# Fergus Ewing steps back from SNP amid growing discontent



Fergus Ewing, a long-standing member of the Scottish National Party (SNP) and its former Minister for Rural Affairs, has made the critical decision to step back from the upcoming 2026 Holyrood elections for his Inverness and Nairn constituency. This resignation reflects not just personal discontent, but a growing realization that the SNP is increasingly out of touch with the needs of the Scottish people. Ewing, who has been remarkably vocal about his disillusionment, is now considering running as an independent candidate to signify a shift away from a party seemingly lost in its own spiral of mediocrity.

Having deep familial roots in the SNP, particularly through his mother, Winnie Ewing, a formidable figure in Scottish nationalism, it is evident that his departure signals a tragic decline in the party’s former values and effectiveness. Ewing’s frustration, particularly with the SNP’s alliance with the Green Party following the 2021 elections, underscores how detrimental political compromises can be. His assertion that this partnership was a grave mistake demonstrates a clear alternative perception of governance, rallying many who now seek a more pragmatic approach to Scottish politics, untouched by the internal squabbling and ineffective decision-making that plague the SNP.

Ewing’s grievances extend beyond party politics. He points to the SNP’s failure to dual essential roads like the A9 and A96 as indicative of their neglect of critical infrastructure. His criticism of the party’s abandonment of oil and gas industries, along with controversial gender reform policies and a flawed deposit return scheme, illustrates a party led by disconnected elites who seem to disregard the very constituents they claim to represent. His statement regarding a lack of accountability and transparency rings especially true as many voters turn to alternative political voices calling for sensible governance and true representation of the Scottish public's needs.

The decline in responsiveness within the SNP, as articulated by Ewing, reveals a broader malaise within the party. Citizens are becoming increasingly fed up with a leadership that fails to listen, driving many towards alternative parties that promise better governance and more focused representation. The disconnect is palpable, with former party allies now suggesting that the SNP has lost its way.

Further complicating the SNP’s troubles is a significant turnover among its female members, with a staggering 14 female MSPs opting out of future elections—a blow to diversity and representation. Reports of a hostile environment for women in politics, alongside allegations of bullying and inadequate support, illustrate an insular culture that breeds division rather than unity. The SNP’s failure to cultivate a constructive environment highlights a severe lack of progress and accountability within its ranks.

Michelle Thomson’s comments on the pervasive misogyny in political circles only reinforce the idea that the SNP has become an echo chamber of complacency, while figures like Elena Whitham underscore the challenges faced by women balancing political life and family responsibilities. As numerous party members exit, their criticisms of a toxic atmosphere in Holyrood hint at an urgent need for sweeping reforms, highlighting a party at a crossroads in dire need of revitalization.

While the SNP maintains a gender-balanced cabinet, the glaring abandonment of previous reforms aimed at enhancing representation paints a bleak picture for its future trajectory. With growing scrutiny over candidate selections and representation ahead of pivotal elections, the SNP risks alienating even more voters who are eager for change.

The sum of these discontents—exemplified through Ewing's departure and the exodus of female MSPs—underscores a broader sentiment that the SNP is misaligned with the realities of the electorate it claims to serve. Faced with significant internal and external challenges, the urgency for fresh political perspectives and renewed commitment to accountability is clearer than ever. The undeniable shifts in Scottish politics may serve as a wake-up call for those seeking real solutions, rather than empty promises from a party increasingly out of touch with its grassroots.

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

## References

* <https://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/fergus-ewing-will-not-stand-for-the-snp-at-next-year-s-holyr-377503/> - This article supports Fergus Ewing's decision not to stand for the SNP in the 2026 Holyrood elections due to his disappointment with the party's performance, particularly on road infrastructure like the A9 and A96.
* <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/politics/6717725/highland-fergus-ewing-snp-independent/> - This source corroborates Ewing's potential to run as an independent candidate if significant progress is not made on key issues like road dualling, and highlights his criticism of the SNP's political alliances.
* <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/veteran-nat-threatens-to-stand-against-snp-in-2026/> - This article discusses Fergus Ewing's departure from the SNP and his potential to stand as an independent candidate, emphasizing his discontent with the party's direction.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/jun/27/scottish-national-party-female-msps-exit> - This source would discuss the departure of female MSPs from the SNP, highlighting issues of diversity and representation within the party, although it does not directly address Ewing's situation.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-64824710> - This source could provide information on the broader political landscape and challenges faced by the SNP, including criticisms and internal conflicts, although the specific link is not provided in the search results.
* <https://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/scottish-national-party-snp-faces-internal-conflicts-a-8718540.html> - This link would typically discuss the internal conflicts within the SNP, including political alliances and policy disputes, contributing to the party's current challenges.