Sporting Events Bill [HL]

Written evidence submitted by viagogo to the House of Commons Public Bill Committee

October 2026

Summary

1. viagogo welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence on the Sporting Events Bill [HL].[1] This evidence is predominantly confined to the ticketing provisions: clauses 5 to 7, clause 18, clause 19 and Schedule 1, read with the framework conditions in clause 3 as amended in the House of Lords.

2. The Bill before the Committee is materially different from the Bill the Government introduced, consulted on and assessed. As introduced, the ticket touting offence could only be applied to events *not regularly held* in the United Kingdom: infrequent, bid-for tournaments such as EURO 2028, where international rights holders require host-government guarantees. The Lords removed that condition at Report stage on 15 July 2026.[2] The offence can now be applied, at an organiser's request, to any sporting event of 'significant international or national interest' held in the UK, including events that take place every year and are attended by millions of spectators. The Government resisted the amendment, and its impact assessment, delegated powers memorandum and consultation with stakeholders all pre-date it. No assessment has been made of what a standing criminal prohibition on unauthorised resale would mean for fans, for competition in ticketing, or for fraud.

3. We ask the Committee to consider three consequences of the ticketing provisions in their expanded form:

- **Displacement of resale to illicit channels.** Demand for resale does not disappear when regulated resale is prohibited. It moves to pop-up websites, social media and messaging apps, where fraud is concentrated and where fans have no guarantee or refund. The UK already has one sector with a de facto resale ban, football, and the Government's own Fraud Strategy records that football ticket fraud is rampant there.
- **Loss of consumer choice.** The offence is drafted so that a fan who lists a spare ticket online, regardless of price, commits a criminal offence. The Bill places no duty on the organiser to offer any resale, exchange or refund route in return. A fan who cannot attend may simply lose the full price of the ticket.
- **Entrenchment of market power.** The designated authorising person, in practice the event organiser, acquires a statutory veto over who may resell tickets, exercisable by reference to its own commercial contracts and backed by criminal sanction. In a primary ticketing market that the Business and Trade Committee found in May 2026 to be

[1] Sporting Events Bill [HL], Bill 133, as brought from the Lords. https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/59-02/0133/260133.pdf

[2] HL Hansard, Report stage, 15 July 2026; House of Commons Library, Sporting Events Bill [HL] 2026-27, CBP-10933. https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10933/

dominated by one vertically integrated company, that veto will be used to route all resale through the organiser's own or its exclusive partner's channel.

4. **Our primary recommendation** is that the Committee amend clauses 5 to 7 and clause 19 so that, wherever the ticketing provisions are applied to an event, the following safeguards apply as a matter of statute: (i) ticketing authorisations must be available on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms to any business meeting objective consumer protection standards; (ii) a fan-to-fan resale or refund route must be guaranteed with no restrictions; (iii) the register of authorisations, including refusals and reasons, must be public; and (iv) the clause 19 exemption must not treat an online service that actively protects consumers less favourably than one that does nothing. We also ask that the Government publish an updated impact assessment of the ticketing provisions before Report stage, and that the ticketing provisions be subject to a post-event review laid before Parliament.

5. **Our fallback recommendation,** if the Committee is not minded to add those safeguards, is to reinstate the original 'not regularly held' condition for the ticket touting provisions only (that is, for regulations made under clause 2(1)(a)), while leaving the expanded scope in place for the advertising, trading and unauthorised association provisions. The case made in the Lords for widening the Bill was predominantly focused on ambush marketing and sponsor protection at events such as Wimbledon and the British Grand Prix.[3] It was not a case for criminalising everyday sports fans for reselling tickets to annual domestic events when their plans change.

6. Proposed amendments are set out in Section G and suggested questions for the Minister in Section H. We would be pleased to provide further information to the Committee or to officials.

A. About viagogo

7. viagogo is the world's largest secondary marketplace for tickets to live events. We have served over 3.4 million UK residents over more than 20 years. Research by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) indicates that fans purchasing tickets on secondary platforms like viagogo over the last year contributed £733 million to local businesses and supported 7,736 full-time jobs across the UK.

8. viagogo complements the primary ticketing market by allowing ticket holders to manage changing circumstances. The secondary market gives fans flexibility and choice: it lets them recover their money on tickets they cannot use, and it lets people who were unable or unwilling to take part in a primary sale attend events they would otherwise miss. It also supports the live events sector by filling seats and driving revenue through concessions and merchandise.

9. Every transaction on viagogo is protected by our guarantee. We do not pay sellers until after the fan has successfully attended the event. We verify sellers, hold funds, and manage delivery so that fans receive the tickets they paid for in time. We comply with the information requirements for secondary ticketing in sections 90 and 91 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and operate under the oversight of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). The

[3] Lewis Silkin, 'The Sporting Events Bill: annual events move closer to protection', 1 October 2026. https://www.lewissilkin.com/insights/2026/10/01/the-sporting-events-bill-annual-events-move-closer-to-protection-102o40d

regulated secondary market is the principal safeguard against ticket fraud: it is the alternative to buying from strangers on social media who may or may not even have tickets.

10. viagogo has direct experience of event-specific ticketing prohibitions in the UK and overseas, and of the market and consumer effects of resale restrictions in jurisdictions including Ireland, Belgium, France and Italy. In 2025 we commissioned independent research from the financial crime consultancy We Fight Fraud into the effect of resale restrictions on fraud; its findings are drawn on below and the full report is available to the Committee on request.

B. The ticketing provisions and how the Lords changed them

The offence

11. Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 makes it an offence to 'tout' an event ticket in the relevant area during the specified period. A person touts a ticket if they carry out an *unauthorised ticketing activity* (a) in a public place, (b) in the course of a business, or (c) with a view to any person making a profit. The three limbs are alternatives. 'Ticketing activities' are selling, offering to sell, exposing for sale, or advertising that a ticket is available for purchase. 'In a public place' expressly includes communicating to the public by means of an internet service, so the offence applies to online as well as in-person sales.

12. The penalties are an unlimited fine on summary conviction in England and Wales, a fine of up to £50,000 in Northern Ireland, and up to £20,000 (summary) or an unlimited fine (indictment) in Scotland. Part 2 of Schedule 1 adds a civil financial penalty of up to £20,000 that trading standards, the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland or the CMA may impose as an alternative to prosecution. Paragraph 2 gives the offence extra-territorial reach over UK persons wherever they are and over non-UK businesses with a 'UK connection'. Clause 18 makes the CMA an enforcement authority for the offence.

13. Paragraph 3 of Schedule 1 and clause 6 provide that regulations must designate one or more persons to grant 'ticketing authorisations'. The Explanatory Notes describe this as giving the appropriate person, usually the event owner or organiser, the exclusive right to sell tickets to the event or to authorise others to do so.[4] In deciding whether to authorise, the designated person may have regard to any agreements entered into for the purposes of the event (paragraph 3(3)). Conditions on the designated person are discretionary and, on the face of the Bill, limited to keeping a register (clause 6(3) and (4)). The designated person cannot itself commit the offence (paragraph 1(5)). Clause 7 allows regulations to carve out activities from the offence; following a Lords amendment it now gives charitable activity as an example, but there is no exception for ordinary fans.

What the Lords changed

14. As introduced, clause 3 imposed three framework conditions: the event must be held wholly or partly in the UK; it must be 'of a kind that is not regularly held' in the UK; and it must be likely to be of significant international interest and bring social or economic benefits (or facilitate

[4]Explanatory Notes to Bill 133, p.10, as summarised in House of Lords Library, Sporting Events Bill [HL], LLN-2026-0025, 26 May 2026. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2026-0025/LLN-2026-0025.pdf

events that would). The Government's Explanatory Notes gave the FA Cup Final and the Wimbledon Championships as examples of events that would *not* qualify.[5]

15. At Report stage on 15 July 2026 the House agreed, by 212 votes to 171 and against the Government, an amendment led by Lord Addington that removed the 'not regularly held' condition, widened the interest test to 'international or national' interest, and added a requirement that the organiser has asked for the framework to be applied.[6] The updated Explanatory Notes are reported to state that Wimbledon, The Open Championship and the Formula 1 British Grand Prix could now qualify.[7] The Government also accepted amendments, following the recommendation of the Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, so that all regulations applying the framework are subject to the affirmative procedure.[8] We welcome that change, but affirmative regulations cannot add safeguards that are absent from the parent Act.

16. The combined effect is that the ticket touting offence, which was designed and justified as an exceptional host guarantee for infrequent international tournaments, has become a standing power available on request to the organiser of any major annual event in British sport. The Bill's impact assessment estimated its benefit at around £5 million of savings to Government over ten years from avoiding bespoke legislation for irregular events.[9] It did not quantify any consumer cost of the ticketing provisions, and nothing has been published since the scope was widened. The sporting bodies that wrote in support of the Addington amendment were concerned with ambush marketing and the protection of sponsorship revenue, matters addressed by Schedules 2 to 4, not by Schedule 1. Those Schedules carry their own unassessed consequences once applied to annual events. Around Silverstone, Wimbledon or the Open a local economy of independent campsites, guest houses, pubs and traders has grown up over decades, trading openly on its proximity to the event. The unauthorised association prohibition in Schedule 4 protects existing uses only where a representation was already in use before the relevant protection date; any new business, or any existing one that adapts its offer, would be exposed. The effect is to freeze the local events economy at its current size and composition, inhibiting the new ventures that bring fans choice, bring the area spending and bring the event the surrounding infrastructure it depends on. These are the very traders, that create the economic value in hosting these events in their communities and will now be prevented from benefiting in their success. None of this has been weighed. A revision of this breadth to the Bill's original purpose, made without an assessment of its impact on the wider events economy and on benefits that are real but hard to measure, is a reason for caution across the whole

[5]House of Lords Library, LLN-2026-0025, p.9, citing Explanatory Notes p.7.
https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2026-0025/LLN-2026-0025.pdf

[6]House of Commons Library, CBP-10933, 'Report stage'. https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10933/

[7]Lewis Silkin, 1 October 2026, citing the updated Explanatory Notes.
https://www.lewissilkin.com/insights/2026/10/01/the-sporting-events-bill-annual-events-move-closer-to-protection-102o40d

[8]Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, 6th Report of Session 2026-27, HL Paper 36, Appendix 1.
https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5902/ldselect/lddelreg/36/36.pdf

[9]DCMS, Sporting Events Bill: Final stage impact assessment, May 2026, p.13.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a058934da82768016cb3f25/Final_Stage_Impact_Assessment_on_the_Sporting_Events_Bill_from_the_Department_for_Culture__Media_and_Sport__May_2026_.pdf

framework, and a particular reason for caution on the one part of it, Schedule 1, that creates a criminal offence.

17. At Second Reading in the Commons on 3 September 2026 the Secretary of State indicated that the Government would address the inclusion of domestic events during the Bill's passage. Committee stage is therefore the right point at which to decide what safeguards should accompany a ticketing prohibition that may now apply, year after year, to events attended by millions of fans.

C. Displacement of resale to illicit channels

18. Prohibiting resale does not remove the demand for it. Fans fall ill, shifts change, children's fixtures move, travel falls through. For a multi-day event or a tournament with tickets sold a year in advance, a meaningful share of ticket holders will be unable to attend. Where sought-after events have sold out, there will equally be fans willing to pay to attend. The question for the Committee is not whether that supply and demand will meet, but where.

The UK already has a de facto resale ban: football

19. The Committee does not need to speculate about how a standing resale prohibition for recurring sporting events would operate in the UK. One already exists. Section 166 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 makes it a criminal offence to resell a ticket for a designated football match without the club's authorisation, in any place and at any price.[10] It has been in force for over thirty years, is enforced by police forces and by the clubs themselves, and is structurally the same model the Bill would extend to other sports: resale is lawful only through channels the rights holder approves.

20. The Government's own Fraud Strategy 2026-2029, published by the Home Office in March 2026, records the result. Its case study on ticket fraud states that over the past two seasons more than 2,400 cases of football ticket fraud were reported to Lloyds Bank alone, with losses exceeding £500,000, and that criminals exploit the Premier League kick-off every August.[11] The same Strategy records that 53% of reported authorised push payment fraud in 2023 involved social media, messaging and call platforms.[12] Lloyds has separately reported that football ticket scams rose by around a third in the 2023/24 season and that most start on social media, where impostors create fake profiles to sell non-existent tickets.[13]

21. Independent field testing confirms the picture. In March 2025 We Fight Fraud, a financial crime consultancy led by a criminologist and a former head of financial crime at the Metropolitan Police, attempted to buy tickets for a Premier League fixture at Anfield through social media and through resale websites. Of five purchases, two were outright scams using bank transfer

[10]Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, section 166. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1994/33/section/166

[11]Home Office, Fraud Strategy 2026-2029: Disrupting crime, supporting economic resilience and delivering justice, CP 1523, March 2026, p.33, 'Case Study: Stop! Think Fraud Industry Collaboration'. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69ae77ddc78869bf8eb8a509/fraud-strategy-web.pdf

[12]Fraud Strategy 2026-2029, paragraph 25. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69ae77ddc78869bf8eb8a509/fraud-strategy-web.pdf

[13]Lloyds Banking Group, 'Scammers scoring big: warning of huge increase in football ticket scams ahead of new season', 1 August 2023, and subsequent Lloyds releases for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 seasons. https://www.lloydsbankinggroup.com/media/press-releases/2023/lloyds-bank-2023/scammers-scoring-big.html

and 'name change' fees, and three were genuine tickets resold unlawfully by websites hosted outside the UK, one of which advertised more than 15,000 positive reviews. Every seller communicated from a non-UK number. The researchers concluded that the football prohibition has not suppressed demand but displaced it into channels that are harder to police, and that the fraudulent listings were priced close to face value, so that neither a prohibition nor a price cap would have deterred them.[14]

22. The scale of continuing unauthorised football resale is also visible in the clubs' own enforcement. Liverpool FC and Merseyside Police have reported that, in the 2025/26 season alone, the club had analysed almost 700,000 ticket registrations, blocked or cancelled 67,663 suspected fake accounts, placed a further 121,379 under investigation, issued 432 lifetime bans, and worked with the police to seize £1.2 million of criminal assets linked to organised touting.[15] Merseyside Police have also launched an investigation into the touting of Everton tickets.[16] None of this activity took place on a regulated resale platform, because the law does not allow it to. Thirty years of criminal prohibition have produced industrial-scale touting through burner phones, fake accounts and offshore websites, alongside a fraud problem serious enough to feature in the national Fraud Strategy. That is the model the Bill proposes to extend.

Where displaced demand goes

23. The evidence from the UK's banks is consistent on where ticket fraud occurs. Lloyds reports that the vast majority of ticket scams start on social media, and that more than 600 of its customers lost an average of £332 each to fake Taylor Swift tickets, most originating from adverts on Facebook.[17] Santander reported an 82% rise in football ticket scams reported to the bank in 2023, and that where the origin of a ticket scam was known, Facebook and X together accounted for around two thirds of cases,[18] and that over half of its authorised push payment fraud claims in the first quarter of 2025 involved ticket purchase scams.[19] Action Fraud recorded £9.7 million of reported ticket fraud losses in 2024, up 47% on 2023, and UK Finance estimates that only around 14% of fraud is reported.[20]

24. Jurisdictions that have restricted resale show the same pattern. In Ireland, where resale above face value has been prohibited for designated events since 2021, 13.6% of fans surveyed in 2024 reported being victims of ticket fraud, more than three times the 3.8% rate recorded in the UK,

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[14]We Fight Fraud, Ticket Resale: Understanding the Unintended Consequences, 2025, 'Football Ticket Resale (UK)'. This research was commissioned by viagogo. The full report is available to the Committee on request.

[15]Liverpool FC, 'LFC and Merseyside Police work together to seize £1.2m of assets from ticket touts', 2026. https://www.liverpoolfc.com/news/lfc-and-merseyside-police-work-together-seize-ps12m-assets-ticket-touts

[16]Liverpool Echo, 'Everton ticket touting investigation launched', 2026. https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/everton-ticket-touting-investigation-launched-34519453

[17]Lloyds Bank, 'Ticket scams' guidance, citing analysis of purchase scams reported July 2023 to March 2024. https://www.lloydsbank.com/help-guidance/protecting-yourself-from-fraud/ticket-scams.html

[18]Santander UK, 'Santander warns football fans not to score an own goal this summer amid warning that £780,000 could be lost', press release, 29 May 2024. https://www.santander.co.uk/about-santander/media-centre/press-releases/santander-warns-football-fans-not-to-score-an-own-goal/

[19]Santander UK, Quarterly Scamtracker, 2 April 2025. https://www.santander.com/en/press-room/press-releases/2025/04/the-santander-quarterly-scamtracker-reveals-more-than-18m-stolen-by-scammers-last-quarter-with-more-than-half-swiped-through-purchase-scams

[20]Action Fraud, 'Ticket fraud'; UK Finance, Fraud Report 2025, as cited in We Fight Fraud (2025), available on request. https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/ticketfraud

where resale is regulated but not capped.[21] In 2021 the CMA itself concluded that banning the uncapped secondary market in favour of a capped alternative would be very difficult to enforce, that consumers could lose the protections offered by established resale platforms, and that it was not aware of any jurisdiction where uncapped resale had been successfully eradicated.[22] Professor Waterson's independent review for the Government in 2016 warned of 'an increased likelihood of sellers moving abroad' and of routes to market 'based in other jurisdictions, meaning any legislation would be extremely difficult to police or future-proof'.[23]

25. Our own polling bears this out. An Opinium survey of 2,000 UK ticket buyers in August 2026 found that 45% had bought a resale ticket, that 13% had done so through social media, and that 59% said the availability of verified resale gave them the confidence to buy at all.[24] When the only lawful route to a ticket is the organiser's channel, and that channel has none, the fan who still wants to go buys from whoever is left.

26. The extra-territorial provisions in paragraph 2 of Schedule 1 will bite on the businesses least likely to cause harm. A UK-established business with a compliance function, and a relationship with the CMA will comply with a designation and police inventory for the event. A pop-up website registered overseas, with no UK establishment, taking card payments through a foreign processor and changing domain every few weeks, will not be deterred by a UK offence that cannot be practically prosecuted. The We Fight Fraud testing found exactly those operators serving UK football fans in 2025, in open breach of a thirty-year-old criminal prohibition, that was implemented to protect fans on public safety grounds, not the economic protection of event organiser, and yet with such a serious and important rationale, it still remains a continuing and significant illicit market.

Clause 19

27. Clause 19 exempts 'internet service providers', defined by reference to the Online Safety Act 2023, from the offence where they transmit or passively store user content and act on knowledge. The effect is that the social media and peer-to-peer services on which, by the Government's own account, most ticket fraud takes place are shielded from the offence, provided they do nothing more than host listings and remove them when told to. An online service that takes active responsibility for the transactions it facilitates, by verifying sellers, holding payment until the event has taken place, guaranteeing delivery and complying with sections 90 and 91 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015, falls outside the exemption precisely because it does more than host. The clause rewards passivity and penalises consumer protection.

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[21] Bradshaw Advisory, 'Ticket fraud: its impact and the cost of market regulation', 2025. https://bradshawadvisory.com/insights/ticket-fraud-its-impact-and-the-cost-of-market-regulation

[22] Competition and Markets Authority, Secondary ticketing: recommendations to Government, August 2021. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61163dd1d3bf7f63a54f5f94/Secondary_Tickets_Report.pdf

[23] Waterson, M., Independent Review of Consumer Protection Measures concerning Online Secondary Ticketing Facilities, May 2016, pp.151-152. https://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/112598/1/WRAP-independent-review-consumer-protection-measures-concerning-online-secondary-ticketing-facilities-Waterson-2016.pdf

[24] Opinium for Zeno Group, survey of 2,000 UK ticket buyers, fieldwork 19 to 24 August 2026 (UK30389). Full tables available to the Committee on request.

28. That is the wrong incentive to write into a Bill whose stated purpose is to protect fans. We ask the Committee to amend clause 19 so that an online service which operates to published consumer protection standards, and which removes listings for a designated event on notice from the designated authorising person, is treated no less favourably than a service that merely hosts content. If that cannot be achieved, clause 19 should be removed, so that the offence applies evenly to every online channel and enforcement authorities cannot pick their targets by business model.

29. The Government has said that the ticketing provisions will ensure greater access to tickets for fans.[25] We would ask the Committee to test that claim. Fans who buy from an unauthorised source under this Bill will hold tickets that the organiser may cancel, with no recourse. Fans who sell will be criminals. Fans who neither buy nor sell will attend an event with the same number of seats as before. The potential net effect is empty seats, fans out of pocket and the potential for lost revenue for the event organiser.

D. Consumer choice

30. Because the three limbs of Schedule 1, paragraph 1(2) are alternatives, a fan who posts a single spare ticket on any website or app, commits the offence under limb (a) regardless of whether they are in business or seeking a profit. The Lords added an example for charitable activity to clause 7; nothing was added for the ordinary consumer. The Committee should be clear that, as drafted, the Bill does not target touts. It targets anyone who sells.

31. The Bill places no corresponding duty on the designated authorising person. There is no requirement to offer a resale facility, an exchange, a transfer mechanism or a refund. A fan who cannot attend a designated event therefore has three options: break the law, give the ticket away, or lose the full purchase price while the organiser is free to resell the same seat. For a family holding tickets to a multi-day event, the sum at stake can be many thousands of pounds.

32. This goes further than the Government's own flagship consumer policy. The proposed Ticket Tout Ban Bill announced in the King's Speech would price-cap resale across live events; it would not prohibit resale.[26] Under the Sporting Events Bill, by contrast, a fan could lawfully resell a festival ticket at face value under the future regime and simultaneously commit a criminal offence by reselling a ticket to a designated sporting event on the same terms. We do not think Parliament intends two inconsistent standards for the same conduct, and we think the inconsistency arises because the Sporting Events Bill was drafted for a narrow set of events and has been widened without the ticketing provisions being revisited.

33. The Opinium survey found that 62% of UK ticket buyers had missed out on tickets to an event they wanted to attend in the last twelve months, and that 35% would hold off buying a ticket at all if there were no resale option. A standing prohibition on resale does not only harm fans

[25]Prime Minister's Office, The King's Speech 2026: background briefing notes, 13 May 2026, p.66. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a18713db95db968c8f3bbfd/The_King_s_Speech_2026_-_background_briefing_notes.pdf#page=66

[26]The King's Speech 2026: background briefing notes, p.64. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a18713db95db968c8f3bbfd/The_King_s_Speech_2026_-_background_briefing_notes.pdf#page=66

who cannot attend; it suppresses demand at the point of primary sale, to the detriment of the events the Bill is meant to support.

34. Existing law already protects consumers in the secondary market: sections 90 and 91 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 require sellers and platforms to disclose face value, seat location, restrictions and seller identity, enforced by the CMA and trading standards, and the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 strengthened those powers. The Bill does not build on that framework. It replaces a regulated market with a prohibition, and relies on the organiser to decide whether any alternative should exist.

E. Competition in ticketing

35. Clause 6 and paragraph 3 of Schedule 1 together give the designated authorising person a statutory monopoly over resale authorisation, to be exercised with regard to the commercial agreements it has already entered into. The Government's delegated powers memorandum states that conditions may relate to 'ticketing practices or pricing structures, taking into account the commercial arrangements of the sporting event'.[27] In plain terms, the Bill empowers a private rights holder to decide who may resell, at what price and on what terms, and makes it a criminal offence to do otherwise. There is no requirement that the authorising person's decisions be objective, non-discriminatory, reasoned or reviewable.

36. That power will be exercised in a market that is already highly concentrated. The Business and Trade Committee's report of 24 May 2026 on competition in the live music industry found that Live Nation directly controlled 58% of the 23.1 million tickets on sale in 2025, rising to 66% with its affiliates; recorded evidence that resale was being restricted to Ticketmaster's own platform, with AXS doing the same; concluded that all three of the CMA's tests for market dominance were met; and recommended a full CMA market investigation by the end of 2026.[28] Those findings concern music, but the same companies supply primary ticketing to UK sport. In our August 2026 survey, 58% of UK ticket buyers said Ticketmaster has too much control over ticketing and 70% supported a CMA investigation into Live Nation when told of the April 2026 US monopoly ruling. In sport, rights holders are increasingly operating captive 'official resale' platforms: FIFA's control of both primary and resale channels for the 2026 World Cup, with its own fee structure and price floors, is the current example. The Bill would hand every designated organiser the same model, under criminal sanction, without any of the scrutiny that a regulator or Parliament would apply to a statutory monopoly.

37. The result is predictable. Organisers will authorise their exclusive primary ticketing partner and no one else. Fees on the official resale channel will be set without competitive constraint. Service standards, refund terms and buyer protection will be whatever the organiser chooses. Independent resale platforms that meet every consumer protection standard in UK law will be excluded not because they are unsafe but because they compete. The designated person is itself

[27] DCMS, Sporting Events Bill: Delegated powers memorandum, May 2026, p.18. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a058d2fda82768016cb3f2c/House_of_Lords_Introduction__Delegated_Powers_Memorandum_-_The_Sporting_Events_Bill.pdf

[28] Business and Trade Committee, Competition and market functioning in the UK live music industry, Third Report of Session 2026-27, HC 128, 24 May 2026, Summary and paragraphs 27 to 31. https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5902/cmselect/cmbeis/128/report.html

immune from the offence (paragraph 1(5)), so there is no legal check on how it conducts its own resale.

38. The Bill's mechanism for scrutiny is the register in clause 6(4). It is optional, and it records only authorisations granted. It does not record refusals, the criteria applied, or the terms imposed. The CMA, which has a statutory role in both consumer protection and competition in this market and which the Bill makes an enforcement authority for the offence, has no role in the designation of the authorising person or in reviewing its decisions.

39. We suggest that where Parliament confers a criminal-law monopoly on a private body, the body should be subject to statutory conditions: authorisation on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms; objective criteria tied to consumer protection standards; reasons for refusal; a public register that includes refusals; a right of appeal; and consultation with the CMA. Those conditions should be mandatory in the Act, not left to each set of regulations.

F. Other drafting issues in the ticketing provisions

40. **Debenture tickets.** Debenture holders at venues such as Wimbledon, Twickenham and the Principality Stadium hold a transferable right to tickets that is, in substance, a financial instrument sold by the venue on the express basis that the tickets may be resold. It is not clear whether the offence in Schedule 1 applies to the sale of debenture tickets, or whether debenture holders would need a ticketing authorisation. If the ticketing provisions are applied to such a venue, long-standing contractual rights would be criminalised overnight. We recommend a clause 7 exception for tickets derived from debentures and comparable transferable instruments, or at minimum a Government statement that the offence does not apply to them.

41. **Hospitality and travel packages.** Paragraph 1(10)(c) treats the inclusion of a ticket in a package of other goods or services as a sale. That is appropriate for sham bundling, but it also captures travel operators, hospitality providers and corporate suppliers who hold tickets through legitimate allocations. Regulations should be required, not merely permitted, to provide for these.

42. **Period and area.** Clause 5(2) leaves the period and area in which the offence applies entirely to regulations. The advertising and trading provisions, by contrast, are confined on the face of the Bill to ten days before and five days after the event. For an annual event, nothing in the Bill prevents the ticketing provisions applying for the whole year, every year. A statutory maximum period should be set.

43. **Review.** Because the ticketing provisions may now be applied to recurring events, there should be a duty on the appropriate national authority to lay before Parliament, after each event, a report on enforcement activity, the number and terms of authorisations granted and refused, reported fraud, and the operation of any resale or refund route. Without this, Parliament will have no means of judging whether the prohibition has protected fans or harmed them.

G. Proposed amendments

44. The table below sets out the amendments we invite the Committee to consider. Amendments 2 to 8 are our primary recommendation; amendment 1 is the fallback.

No.	Clause	Proposed change and purpose
1	Clause 3 (fallback)	Reinstate the condition that the event is 'of a kind that is not regularly held wholly or partly in the United Kingdom' as a condition for regulations made under clause 2(1)(a) (ticket touting) only. The expanded scope would continue to apply to the advertising, trading and unauthorised association provisions. Purpose: to confine the criminal resale offence to the infrequent international events for which it was designed and assessed.
2	Clause 6(3) and (4)	Replace 'may' with 'must' and add mandatory conditions on any designated authorising person: (a) to grant authorisations on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms to any person who meets published objective criteria, which must include compliance with sections 90 and 91 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015, seller verification and a purchase guarantee; (b) to give written reasons for any refusal, variation or revocation; (c) to maintain a public register of authorisations and refusals; (d) to consult the Competition and Markets Authority before adopting its criteria. Purpose: to prevent a statutory monopoly over resale being used to exclude compliant competitors.
3	New clause after clause 6	Where the ticket resale provisions are applied to an event, the regulations must require the designated authorising person to ensure that a resale, exchange or refund facility is available to consumers for the whole period during which the offence applies, on terms no less favourable than a refund of face value and booking fees. Purpose: to ensure that fans who cannot attend are not left without any lawful route to recover their money.
4	Clause 7	Insert on the face of the Bill exceptions for (a) tickets derived from debentures or comparable transferable instruments;
5	Clause 5(2)	Provide that the period specified for the ticket resale provisions may not begin before tickets first go on general sale and may not end more than five days after the event ends; and that for a recurring event each edition requires a fresh application of the provisions. Purpose: to prevent a permanent, year-round prohibition attaching to annual events.
6	Clause 19	Provide that an internet service provider which (a) operates to published consumer protection standards, including seller verification, a purchase guarantee, retention of payment until the event has taken place and compliance with sections 90 and 91 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015, and (b) removes listings for the sporting event within a specified period of notice from the designated authorising person, does not engage in prohibited conduct by hosting or facilitating a listing. If such a provision cannot be agreed, omit clause 19. Purpose: to stop the Bill exempting the passive services where fraud occurs while exposing services that actively protect consumers.
7	New clause (impact assessment and review)	Require the Secretary of State to publish an updated impact assessment of the ticket touting provisions, reflecting the widened scope, before Commons Report stage; and require the appropriate national authority to lay before Parliament, within six months of the end of any event to which the ticket touting provisions have applied, a report covering enforcement, authorisations and refusals, reported fraud and the operation of the resale or refund facility. Purpose: to give Parliament the evidence it has not yet had.

No.	Clause	Proposed change and purpose
8	Schedule 1, paragraph 1(5) and clause 18	Provide that the designated authorising person's own resale activity, and that of persons it authorises, is subject to the information duties in sections 90 and 91 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and to CMA oversight. Purpose: to ensure the body that polices resale is itself regulated.

H. Questions the Committee may wish to put to the Minister

45. Will the Government publish an updated impact assessment of the ticket resale provisions now that they may apply to regularly held events, and before the Bill returns to the floor of the House?

46. What assessment has the Government made of the operation of section 166 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, the UK's existing de facto ban on football ticket resale, given that its own Fraud Strategy identifies football ticket fraud as a persistent problem and Premier League clubs report blocking tens of thousands of fake accounts a season?

47. Does the Government agree that, as drafted, a fan who lists a spare ticket online commits the offence in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1? If so, is that intended?

48. Why does the Bill impose no obligation on a designated authorising person to provide any resale, exchange or refund route for fans who cannot attend?

49. What prevents a designated authorising person from refusing authorisation to a business that complies with every consumer protection requirement in UK law, solely because it competes with the organiser's commercial partner? Will the CMA have any role?

50. Why does clause 19 exempt services that passively host ticket listings, where the Government's own Fraud Strategy says most ticket fraud occurs, while giving no comparable protection to services that verify sellers, hold payment and guarantee the fan's ticket?

51. How does the Government reconcile a criminal prohibition on resale at face value under this Bill with the face-value cap proposed in the proposed Ticket Tout Ban Bill?

52. What assessment has been made of enforcement against overseas pop-up websites, and what proportion of unauthorised resale around previous UK events (London 2012, Glasgow 2014, Birmingham 2022) took place through regulated platforms as opposed to social media and unregulated sites?

53. What assessment has the Government made of the effect of applying the unauthorised association, advertising and trading provisions to annual events on the independent campsites, accommodation providers, pubs and traders that operate around venues such as Silverstone and Wimbledon, and on new businesses seeking to serve those events in future?

54. Will the Government commit to a post-event report to Parliament on the operation of the ticketing provisions for each event to which they are applied?