# Boris Johnson warns Tory recovery is uncertain amid surge of new political force



# Boris Johnson: The Tories' Struggles and the Rise of a New Political Force

Boris Johnson, the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, recently addressed the Conservative Party's significant challenges in an interview with GB News. He confessed that the Tories are “in a tough spot” after a dismal round of local election results. However, his optimism for the party's comeback seems misplaced amid an evolving political landscape dominated by rising dissent and a surge of new voices demanding change.

The Conservatives faced a particularly grim election cycle, losing all 15 councils they were defending. This catastrophe comes as the party grapples with pressures from new political forces, most notably from an emerging party that has capitalised on widespread voter dissatisfaction. This new contender has seized over 600 council seats, sharply highlighting a growing discontent with traditional politics. In stark contrast, the Conservatives suffered a staggering loss of 676 seats, painting a bleak picture of their current standing.

Johnson’s unwavering support for Kemi Badenoch, the party’s new leader, rings hollow in the face of mounting crises. He describes her as “the most original thinker” among political leaders but fails to acknowledge the urgent necessity for transformative policy that resonates with the electorate's reality. Badenoch herself recognised the daunting task ahead, stating that the Conservatives have "a big job to do to rebuild trust with the public," a sentiment that underscores a deep rift between the party and its former base.

This election cycle has illustrated that both major parties are struggling to maintain public confidence. Labour, under the leadership of Sir Keir Starmer, also lost ground in the recent elections, shedding 186 council seats amid mounting doubts about their policy effectiveness. The electorate's growing concerns over economic stagnation and deteriorating public services only fuel discontent, presenting an opportunity for new political narratives to gain traction.

The surge of the new political entity has not only siphoned votes from the Conservatives; it has emerged as a formidable alternative to the traditional parties. Recent forecasts indicate that this insurgent group is poised to attract a national vote share of approximately 30%, representing a serious challenge to both the Conservatives and Labour alike. The robust performance of this party may very well reflect a broader populist shift in the UK, echoing similar trends across Europe and signalling the potential reshaping of political alliances.

Moreover, the Liberal Democrats have also experienced gains, particularly in the southern regions, complicating the landscape further for both the Conservatives and Labour. As the political environment shifts, questions about the efficacy of the first-past-the-post electoral system grow ever more pertinent, especially as constituents increasingly demand representation that aligns with their views and needs.

The pressing challenge for the Conservatives remains the necessity to reconnect with their base. Johnson's confidence may resonate within certain Tory circles, but it is clear that the road to recovery is paved with the need for clear, pragmatic policies that directly respond to voter concerns. In facing economic turbulence and increasing competition from both established and emerging parties, Kemi Badenoch's leadership will be put to the test in the months leading up to the next general election.

As Johnson ponders the party's future, he embodies a strained sense of hope: “The Tories are going to recover. Of course they will." Yet, with the groundwork laid for significant change and the emergence of serious alternatives, the next few years will undoubtedly challenge this belief and reshape the UK’s political landscape in profound ways.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/boris-johnson-says-tories-in-a-tough-spot-but-will-recover-RN4LEFWAYJLYJCZVZHDBDZMZUA/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/9b498cb3-b6ea-457c-9c48-3fa1ca0af030> - Nigel Farage's Reform UK party achieved significant gains in recent local elections, challenging the traditional dominance of the Labour and Conservative parties. Reform UK secured over 600 Conservative seats and gained control of councils in regions like Staffordshire, Lancashire, and Kent. Farage declared ambitions to win the next general election, with BBC projections suggesting Reform UK would command a 30% national vote share, surpassing Labour (20%) and the Conservatives (15%). Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer acknowledged the electorate’s dissatisfaction, while Tory leader Kemi Badenoch faces mounting pressure amid calls for internal reform and policy clarity following the Conservatives' electoral collapse. The Liberal Democrats also gained ground, overtaking Tories in southern councils. Farage cited the Runcorn and Helsby by-election win as evidence of Labour’s diminishing appeal and noted the challenge his party faces in governing local institutions. Reform also secured mayoralties in Greater Lincolnshire and Hull and East Yorkshire, further solidifying its emerging role as a major political force.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/197d3cf6-8719-49dd-b3b4-63fa41382d65> - Labour and the Conservative Party are facing a major political challenge after Reform UK, led by Nigel Farage, made sweeping gains in local elections, disrupting Britain’s traditional two-party dominance. Reform captured 677 council seats and narrowly won the Runcorn and Helsby parliamentary by-election. Labour lost 186 seats while the Conservatives suffered a massive setback, losing 676. The emergence of Reform, now leading national opinion polls, reflects a broader populist shift similar to trends seen in the US and across Europe. Farage has positioned Reform as a hardline alternative, pledging to scrap carbon targets, intensify immigration controls, confront liberal elites, and push for more state intervention in key industries. Labour Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer acknowledged the significance of the results, promising hard work on issues like the NHS and immigration, while cautioning against simplistic solutions. Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch, facing criticism for lack of policy clarity, is under pressure to revive the party's prospects. Despite Reform’s breakthrough, party chair Richard Fuller warned of the challenges in governance. Reform gained control of 10 councils, while the Liberal Democrats also made notable advances. BBC projections suggest a national vote share of 30% for Reform, more than any other party.
4. <https://apnews.com/article/33fa773d553d022c6af527656e54ac21> - In the latest UK local elections, Nigel Farage’s hard-right Reform UK party achieved substantial gains, signaling a challenge to the traditional dominance of the Labour and Conservative parties. Reform UK won a Westminster seat in Runcorn and Helsby by a narrow margin, taking it from Labour following a scandal-related resignation. The party also secured over 600 local council seats and gained control in conservative heartlands such as Staffordshire, Lincolnshire, and Durham. This marks a significant expansion from the previous national election where Reform held just 14% of the vote. Farage described the results as a turning point in British politics, hinting at the decline of long-established two-party dynamics. The Labour government under Prime Minister Keir Starmer faced a sobering rebuff, with public discontent over economic stagnation and welfare cuts. The Conservatives suffered even heavier losses, and leader Kemi Badenoch acknowledged ongoing voter distrust. The centrist Liberal Democrats also made gains in southern England, appealing to socially liberal voters. Political analyst John Curtice noted these results reflect a fragmentation of British politics, with Reform now seen as a major threat to both leading parties.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/02a06002-d769-478f-8ac9-6c2fb0dd4640> - In this episode of the Financial Times' Political Fix podcast, Lucy Fisher and colleagues analyze the significant shake-up in the UK's political landscape following recent local elections. The main highlight is the marked success of Reform UK under Nigel Farage, including winning a fifth MP, a first mayoralty in Lincolnshire, and control of at least two councils. This shift signals a substantial blow to both Labour and the Conservatives, especially the latter, facing what some described as an existential crisis. The panel explores how populist dissatisfaction and ineffective delivery from mainstream parties spurred voter support for smaller parties like Reform, the Greens, and the Liberal Democrats. Discussion spans the unsuitability of the first-past-the-post system in a fragmented political environment, scrutiny facing Reform UK's newly acquired local powers, and struggles within the Conservative leadership under Kemi Badenoch. Keir Starmer’s Labour government is critiqued for inadequate delivery, while potential strategies for both major parties are debated, including economic messaging and coalition speculation. The podcast concludes with commentary on the long-term erosion of class-based voting patterns and the evolving identities of the UK’s traditional political parties.
6. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/nigel-farages-reform-uk-party-ahead-by-four-votes-key-election-race-2025-05-02/> - Reform UK, led by Nigel Farage, achieved significant electoral gains in England, winning a parliamentary seat in Runcorn and Helsby by a narrow six-vote margin, capturing the mayoralty of Greater Lincolnshire, and taking control of Staffordshire and Durham county councils. These victories mark the party’s fifth seat in the House of Commons and its continued rise as a right-wing alternative to the established Labour and Conservative parties. Former Conservative minister Andrea Jenkyns now becomes Reform's most powerful elected official as mayor. Farage hailed the results as indicative of the party becoming the 'real opposition,' criticizing both major parties for their declining support. Labour, led by Prime Minister Keir Starmer, acknowledged the 'disappointing' outcomes, while the Conservatives continued to suffer from past mismanagement. Reform UK, originally formed as the Brexit Party in 2018, has expanded its platform beyond immigration, addressing issues like healthcare and economic stagnation. Analysts warn that the party will now face greater scrutiny to deliver on its promises as it gears up to challenge the political establishment in the next national election, expected in 2029.
7. <https://www.ft.com/content/20598c6b-3884-4f31-a874-e5a3a827cc4d> - The May 1, 2025 local elections in England marked a seismic shift in British politics, with Nigel Farage's Reform UK delivering a devastating blow to both the Labour and Conservative parties. Reform UK achieved a symbolic victory by winning the Runcorn and Helsby by-election, previously one of Labour’s safest seats, and went on to dismantle decades-long Conservative control in councils such as Kent, where their presence fell from 62 councillors to just five. Tory officials described the outcome as 'apocalyptic', and leadership questions loom over current leader Kemi Badenoch. Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer also faced setbacks as Reform siphoned traditional Labour support, driven by voter discontent and economic anxiety. While Starmer plans to counter the populist surge with centrist reforms and trade agreements, criticisms over policy decisions, such as cuts to winter fuel payments, have hurt his standing. The rise of Reform UK threatens the historic two-party system, drawing parallels to previous political realignments. Despite internal unrest, both Badenoch and Starmer pledged continued leadership, but their respective parties face existential challenges in the face of Farage’s growing momentum. Meanwhile, the mood among Conservative ranks is bleak, foreshadowing tough months ahead.