# Nigel Farage leads Reform UK charge in crucial Hamilton by-election challenge



Nigel Farage is making a notable return to Scotland, planning a visit to the constituency of Hamilton, Larkhall, and Stonehouse ahead of a significant by-election scheduled for June 5, 2025. This by-election comes in the wake of the passing of former MSP and Scottish government minister Christina McKelvie, creating a crucial opportunity for parties to vie for leadership in the region. Reform UK, under Farage's stewardship, appears to be strategically positioned, potentially challenging both the SNP and Labour for the seat.

Deputy leader Richard Tice, who recently visited the constituency, expressed confidence that Reform UK could outperform their competitors, claiming the party has garnered substantial momentum following encouraging results in the May local elections in England. This visit marks Farage's first campaign engagement in Scotland since 2019, when he attended a Brexit party event that concluded with police intervention due to protests by independence supporters.

The political landscape in Hamilton, Larkhall, and Stonehouse is shifting. Reform UK claimed 7% of the Scottish vote in the previous general election, marking its incursion into a region traditionally dominated by other parties. Recent polls suggest growing support for Reform UK within the constituency, indicating a possible decrease in backing for both the Conservatives and Labour. The urgency for all parties is palpable as they head into the final week of campaigning, with potential impacts on their future bids for power.

The SNP, under the leadership of First Minister John Swinney, is striving to reinforce its position by promoting initiatives like the elimination of peak rail fares, which could result in significant savings for commuters—potentially up to £1,000. Such measures are part of a broader strategy to maintain their grip on the electorate, particularly as local travel remains a key concern for voters in Hamilton Central and Larkhall surrounding areas.

Labour leader Anas Sarwar regards this by-election as critical for the party’s ambitions in Scotland, describing it as a potential launchpad for the next parliamentary session. Sarwar's campaign hinges on challenging the SNP's long-held dominance, aiming to inspire a revitalisation of Labour's standing in Scottish politics.

Adding further interest to the contest, Councillor Ross Lambie has emerged as Reform UK's candidate for the by-election. Lambie, who crossed the floor from the Conservatives earlier this year, brings with him a mandate to address pressing local issues such as economic challenges, education, and youth unemployment. His candidacy is seen as indicative of Reform UK's growing foothold in Scottish politics—a development that could transform the balance of power in the region.

As the campaigning intensifies, all eyes are on Hamilton, Larkhall, and Stonehouse, where the results of this by-election may very well signal a shift in the political landscape, influencing not just local governance but also the wider dynamics of Scottish politics in the run-up to the next general election.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2060295/nigel-farage-visits-ahead-by-election), [[2]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2060295/nigel-farage-visits-ahead-by-election)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2060295/nigel-farage-visits-ahead-by-election), [[2]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2060295/nigel-farage-visits-ahead-by-election), [[5]](https://www.spectator.com.au/2025/04/tory-defector-to-stand-for-reform-in-scottish-by-election/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/anas-sarwar-scottish-labour-hamilton-larkhall-and-stonehouse-by-election-5099963), [[4]](https://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/national/reform-uk-announces-candidate-for-holyrood-by-election-131993/), [[6]](https://news.stv.tv/politics/tory-defector-named-as-reform-uk-candidate-for-holyrood-by-election)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2060295/nigel-farage-visits-ahead-by-election), [[5]](https://www.spectator.com.au/2025/04/tory-defector-to-stand-for-reform-in-scottish-by-election/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[6]](https://news.stv.tv/politics/tory-defector-named-as-reform-uk-candidate-for-holyrood-by-election), [[4]](https://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/national/reform-uk-announces-candidate-for-holyrood-by-election-131993/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2060295/nigel-farage-visits-ahead-by-election> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/2060295/nigel-farage-visits-ahead-by-election> - Nigel Farage is set to visit Scotland ahead of the Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse by-election on June 5, 2025, following the death of former MSP Christina McKelvie. Reform UK leader Farage's visit aims to bolster the party's campaign, with deputy leader Richard Tice expressing confidence in defeating the SNP and Labour. This marks Farage's first campaign trip to Scotland since 2019, highlighting the party's growing influence in Scottish politics.
3. <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/anas-sarwar-scottish-labour-hamilton-larkhall-and-stonehouse-by-election-5099963> - Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar views the upcoming Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse by-election as a pivotal opportunity to challenge the SNP's dominance. Sarwar aims to use the by-election as a 'launchpad' for forming the Scottish Government in the next election, emphasizing the importance of winning this seat to gain credibility for future governance.
4. <https://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/national/reform-uk-announces-candidate-for-holyrood-by-election-131993/> - Reform UK has announced Councillor Ross Lambie as their candidate for the Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse by-election on June 5, 2025. Lambie, who previously represented the Clydesdale South ward on South Lanarkshire Council, defected from the Conservatives to Reform UK earlier this year. He aims to address issues such as economic challenges, education system concerns, and youth unemployment in the constituency.
5. <https://www.spectator.com.au/2025/04/tory-defector-to-stand-for-reform-in-scottish-by-election/> - Former Conservative councillor Ross Lambie has been selected as Reform UK's candidate for the Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse by-election. Lambie's defection from the Tories to Reform UK underscores the party's growing influence in Scottish politics, with the by-election providing an opportunity to challenge the SNP's stronghold in the region.
6. <https://news.stv.tv/politics/tory-defector-named-as-reform-uk-candidate-for-holyrood-by-election> - Reform UK has named Councillor Ross Lambie as their candidate for the Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse by-election. Lambie, who defected from the Conservatives earlier this year, aims to address local economic and social issues, positioning Reform UK as a viable alternative to the SNP and Labour in the constituency.
7. <https://www.holyrood.com/news/view%2Chamilton-larkhall-and-stonehouse-byelection-date-confirmed> - The Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse by-election is scheduled for June 5, 2025, following the death of SNP MSP Christina McKelvie. The by-election presents an opportunity for parties like the SNP, Labour, and Reform UK to contest the seat, with the winner holding it until the next election in May 2026.