

Vote Labour to oppose another divisive independence referendum

In seats across Scotland, including Edinburgh South, it is only Labour that can beat the SNP.

As our new advert shows, the Tories just aren't at the races – and a vote for them or the LibDems will just let the SNP in.

By backing Labour on June 8, voters can tell Nicola Sturgeon to drop her plans for a divisive second independence referendum.

Labour will never support independence and every Labour MP elected will fight the SNP's unwanted plan to break up Britain.

A vote for the Tories or the Lib Dems will simply let the SNP in and embolden Nicola Sturgeon. Only by voting Labour on June 8 can we defeat the SNP.

Tories need to come clean on social care cap before election



UKIP Economic Spokesman Patrick O'Flynn has demanded Theresa May and her ministers declare before polling day what cap they intend to impose on social care bills.

He has also suggested voters use Twitter to contact their local Tory candidate using the hashtag #whatisthecap to increase pressure for a further climbdown.

Mr O'Flynn last week led calls for a cap to be imposed after the Tory manifesto proposed taking bills out of the estates of deceased persons who had needed social care on a completely uncapped basis.

Following an outcry, Theresa May performed a partial U-turn by announcing there would after all be a cap. But she has so far refused to say what it will be or even give an approximate figure.

On Sunday, Home Secretary Amber Rudd failed to deny suggestions by Andrew Marr that the cap could be as high as £300,000.

Clegg: May's approach to Brexit is a threat to national security

The Schengen Information System (SIS II) is an EU-wide database on organised criminal and terrorist suspects across 28 countries, including 35,000 people wanted under a European Arrest Warrant. It includes alerts on suspected 'foreign fighters' – people who have travelled to Syria and elsewhere to fight for ISIS.

- UK police and security services queried the database over half a billion times in 2016 – equivalent to 16 checks a second.
- 53 people are detained and questioned under anti-terrorism laws at ports and airports every day, where they can be checked against the database by UK Border Force officers.
- In April 2016, the UK received 25 hits on alerts issued by other participating countries in relation to individuals who could pose a risk to national security.
- The UK would lose access to the database under Theresa May's plans to leave the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice. Unless this position changes, UK authorities will see their access to the database cut off on 29th March 2019.

Nick Clegg has challenged Theresa May to answer three vital questions:

1. How will we maintain access to SIS II without accepting the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice?

2. What contingency plans has she put in place to mitigate the loss of this information on the movement of terrorist suspects across the continent?

3. How will we issue instructions to other EU countries to stop and question terror suspects if we are no longer part of this system?

Nick Clegg commented:

"Theresa May's extreme approach to Brexit will have the direct consequence of

severing our ties to a fantastically useful weapon in our armoury against terrorism.

“By refusing to accept a role for the European Court of Justice in policing this European-wide database, she has ruled out our future participation it.

“It is hard to overstate the importance of this database. We check it 16 times a second, looking for security threats that have been flagged to us by other European countries. And we use it to tell other countries to stop and question people who we think are potential terrorists.

“This is euroscepticism gone mad. If she fails to back down, Theresa May’s approach to Brexit poses a direct threat to our national security.”

Terror cannot triumph

There are times when words simply cannot do justice to the enormity of events or to the depth of human emotion they can provoke.

Courts ‘write off’ more than £5m in unpaid fines

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- Courts ‘write off’ more than £5m in unpaid fines

29 May 2017



More than £5 million in unpaid fines have been effectively written off by the Scottish Courts Service, new research has revealed.

Fines which have been outstanding for longer than three years are “archived” by the organisation, with no realistic expectation they will ever be paid.

And between 2008 and 2013 – the most recent juncture for which a fine can be officially archived – £5,547,358 remains unaccounted for.

That figure does not include unpaid fines accumulated since that date, which

the SCS still hopes will be recovered.

In 2012/13 alone, nearly £2 million worth of fines were issued, but have now been written off as more than three years have passed.

The statistics emerged following a Freedom of Information request by the Scottish Conservatives, who said the unpaid penalties were placing additional financial strain on the courts.

The sums are also left out of official unpaid fines statistics, which most recently showed the SCS was waiting for £32.3 million to be paid in penalties, £4.3 million of which was deemed to be “in arrears”, from the last three years.

Scottish Conservative Central Scotland MSP Margaret Mitchell, convener of the Scottish Parliament’s justice committee, said:

“These figures show courts have effectively written off more than £5 million in unpaid fines.

“That sends a completely wrong message to criminals, and creates an impression that if they evade the law for long enough, they’ll get away with it.

“The SNP is increasingly urging courts to turn away from custodial sentences and pursue other options.

“But as it stands, these offenders don’t seem to think they have to comply with alternative punishments, and millions of pounds in fines have gone unpaid.

“This is also having a negative impact on public finances, and amounts to a huge loss of revenue for the UK taxpayer.”
