated in the final legislation will directly affect what is permissible on official exchange platforms.

⁵ Under UK law and Government’s policy, a “major” sporting event is often classified as a “listed event” under the Broadcasting Act 1996 (meaning it has been identified by the Secretary of State as having special national interest and must be offered to free-to-air broadcasters), or under the [Gold Framework](#) as a world championship, European championship or other event that supports the qualification and preparation of British athletes.

3.3 Venue and primary ticketing operators.

Although the Government does not intend to legislate on the primary ticketing market for now, primary sellers are not beyond regulatory reach, as the Ticketmaster investigation made clear. Venue and primary ticketing operators should consider reviewing contractual arrangements with resale partners to assess whether they align with incoming obligations. More broadly, these operators should ensure that their pricing disclosure practices are compliant with the price transparency requirements of the DMCCA.

3.4 Secondary ticketing platforms.

Under the resale reforms, the existing business model of facilitating above-face-value resale and earning commission on the mark-up will be unlawful. Monitoring, compliance and enforcement obligations will also apply to resale platforms. This is likely to increase compliance costs and may reshape the viability of certain secondary market channels. In addition to these potential commercial implications, resale platforms should consider their legal exposure under both the incoming legislation and DMCCA regime. The ongoing Viagogo and StubHub investigations are a clear signal that the CMA will not wait for the new legislation before ensuring compliance with consumer protection laws in the ticketing space.

4. Conclusion

The King’s Speech confirms a clear policy commitment to reform the UK secondary ticketing market, with an emphasis on price controls, platform regulation and major sporting events.

While the immediate position is unchanged, sports-sector stakeholders should consider reviewing their ticketing and resale contracts, policies and practices against the proposed reforms and actively preparing to participate in consultation on the draft Ticket Tout Ban Bill. Those who engage early may be better placed to shape the final legislation and adapt to this new regulatory environment.

Our firm regularly advises on consumer and competition law issues across a wide range of sports. We combined deep sector expertise with a practical and commercial approach.

⁶ This would remove the current requirement for bespoke legislative assessment for each major sporting event, which the Government regards as a deterrent to global sports bodies when selecting UK host nations.

Contact



ALEX BULFIN
Partner
T: +44 (0)20 7090 3454
E: alex.bulfin@slaughterandmay.com



TIM BLANCHARD
Partner
T: +44(0) 20 7090 3931
E: tim.blanchard@slaughterandmay.com



JONNY SLADE
Partner
T: +32(0) 2 737 94 36
E: jonathan.slade@slaughterandmay.com



MARLON KERSTENS
Associate
T: +44 (0)20 7090 3338
E: marlon.kerstens@slaughterandmay.com



SMRITI SRIRAM
Partner
T: +44(0) 20 7090 3718
E: smriti.sriram@slaughterandmay.com

London

T +44 (0)20 7600 1200
F +44 (0)20 7090 5000

Brussels

T +32 (0)2 737 94 00
F +32 (0)2 737 94 01

Hong Kong

T +852 2521 0551
F +852 2845 2125

Beijing

T +86 10 5965 0600
F +86 10 5965 0650

Published to provide general information and not as legal advice. © Slaughter and May, 2026.
For further information, please speak to your usual Slaughter and May contact.

www.slaughterandmay.com