# Nigel Farage returns to Scotland as Reform UK eyes breakthrough in crucial Hamilton by-election



Nigel Farage is set to make a highly anticipated return to Scotland for the by-election in the Hamilton Larkhall and Stonehouse constituency, following the unfortunate passing of local MSP and former Scottish government minister, Christina McKelvie. This election is crucial as it marks a significant challenge to the dominance of the SNP and Labour, particularly in light of recent election results that have seen Farage’s party gaining momentum. The impending by-election, scheduled for June 5, is not just another contest; it is a defining moment that could signal a substantial shift in Scotland's political landscape.

Farage’s visit is his first since 2019, a year marked by hostility as he faced fierce opposition during a Brexit Party event. However, this time, he arrives amid polling that indicates Reform UK is drawing crucial support from both Labour and the Conservatives, threatening to shake up the established political order. Having garnered a 7% vote share in the last general election, the party appears poised to challenge the entrenched dominance of the SNP and Labour, much to the dismay of those who favored the status quo.

Recent analysis reveals the potential of Reform UK to become Scotland’s third-most popular party, overtaking the faltering Conservative presence. Projections for the upcoming Holyrood election in 2026 suggest the party could capture around 17% of both constituency and list votes. Such figures signal a disturbing shift in the political wind, especially among younger voters who are increasingly gravitating towards alternatives that better reflect their dissatisfaction with the traditional parties.

In contrast, the economic policies touted by Scottish First Minister John Swinney, like the recent scrapping of peak rail fares, represent a desperate bid by Labour and the SNP to cling to power amidst growing discontent. While these measures are framed as solutions to ease financial burdens, they fail to address the deeper frustrations felt by many constituents. The rising popularity of Reform UK underscores a broader hunger for change and accountability, elevating the stakes of this by-election to unprecedented levels.

Polling from Survation supports the narrative of Reform UK's ascendance, with estimates suggesting potential parliamentary gains of up to 14 seats in the upcoming Holyrood election. The SNP's grip on Scotland has loosened, particularly following disappointing results in the recent UK general election, where they secured only nine seats. Such losses have ignited an urgent response from Labour and the SNP to ramp up voter engagement, underscoring the fierce competition brewing on the horizon.

As the final week of campaigning unfolds, the air is charged with tension. Farage's mission is clear: to fortify Reform UK’s position and disrupt the long-standing influence of the SNP and Labour, both of whom seem increasingly unable to resonate with the electorate's needs. The outcome of the Hamilton Larkhall and Stonehouse by-election could herald a new chapter in Scottish politics, reshaping alliances and strategies as the crucial Holyrood elections in 2026 loom ever closer.

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.scotsman.com/news/politics/reform-becomes-the-3rd-most-popular-party-in-scotland-ahead-of-the-tories-5024451> - Reform UK has become the third most popular party in Scotland, surpassing the Conservatives. The Scottish Election Study predicts that Reform UK will overtake the Scottish Conservatives in the 2026 Holyrood election, with 17.1% of constituency votes and 17.8% of list votes. The SNP leads with 32.6% and 30%, while Labour follows with 20.9% and 17.9%. ([scotsman.com](https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/reform-becomes-the-3rd-most-popular-party-in-scotland-ahead-of-the-tories-5024451?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/reform-uk-snp-scottish-poll-holyrood-b1217539.html> - A Survation poll for Quantum Communications indicates that Reform UK could secure 14 seats in the next Holyrood election, finishing ahead of both the Greens and Liberal Democrats. The poll shows the SNP on 55 seats, Labour on 19, Conservatives on 17, Lib Dems on 13, Greens on 10, and Alba with one seat. Reform UK's strongest support is among the 16 to 24 age bracket, where it is the second-highest party on 20%. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/reform-uk-snp-scottish-poll-holyrood-b1217539.html?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.shropshirestar.com/uk-news/2025/03/19/poll-has-strongest-scottish-support-recorded-for-reform-uk/> - A Survation poll for Quantum Communications suggests that Reform UK could win 14 seats in the next Holyrood election, finishing ahead of both the Greens and Liberal Democrats. The poll shows the SNP on 55 seats, Labour on 19, Conservatives on 17, Lib Dems on 13, Greens on 10, and Alba with one seat. Reform UK's strongest support is among the 16 to 24 age bracket, where it is the second-highest party on 20%. ([shropshirestar.com](https://www.shropshirestar.com/uk-news/2025/03/19/poll-has-strongest-scottish-support-recorded-for-reform-uk/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/election/2024/uk/regions/S92000003> - In the 2024 general election, the Scottish National Party (SNP) experienced a significant decline, securing only 9 seats, a loss of 39 seats from the previous election. Labour emerged as the largest party in Scotland with 37 seats, an increase of 36 seats. The Liberal Democrats gained 6 seats, while the Conservatives secured 5 seats. Reform UK received 7% of the vote but did not win any seats. ([bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/election/2024/uk/regions/S92000003?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.thenational.scot/news/24433794.nigel-farages-reform-perform-scotland/> - In the 2024 general election, Reform UK secured approximately 7% of the vote in Scotland, failing to win any parliamentary seats. Their highest vote share was 9.4% in Dumfries and Galloway. Despite not winning seats, Reform UK's performance in Scotland was notable, considering the UK's first-past-the-post electoral system. ([thenational.scot](https://www.thenational.scot/news/24433794.nigel-farages-reform-perform-scotland/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://reformuk.scot/2025/01/final-results-bannockburn-by-election/> - In the Bannockburn by-election held on 23 January 2025, the Scottish National Party (SNP) secured 35.35% of the vote, Labour received 23.52%, and Reform UK garnered 22.40%. The Conservatives, Greens, and Liberal Democrats received 10.57%, 3.31%, and 3.44% respectively. This result indicates a competitive political landscape in the region. ([reformuk.scot](https://reformuk.scot/2025/01/final-results-bannockburn-by-election/?utm_source=openai))