# Divisions within the Conservative Party heat up over Farage comments



Tensions within the UK Conservative Party have erupted into the open, following provocative comments from Kemi Badenoch and Shadow Transport Minister Greg Smith regarding possible collaboration with the opposition party led by Nigel Farage. This discord highlights a significant divergence among Conservative leadership on strategic approaches ahead of the upcoming local and general elections, a moment of critical importance for right-wing politics in the UK.

Badenoch, attempting to position herself as a stalwart of the traditional Conservative values, has been explicit about her disdain for populism, especially the kind championed by Farage, who remains a central figure in the public's perception of right-wing politics. Describing Farage as “just a reality TV star” following his turn on "I'm a Celebrity… Get Me Out of Here!", she argued that the political landscape should distance itself from "politics as showbusiness.” While her comments are aimed at consolidating a mainstream appeal, they reveal an underlying fear: the thought that the public might prefer Farage's populist accessibility over the more austere conservatism Badenoch represents. The claim that voters should prioritize governance over media appeal signals a discomforting awareness that the party is increasingly out of touch with its base.

In stark contrast, Greg Smith has demonstrated a pragmatic approach amid this turbulent landscape. During an interview with Talk TV, he indicated a readiness to forge alliances with Farage’s party, emphasizing the urgent need for right-of-centre parties to unite against the looming threat of a Labour government. As he put it, there’s an imperative for cooperation if they are to prevent a left-leaning dominance that could lead to dire consequences such as proportional representation. Smith’s willingness to consider collaboration highlights a rift within the Conservatives, showcasing a recognition that their isolation may cost them dearly at the ballot box.

Badenoch’s critical stance towards Farage only serves to stoke this internal discord, as her worries about Farage’s ability to draw disillusioned Conservative voters reveal a profound grasp of the shifting tides of political favour. Many party insiders believe that her approach lacks the charisma and influence that characterizes Farage’s appeal—an awkward truth that becomes increasingly evident in light of Reform's rising membership numbers. Recent data indicate an alarming trend: Reform's membership has surged past 200,000, dwarfing the Conservatives, which now holds a mere 131,000 members.

Moreover, Badenoch’s accusations of misinformation regarding membership numbers have ignited a bitter exchange with Farage that has gone unresolved, underscoring the division within her own party. This exchange represents not just an argument about numbers but a broader existential crisis over the party's direction and identity as it faces a more populist and engaging alternative.

As the local elections approach in May, Badenoch's admission that the Conservative Party is struggling serves only to highlight the momentum building behind Farage’s movement. Despite her critique of the perceived disarray within Reform—especially following the suspension of MP Rupert Lowe over bullying allegations—one cannot ignore the threat that a well-organized alternative presents to a party that once dominated the landscape.

The implications of these conflicting views point to significant challenges ahead for the Conservative Party as it navigates a path through deep internal divisions and growing discontent among voters. The upcoming elections are likely to serve as a litmus test, potentially reshaping the political landscape and determining whether the party can reclaim its footing or will continue to lose ground to emerging populist forces. If the Conservatives remain stubbornly dismissive of the evolution within the electorate, they risk sealing their fate in an increasingly competitive political environment.

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

## References

* <https://chamberuk.com/turning-from-the-past-the-conservatives-in-2025/> - This article discusses the challenges facing the Conservative Party in 2025, including internal divisions and the rise of Reform UK, which aligns with the tensions described in the article.
* <https://www.mass.gov/guide-to-evidence/article-xi-miscellaneous> - This URL does not directly relate to the article's content but is included as it was part of the search results. It pertains to legal proceedings rather than UK politics.
* <https://cratus.co.uk/what-does-the-conservative-party-have-in-store-for-2025/> - This article explores the Conservative Party's challenges and opportunities in 2025, including the impact of Reform UK and the need for a clear vision, which supports the article's discussion on internal party dynamics.
* <https://capx.co/why-did-the-tories-fail-it-is-time-for-a-reckoning> - This piece highlights the need for the Conservative Party to articulate its vision and address past failures, which is relevant to the article's mention of internal divisions and strategic approaches.
* <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/124094NCJRS.pdf> - This document does not relate to the article's content but is included as part of the search results. It focuses on occult crime rather than UK politics.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This URL is mentioned as the source of the original article but does not provide additional external corroboration beyond the article itself.