

# Scots 'sick to death' of the SNP's independence games

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21 Mar 2017



The people of Scotland are “sick to death” of nationalist games on independence, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson has said.

Speaking as part of a marathon Holyrood debate on whether or not there should be a second independence referendum, she blasted both the SNP and the Greens for their “hypocrisy” on the issue.

She said the previous referendum was agreed legally and decisively under the Edinburgh Agreement, a process the SNP had described as the “gold standard” for referendums.

However, Nicola Sturgeon’s latest attempts indicate a “tin pot approach”, she said.

The First Minister announced last Monday that she wanted to hold a referendum re-run sometime between the autumn of 2018 and the spring of 2019, a timetable which has been rejected by the UK Government and the Scottish Conservatives.

And far from this being an attempt by the SNP to have a fair referendum, Ruth added, it was instead part of a “well-rehearsed game” to stoke grievance between Scotland and the rest of the UK.

## **Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:**

“Most people in Scotland are sick to death of the SNP’s games.

“They don’t want another referendum any time soon, just three years after the last one.

“But let’s cut to the chase: the SNP’s plan was not actually about trying to hold a fair, legal and decisive referendum.

“It was about a well-rehearsed game to put forward unworkable proposals, wait for Westminster politicians to point that out, then rush to any nearby microphone – angry face attached – to trot out the same old tired complaints.

“This bull-dozer approach is completely at odds with the way the 2014 referendum was held.

“The UK and Scottish governments worked together on proposals for a fair, legal and decisive referendum.

“The Edinburgh Agreement was then signed – with both sides promising to respect the result.

“How different things are today.”

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You can read the text of Ruth’s speech here:

[Ruth’s Scottish Parliament speech on IndyRef2](#)

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## **Press release: Government Ministers visiting Wales as part of Industrial Strategy engagement programme**

- Ministers visiting sites across Wales to explain how plans for a modern Industrial Strategy will benefit Wales.
- Business Secretary Greg Clark to be joined by Wales Secretary Alun Cairns at General Electric (GE) Aviation to tour production line and meet staff.
- Engagement will be followed by an evening reception with leading Welsh businesses and organisations in Cardiff.

The Government’s engagement programme for its Industrial Strategy continues today, with Ministers set to meet with universities, companies, and workers in Wales to hear their views on how to get the economy firing all cylinders.

Business Secretary Greg Clark and Wales Secretary Alun Cairns will visit General Electric (GE) Aviation in Cardiff to meet with production staff and management, before touring the plant to see the world-class services GE offers to airlines around the world.

Greg Clark, Alun Cairns and Business Ministers will then host an evening reception at Tramshed Tech in Cardiff with Welsh businesses, trade groups and local leaders, discussing the views of the Welsh business community on the priorities for a modern Industrial Strategy.

### **Business and Energy Secretary Greg Clark said:**

We recognise no two places in the UK are the same with each place

having its own unique identity and strengths.

Through our modern Industrial Strategy we plan to build on these strengths in fields such as aerospace, technology and life sciences, to make Wales one of the most competitive areas in the UK to start and grow a business.

We launched our strategy as a Green Paper because we want this to be a conversation with businesses and employees. Today my ministerial team and I are visiting Wales to discuss how the Government can work with business and academia to deliver a high-skill economy, prepared for the future.

### **Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

The UK Government's modern industrial strategy is a plan for everyone. Wales has a strong competitive economy and by pulling together we can build on our strength to grow key sectors and business in Wales.

We need to ensure people throughout Wales benefit from the creation of a highly skilled and strong workforce; this is what the industrial strategy sets out to do.

Universities and Science Minister Jo Johnson is visiting world-leading engineering and scientific technology company, Renishaw Plc, while Lord Prior of Brampton is visiting a Tata Steel plant in Shotton and the military aerospace facility, Raytheon.

Climate Change and Industry Minister Nick Hurd is going to the Liberty Steel plant in Newport and sustainable cement manufacturer Cenin Cement in Bridgend.

Small Business and Consumer Minister Margot James will be visiting a leading microbrewery, Tiny Rebels Brewery, to find out more about its recent export successes, before visiting the largest animation production company in Wales, Cloth Cat Animation. Margot will then be part of a creative industries roundtable on the Industrial Strategy, with representatives from the creative industry in Wales.

In its Green Paper, Building our Industrial Strategy, the Government has outlined ten key pillars of focus to be discussed as part of a 12 week consultation period, inviting contributions from industries, businesses, local groups and workers across Wales.

With a clear ambition of creating an economy that works for everyone, the Green Paper contains a number of proposed announcements set to benefit the Welsh regions such as:

- The Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund and foundation of UKRI, creating

new opportunities for Wales' world class universities to bid for UK Government funding.

- Recognising the excellence in research and innovation that exists across the UK, and investing an additional £4.7 billion by 2020-21.
- Investing in digital infrastructure, which has for too long been a barrier to economic growth across Wales.
- Finding a sustainable way to support energy intensive industries such as steel with energy costs.

The Government has issued an open invitation to industries, businesses and local groups across Wales to visit the GOV.UK website and help set the priorities for a modern Industrial Strategy. The consultation period runs for 12 weeks after which the Government will consider responses before publishing a White Paper later in the year.

## **Notes to Editors**

### **Industrial Strategy pillars**

The Green Paper seeks views from Wales on how the Government can refine its vision to help the UK economy meet future challenges and opportunities. The 10 pillars which the Green Paper seeks feedback on are:

- Investing in science, research and innovation – we must become a more innovative economy and do more to commercialise our world-leading science base to drive growth across the UK.
- Developing skills – we must help people and businesses to thrive by: ensuring everyone has the basic skills needed in a modern economy; building a new system of technical education to benefit the half of young people who do not go to university; boosting STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) skills, digital skills and numeracy; and raising skill levels in lagging areas.
- Upgrading infrastructure – we must upgrade our standards of performance on digital, energy, transport, water and flood defence infrastructure, and better align central government infrastructure investment with local growth priorities.
- Supporting businesses to start and grow – we must ensure that businesses across the UK can access the finance and management skills they need to grow; and we must create the right conditions for companies to invest for the long term.
- Improving procurement – we must use strategic government procurement to drive innovation and enable the development of UK supply chains.
- Encouraging trade and inward investment – government policy can help boost productivity and growth across our economy, including by increasing competition and helping to bring new ways of doing things to the UK.
- Delivering affordable energy and clean growth – we need to keep costs down for businesses, and secure the economic benefits of the transition to a low carbon economy.
- Cultivating world-leading sectors – we must build on our areas of competitive advantage, and help new sectors to flourish, in many cases challenging existing institutions and incumbents.

- Driving growth across the whole country – we will create a framework to build on the particular strengths of different places and address factors that hold places back – whether it is investing in key infrastructure projects to encourage growth, increasing skill levels, or backing local innovation strengths.
- Creating the right institutions to bring together sectors and places – we will consider the best structures to support people, industries and places. In some places and sectors there may be missing institutions which we could create, or existing ones we could strengthen, be they local civic or educational institutions, trade associations or financial networks.

## **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy brings together the responsibilities for business, industrial strategy, science, innovation, energy, and climate change. The Department is responsible for developing and delivering the Government's vision for an ambitious industrial strategy, and continuing to ensure that the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation. The Department leads the Government's relationship with business, and is responsible for improving corporate governance and securing better outcomes for consumers. We also make sure that the UK has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean and take action to tackle climate change, working in partnership with the business community.

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## **[Beijing to receive 900 cubic meters of water from Yangtze River in 2017](#)**

Beijing expects to receive 911 million cubic meters of water from the Yangtze River between Nov. 2016 and Oct. 2017, local authorities said on Tuesday.

The south-to-north water diversion project has already pumped 260 million cubic meters of water into Beijing since last November, according to the capital's office for the project.

Since the project began pumping water in December 2014. Beijing has received more than 2 billion cubic meters of water from the Yangtze, and 1.6 billion cubic meters of water from nearby Hebei Province, according to Sun Guosheng, head of the office.

More than 11 million residents, or about half of Beijing's population, have directly benefitted.

Recent data showed the water table in Beijing had risen 0.42 meters from a year ago, thanks to a daily water flow of 3.4 million cubic meters from the

project.

The city will construct more facilities including pipelines and reservoirs, according to Sun.

The project was conceived by Mao Zedong in 1952. The State Council approved the project in December 2002 after nearly half a century of debate.

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## **Independent recommendations will have positive impact on the IPFR process says Vaughan Gething**

The NHS Wales IPFR process is the mechanism used by all health boards in Wales to make decisions on access to treatments that are not routinely available for individual patients.

The review was established in July 2016 with a particular focus on considering the “clinical exceptionalism” decision making criteria for IPFR and the scope to reduce the number of IPFR panels in Wales. Central to the review was the patient perspective.

The review’s comprehensive findings were published in January and are available [here](#).

Ahead of his Oral Statement in the Senedd this afternoon, Vaughan Gething said:

“My approach to this review has been to be open, inclusive and transparent from the outset involving all political parties, the public and the NHS in Wales.

“I’m pleased that the consensus is that this is a helpful piece of work that makes thoughtful and pragmatic recommendations that will help health boards deal with what are sensitive and very often complex decisions. I am particularly pleased that the patient voice has centre stage in the report.

“The good news from the report is that many aspects of the system are working well and the review group have made helpful recommendations to strengthen those and improve upon other aspects of the process.

“The review concluded that the principle for making decisions at an individual patient level about access to a treatment should be based upon the level of expected clinical benefit and whether the

treatment offers reasonable value for money.

“With regards to reducing the number of IPFR panels, the review group have recommended it would not be the best way forward.

“The review has suggested improvements to the overall process to support health boards make these highly complex and sensitive decisions. This includes clarifying when it is appropriate to use the IPFR process, and strengthening quality assurance.

“I would like to thank the review group, once again, for their hard work and commitment in completing this complex piece of work. I would also like to express my gratitude to all of the patients who have been involved in the review process. The evidence they’ve provided in the workshops that have taken place across Wales has been invaluable.

“I have written to all of the health boards to confirm the implementation of the recommendations by September.

“I believe the recommendations in this report, when implemented, will have a positive impact on the IPFR process. It will make the system more easily understandable and less prone to being misused. Something I’m sure the people of Wales will welcome.”

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## [Green Party: Galloway’s a burnt out Brexiteer – only Greens offer real alternative in Gorton](#)



21 March 2017

The Green Party has responded to news George Galloway will stand in the Manchester Gorton by-election saying he offers the constituency nothing but an “overinflated ego”.

Jonathan Bartley, whose party placed second in Gorton in the 2015 General Election [1], said only the Greens give Gorton “a real alternative to the status quo”.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“George Galloway is a burnt out Brexiteer who offers nothing but an overinflated ego to the people of Manchester Gorton. Of course people want a real alternative to the status quo – that’s why the Green Party polled second

in Gorton last time and why we got more than five times more votes than him in the London Mayoral election.

“We are the only party who can deliver a real alternative for Gorton and we will fight to make sure this constituency is not left behind or overlooked.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2016/london/results>

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