

# News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

## 17th May 2019

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### News Highlights

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## News from the Brexit Cliff Edge

### Arron Banks has 'been only making plans for Nigel'

- [Millionaire Arron Banks spent £450,000 bankrolling Nigel Farage's lavish lifestyle](#), including the rent of an exclusive home in Chelsea, his furniture and fittings for the house - even a shower curtain. He paid for a car and security trained driver, leased a private office for Mr Farage. He's paid £13,000 a month in rent for the £4.4m 3-bedroomed house, provided a Land Rover Discovery worth £32,000 for Farage's use and £20,000 for a close protection driver

### Led by Donkeys is back with a bang - they're writing Nigel Farage's Brexit Manifesto for him as he has not got one and fly-posting it around the UK

- [Led by Donkeys billboards include past statements](#) made by Nigel Farage and his Brexit Party candidates. The latest feature comments he has made about breaking up the NHS and moving to an insurance-based system of healthcare and giving women less maternity pay

### MPs will probe 'dark money' after the Brexit Party website's a fake members loophole is revealed

- [An investigation revealed that loopholes could](#) permit foreign cash to pour into UK politics. The Daily Mirror highlighted it cheekily by registering a Mr Vladimir Putin, address The Kremlin - as a Brexit Party donor

### Tories Euro Election campaign has never been launched

- [There is no party manifesto. No speech by the leader.](#) Barely any money is being spent on the campaign. Officials are struggling to find enough activists to stuff envelopes or knock on doors. The 'strategy' is putting in so little effort that it automatically gives the Conservatives an excuse for their likely worst showing in an election nationwide in at least a century. The party is resigned to losing half its MEPs and possible coming fifth

### Labour's European Election tactics are failing spectacularly

- [YouGov's Peter Kellner provides an analysis](#) of opinion poll data and says the slump in the Labour Party's recent support has been caused by the desertion of voters who want the UK to stay in the European Union

### LibDems leapfrog Labour as Tories trail in European polls

- [A new opinion poll for The Times places the Liberal Democrats](#) (16%) in second place to the Brexit Party (35%) with Labour on (15%) and the Greens on (10%) with the Conservatives in fifth on (9%). Around 62% of people who voted Conservative at the 2017 General Election now say they are backing the Brexit Party. Only 1-in-5 Tory voters are staying with the party

## **It's the final countdown for Theresa May**

- [Theresa May met the Conservative Party](#) backbench 1922 Committee, who made their view that she should name her departure date now, as clear as possible. In a statement after the meeting, from chair Sir Graham Brady, it confirmed that after the next Brexit vote - in the first week of June, the PM will sit down with the party to plan the process to choose her successor. In short, if May loses the Brexit vote in the first week of June she will announce her resignation

## **Cross-party Brexit talks will end soon**

- [Labour has been insisting on concessions](#) from the government on guarantees for workers' rights and environmental standards - plus provisions to prevent a future Tory Party leader from tearing up any agreed deal - in return for its support. Tory whips believe a deal with Labour is not possible. The BBC reported that Conservatives will pack the proposed EU Brexit withdrawal draft legislation, bound for parliament in early June, with financial goodies designed to win over the votes of Brexiteers for the bill

## **Boris Johnson confirms he will stand for the leadership of the Tory Party**

- [Boris Johnson was asked at a business event](#) in Manchester whether he would run for the leadership when the contest began. He replied 'of course I am going to go for it'
- [Two more 'rising stars' of the Tory party launched](#) leadership bids after being urged to take on Cabinet big beasts - Kit Malthouse and James Cleverly
- [Amber Rudd tacked to the political](#) centre warning Tory activists in a speech 'not to give up and let extremists from the left and right win' as the EU elections loom into focus

## **Other Political News**

- [Momentum says its launching campaigns](#) to urge the Labour Party to adopt a series of radical and transformational pledges in its next General Election manifesto. These pledges will include action on a green new deal and a four-day working week
- [Pro-EU Tory MP, Philip Lee, faces a no confidence vote](#) from his local party's Brexiteers on June 1st. Lee said it was not a surprise and blames UKIP entryism
- [The debacle of the botched privatization](#) of the probation service was finally ended as the government said it would re-nationalise the service
- [Tony Blair said social democracy needs](#) a narrative of optimism about the challenges of the future if it is to thrive
- [EU regulators announced they have levied hefty fines](#) on Barclays, Royal Bank of Scotland, Citigroup, Japan's MUFG and JPMorgan for collusion in currency trading. The five banks collectively will pay \$1.2bn - 10% lower than planned after they all admitted their involvement
- [Former Tory Brexit Minister, Chris Heaton-Harris](#) breached ministerial code by meeting and discussing Brexit with members of a Spanish Far Right party called Vox
- [An investigation revealed that a secretive think tank](#) which is calling for the NHS to be scrapped is being funded heavily by 'Big Tobacco' and it is now donating to some of the Conservative Party leadership candidates

## **Economy**

- [Jaguar Land Rover's CEO denied he has been](#) in talks with Peugeot over a possible sale. Ralf Speth said he has not been in talks with Peugeot but declined to comment on whether owner Tata Motors may have been
- [CBI's director general, Carolyn Fairburn,](#) told business leaders in London that paralysis in

Westminster is continuing and that every day without any sort of deal with the EU is corrosive for business and is hurting the economy. Fairburn called the political mess caused by Brexit 'a crushing disaster' for business in Britain, with investor confidence at its lowest since the financial crash a decade ago

## **Jobs at Risk**

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### **Gill Furniss: 'Give the steel industry support and it can still thrive'**

News that the Government is drawing up contingency plans for a British Steel collapse will have come as a shock to thousands of workers who have worked against the odds to defend the company's future. Despite the sector's best efforts, the Government's failure to support this vital industry has resulted in the pressures becoming too great to absorb. To compete in a post-Brexit world, we must support and encourage our manufacturing industries. The future could be bright for UK steel as the Government's own analysis identified a £3billion opportunity by 2030, sustaining good jobs in areas that need them most.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/gill-furniss-give-steel-industry-16158023>

## **Economic Impact**

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### **Jaguar Land Rover CEO denies holding talks over sale to Peugeot**

Jaguar Land Rover's chief executive has denied the carmaker is in talks with Peugeot over a possible sale. The British company's Indian owner, Tata Motors, was last week forced to deny reports of advanced talks with France's PSA Group, which owns Peugeot, Citroën and Vauxhall. The Press Association reported a "post-sale integration document" was passed around senior executives at the companies, detailing the potential benefits of a tie-up. Speaking on Wednesday, JLR's chief executive, Ralf Speth, said he had met Carlos Tavares, his PSA counterpart, at the latest gathering of the European car industry lobby group but they did not discuss any deal. "I didn't have any discussion about it with him at all," Speth said at the FT future of the car summit in London. However, he declined to comment on whether Tata Motors had engaged in talks.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/may/15/jaguar-land-rover-ceo-denies-talks-peugeot-sale-psa-group>

## **Administrative Fall Out**

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### **Brexit political mess a 'crushing disaster' for UK business - CBI chief**

The continuing political mess over Brexit is a "crushing disaster" for business in Britain with investor confidence at the lowest since the financial crash a decade ago, the Confederation of British Industry's director general has said. Carolyn Fairbairn told business leaders in London that "the paralysis" in Westminster continuing "every day without a deal is corrosive" in its effect on Britain's economy. She said the government and other political parties involved in the Brexit mess needed to sit up and pay attention to the realities in business and stop shirking their responsibilities to the country, where business leaders are already being forced to cancel expansion because the prospect of a decision on Brexit seems further away than ever. "From the heart of business to the heart of politics, resolve this gridlock, do whatever it takes and do it fast," she said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/16/brexit-political-mess-crushing-disaster-uk-business-cbi-chief-carolyn-fairbairn>

### **Thomas Cook Blames Brexit For Huge £1.5bn Half-Year Loss**

Troubled holiday giant Thomas Cook has slumped to a £1.5 billion half-year loss as it warned Brexit uncertainty had seen Britons delay their summer holiday plans. The cash-strapped group's pre-tax losses widened from £303 million a year earlier and the firm warned "challenging" trading over the peak summer season was set to put the full-year result under pressure. It now expects underlying earnings to fall over the second half as holiday firms cut prices to boost Brexit-hit demand and costs of fuel and hotels rise. Thomas Cook is planning further cost savings in the second half to offset

tougher trading and higher fuel expenses, following its decision in March to shut 21 stores and axe more than 300 retail roles.

[https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/thomas-cook\\_uk\\_5cdd175fe4b01571365c1e45](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/thomas-cook_uk_5cdd175fe4b01571365c1e45)

## **Political Shenanigans**

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### **Lib Dems leapfrog Labour as Tories trail in Euro polls**

The Liberal Democrats have overtaken Labour while the Tories are pushed to fifth place, according to a poll for The Times before the European elections. The Lib Dems appear to be picking up support from Labour and Green voters after Sir Vince Cable argued that opponents of Brexit should vote for his party. YouGov interviewed 7,192 British adults between Sunday and Thursday this week. When asked whom they would support in the European elections, 35 per cent said the Brexit Party, up 1 point on the week before. Lib Dems were on 16 per cent, up 1, Labour on 15 per cent, down 1, Greens on 10 per cent, down 1, Conservatives on 9 per cent, down 1, Change UK unchanged on 5 per cent and Ukip unchanged on 3 per cent. The decline of the Conservatives into single figures is likely to increase the panic in the party's high command, with 62 per cent of Tory voters in the 2017 general election now saying that they will vote for the Brexit Party in the European elections. Only one in five who backed the party at the last general election is sticking with the Tories in the European elections.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/lib-dems-leapfrog-labour-as-tories-trail-in-euro-polls-pnclfv7d>

### **Brexit talks between the Government and Labour set to collapse without a deal**

The negotiations, which have been going on since the end of March, could break down as early as Friday. Senior Labour sources said on Thursday that they were not going to walk away "imminently" - leaving the door open to the party pulling the plug at some point in the next few days. Labour negotiators had also insisted that any deal agreed with the Government - which they also wanted to contain guarantees on workers' rights and environmental standards - must contain provisions preventing a future Tory leader from being able to tear them up. Meanwhile, BBC Newsnight's Nick Watt also reported that Tory whips believe a deal with Labour was not possible.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/foreign-affairs/brexit/news/103932/brexit-talks-between-government-and-labour-set-collapse>

### **Could Nigel Farage end up rescuing - or even owning - the Tory Party?**

Is the Brexit party the enemy or friend of the Tory Party? Is Nigel Farage its destroyer - or could he turn into its redeemer? This is not as crazy a question as it may sound, even though right now Farage's new venture is set to humiliate the Conservatives in the forthcoming EU parliamentary elections. The answer is contingent on other events, and in particular who wins the power struggle within the Conservative Party after Theresa May stands down (which every Tory MP I ask believes will be before the June 15 extraordinary vote by Tory local association chairs and grassroots officials on whether she is fit to remain in office - strikingly Bridgen and Vaizey, from the polar opposite wings of the party, endorsed that scenario on my show last night

<https://www.itv.com/news/2019-05-16/could-nigel-farage-end-up-rescuing-or-even-owning-the-tory-party/>

### **Probation privatisation debacle: Crazy obsession with the market fails again**

It is hard to fully describe the wastefulness of this debacle. Probation is the system that monitors offenders when they leave jail and tries to ensure that they do not reoffend. It is the harsh and unloved wing of public services. It isn't exciting, like the armed forces. It doesn't win public sympathy, like schools or hospitals. Most people don't even really know what it is. But when it goes wrong, we all suffer, because we all become less safe. There is a direct causal line between someone stealing your phone on the street and this service. Grayling shattered the system then tried to rebuild it according to the profit motive. He split low, medium and high risk cases and put the former two in the private sector, with the latter retained in the public sector. Then 21 separate

companies were given the contracts. The end result is clear. The National Audit Office found that probation companies had much lower business volumes than the Ministry of Justice had modelled, underinvested in their clients and didn't meet performance targets. They failed to work with charities, or develop appropriate supply chains, or provide innovative changes to the service, or meet contractual commitments, or help offenders with accommodation, employment, finance, mental health or drug problems. In repeated checks, they were found to be inadequate, particularly in the area of public protection. After the reform, there was a 22% overall increase in the number of proven re-offences per re-offender.

<http://www.politics.co.uk/blogs/2019/05/16/probation-privatisation-debacle-crazed-obsession-with-the-ma>

### **Union Flag on Theresa May's official car is flown upside down in Paris — famously a coded signal for 'distress'**

Theresa May's Brexit "distress" was sent around the world yesterday as bungling Brit officials appeared to fly the Union flag upside down. Eagle-eyed readers pointed out TV footage from Wednesday evening which showed the flag on the PM's official car in Paris fluttering the wrong way round as she met President Emmanuel Macron for talks.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9093320/union-flag-upside-down-theresa-may-car-distress/>

### **Beginning the hunt for the next PM**

But the paragraph tucked into the short formal letter from Sir Graham Brady to Tory MPs all but marks the end of Theresa May's premiership and the beginning of the official hunt for the next leader of the country. After the lines in the short note restate the prime minister's determination to get Brexit done, it confirms in black and white that after the next big vote, in the first week of June, the prime minister will make plans with the party for choosing a successor. Right now, the expectation is that vote will be lost (although it is not impossible, of course, that Number 10 could turn it round). And the conversation that's been arranged won't just be a gentle chat about what to do next. Senior sources have told me that means, even though the letter doesn't spell it out, that if her Brexit plan is defeated again, Mrs May will announce she is going.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48301127>

### **Britain's cross-party Brexit talks due to end soon - BBC's Watt**

Brexit talks between Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservatives and the opposition Labour Party will soon draw to a close after the ruling party gave up on finding a compromise to break the Brexit impasse, a BBC reporter said on Thursday. May opened cross-party talks with the Labour Party more than a month ago after parliament rejected her European Union withdrawal deal three times, leaving Britain in political limbo. Nicholas Watt, political editor of the BBC Newsnight programme, said he understood that the cross-party search for a solution would end soon, after Conservative officials gave up on the phase of the talks. "(They) are looking to pack the (EU withdrawal) legislation with goodies for Brexiteers," he said on Twitter.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/britains-cross-party-brexit-talks-due-end-soon-202321643--business.html>

### **Blair: Social democracy needs 'narrative about the future'**

When I asked Tony Blair whether he took the Thorning-Schmidt line or that of Angela Merkel, the German chancellor who ruled out any possible deal with the AfD, he gave a nuanced answer. "It depends on what you're being asked to trade in terms of policy in order to go into that coalition", Mr Blair explained. "If, for example, you know going into coalition with a right-wing party means you're going to adopt policies that are completely contrary to your principles then you shouldn't do it. "If on the other hand by forming that coalition you're keeping out a more destructive right wing coalition then you might do". Unsurprisingly, he castigates the current Labour leadership, and they reject his blueprint. But the Blair formula involves creating a compelling narrative for a future where the dizzying changes engendered by artificial intelligence, big data and robotics need to be channelled

to create hope rather than insecurity.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-48300161>

### **Boris Johnson confirms bid for Tory leadership**

Boris Johnson has said he will run for the Conservative Party leadership after Theresa May stands down. Asked at a business event in Manchester if he would be a candidate, the former foreign secretary replied: "Of course I'm going to go for it." Mrs May has said she will resign once MPs back her Brexit deal. A decision on her exit timetable will now take place after the House of Commons votes on her Brexit bill early next month.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48299424>

### **Theresa May to agree resignation timetable in WEEKS after showdown with MPs**

Theresa May looks set to agree her resignation timetable in just over two weeks' time after a showdown with Tory MPs. Cabinet ministers and the PM's allies now believe there'll be a full-blown Tory leadership contest before the summer holiday after her two-hour meeting with the 1922 Committee.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/breaking-theresa-agree-resignation-timetable-16156072>

### **May agrees to set her exit date after Brexit bill vote**

Theresa May has agreed to set a timetable for her departure as prime minister in the first week of June, leading MPs to believe she will trigger a leadership contest before the summer. Sir Graham Brady, the chair of the 1922 Committee of backbenchers, said she would agree a timetable for the election of a new leader after her Brexit legislation returned to parliament for a final attempt in the week of 3 June. Another member of the 1922 Committee told the Guardian that May understood she would have to name a quick date for her departure if the withdrawal bill is voted down, with a leadership contest before the summer. The MP said some Brexit supporters on the committee were disappointed that the prime minister was not forced to announce her departure immediately but this represented a "fair compromise".

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/16/may-averts-tory-mutiny-by-agreeing-to-set-her-exit-date-after-brexit-bill-vote>

### **Momentum urges Labour to adopt 'radical' pledges in next manifesto**

Momentum, the grassroots group set up to support Jeremy Corbyn, is directing its campaigning muscle into urging Labour to adopt a series of "radical and transformational" pledges in its next manifesto, including a green new deal and the four-day week. With Westminster politicians deadlocked over Brexit, which has divided Labour activists, Momentum wants to use its 40,000-strong membership to influence the direction of policy on other issues. It also hopes to act as a bulwark against the influence of MPs from the social democratic wing of the Labour party.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/16/momentum-urges-labour-to-adopt-radical-pledges-in-next-manifesto>

### **Nigel Farage's funding secrets revealed - Channel 4 News**

Channel 4 News investigation reveals how millionaire Arron Banks spent approximately £450,000 on Nigel Farage to fund lavish lifestyle the year following the EU referendum in summer 2016.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5qxehLbHiQ&feature=youtu.be>

### **Change UK is dying before it even learned to walk**

Change UK is dying before it even learned to walk. Its MPs know it. Its candidates know it. The public knows it. Change UK never really wanted to change anything. What it wanted most of all was for things to stay the same. For the UK to remain in the EU and for the extremes of both the Tory and Labour parties to shut up and go away.

[https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/16/change-uk-is-dying-before-it-even-learned-to-walk?CMP=Share\\_A](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/16/change-uk-is-dying-before-it-even-learned-to-walk?CMP=Share_A)

[ndroidApp\\_Tweet](#)

### **Pro-EU Tory MP Philip Lee to face no confidence vote from his local party's Brexiteers**

Rebel Tory MP Philip Lee is to face a no confidence vote by local party Brexiteers trying to oust him, The Sun can reveal. The outspoken MP for Bracknell resigned as a justice minister last year to back a second referendum. He is the latest in a series of pro-EU Tories to face deselection attempts. The vote will be held on June 1, after 53 members signed a petition calling for one.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9092111/philip-lee-no-confidence-vote/>

### **Momentum to try to force Jeremy Corbyn to adopt four-day working week as Labour Party policy**

A pro-Jeremy Corbyn campaign group will try to force the Labour Party to adopt a four-day working week as official policy ahead of the next general election. Momentum will use its 40,000-strong activist base to campaign in the run up to Labour's annual party conference in September to push through "radical and transformational" pledges. Those pledges will also include a much tougher position on combating climate change by requiring the UK to become carbon neutral by 2030. That would go much further than the party's current position of achieving net zero emissions before 2050. But the Tories said the proposals would weaken the UK's economy and put jobs at risk.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/16/momentum-try-force-jeremy-corbyn-adopt-four-day-working-week/>

### **Why is Labour just letting the Brexit party win the European elections?**

Why is Labour making such a historic mistake? To judge from public statements, the leadership believes that Labour's poor showing in this month's local elections proves simply that the public wants us to "get a deal done" on Brexit: the leadership also argues that their ambiguous approach to Brexit in the 2017 election helped them win voters. Actually, Labour's 2017 success depended on people believing that it was fundamentally a remain party despite tactical ambiguity on Brexit. And regardless of the suggestion that the public simply want the political class to get on with Brexit, polling shows that a large portion of the public now wants to stop Brexit. There are, of course, hardcore voters who want to leave no matter what, but they have mostly already shifted to Farage and his Brexit party.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/16/labour-brexit-party-european-elections-nigel-farage>

### **Arron Banks 'spent £450,000 on Nigel Farage in year after Brexit vote - providing him with £4.4m Chelsea home, £32,000 Land Rover Discovery, close protection driver, furniture and even utility bills'**

Millionaire insurance tycoon Arron Banks spent close to half a million pounds funding Nigel Farage's lavish lifestyle, according to the findings of a Channel 4 News investigation. The investigation to be broadcast tonight reports that Rock Services Ltd, a company owned by Mr Banks, leased a £4.4m 3-bedroom Chelsea home with garage for Mr Farage at an estimated rent of £13,000 a month in the summer of 2016. It is claimed Mr Banks also fitted and furnished the house, buying crockery, chairs and bathroom accessories and even a shower curtain for Mr Farage. Former UKIP leader Farage - who now fronts the Brexit Party - was also said to have been handed a Land Rover Discovery, valued at £32,300, for his personal use.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7037651/Arron-Banks-spent-450k-Nigel-Farage-including-4-4m-home-Land-Rover-utility-bills.html>

### **Millionaire Arron Banks 'spent £450,000 bankrolling Nigel Farage's lavish lifestyle'**

The tycoon Arron Banks spent £450,000 bankrolling Nigel Farage's lavish lifestyle, including the rent of an exclusive home in Chelsea, according to a Channel 4 News investigation. Mr Banks bought furniture and fittings for the house, including crockery, chairs and bathroom accessories - even a shower curtain. He also paid for a car and security trained driver and leased a private office for Mr Farage, who now leads the Brexit Party, Channel 4 reported. Its investigation claimed that Rock

Services Ltd, which is owned by Mr Banks, leased the £4.4m 3-bedroom house at an estimated rent of £13,000 a month in summer 2016. Mr Farage was provided with a Land Rover Discovery, valued at £32,300, for his use and Mr Banks paid £20,000 for a close protection driver

<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/millionaire-arron-banks-spent-450000-bankrolling-nigel-farages-lavish-lifestyle/>

### **Arron Banks 'gave £450,000 funding to Nigel Farage after Brexit vote'**

Nigel Farage was lavishly funded by Arron Banks in the year after the Brexit referendum, Channel 4 News has alleged, with the insurance tycoon providing him with a furnished Chelsea home, a car and driver, and money to promote him in America. According to invoices, emails and other documents, Banks, who regularly bankrolled Farage's former party, Ukip, spent about £450,000 in the year after the referendum, when Farage had quit as Ukip leader, the programme said. It said the money, some provided via Rock Services Ltd, a company owned by Banks, was used to rent a Chelsea home for £13,000 a month, with Banks purchasing furniture and fittings including crockery and a shower curtain. Farage was also provided with a Land Rover Discovery and a driver, and Banks sought to raise an extra £130,000 from supporters to cover security.

[https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/16/arron-banks-allegedly-gave-450000-funding-to-nigel-farage-after-brexit-vote?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/16/arron-banks-allegedly-gave-450000-funding-to-nigel-farage-after-brexit-vote?CMP=share_btn_tw)

### **Nigel Farage's funding secrets revealed**

Channel 4 News investigation reveals how millionaire Arron Banks spent approximately £450,000 on Nigel Farage to fund lavish lifestyle the year following the EU referendum in summer 2016. Millionaire insurance tycoon Arron Banks spent close to half a million pounds funding Nigel Farage, who is now the Brexit Party leader. Mr Banks is currently under investigation by the National Crime Agency over the source of his funding for the Brexit campaign. However, Nigel Farage claims Mr Banks has never funded The Brexit Party, which was founded in February this year. An investigation by Channel 4 News reveals: Mr Banks, through one of his companies, rented exclusive £4.4m Chelsea home for Mr Farage - Gifts included furniture, council tax, water and electricity bills - Banks provided a £30k car and £20k for a driver - Banks also leased private office for £1,500 a month and paid Mr Farage's personal assistant - Hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent promoting "Brand Farage" in America - A company owned by Mr Banks, called Rock Services Ltd, leased a £4.4m three-bedroom Chelsea home with a garage for Mr Farage at an estimated rent of £13,000 a month in summer 2016.

<https://www.channel4.com/news/nigel-farages-funding-secrets-revealed>

### **Boris Johnson confirms he will 'of course' run to succeed Theresa May**

Boris Johnson has confirmed he will run to replace Theresa May as leader of the Conservative Party, claiming he has a "boundless appetite to try to get it right". Speaking at a private event in Manchester alongside the BBC presenter Huw Edwards, Mr Johnson told those in attendance "of course I'm going for it". "I don't think that is any particular secret to anybody," he added. "But you know there is no vacancy at present." It marks the first time that the former foreign secretary has publicly stated his intention to run. Mr Johnson is the Grassroots favourite to succeed Mrs May, topping every leadership poll published in recent months. He is expected to run as the candidate offering a "clean Brexit"

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/16/boris-johnson-confirms-will-course-run-succeed-theresa-may/?hootPostID=3f0fbc0a60e611a4dcbf879da6a76a55>

### **Two rising star Tory MPs launch leadership bids after being urged to take on Cabinet big beasts**

Two rising star Tory MPs have launched leadership bids after being urged to take on "failing" Cabinet big beasts. Housing minister Kit Malthouse and Brexit minister James Cleverly are discreetly setting up campaign teams to challenge for the nation's top job, The Sun can reveal.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9092774/tory-mps-launch-leadership-bids-kit-malthouse/>

### **Amber Rudd warns Tories not to give up and let 'extremists' win as EU elections loom**

Amber Rudd has warned that the Conservatives must occupy the centre ground if they are to defeat the "extremists" currently dominating British politics. Amid a surge in support for Nigel Farage's new Brexit Party, the Cabinet minister told Tory activists that the Conservatives were now in "the fight of our lives" to push back against populists. A spate of recent polls have suggested that the Brexit Party, which is pushing for a no-deal exit from the EU, will come out on top at the EU elections on 23 May.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/conservative-party/news/103886/amber-rudd-warns-tories-not-to-give-up-and-let>

### **For a Tory revival that can truly see off populism, all you need is Gove**

In the latest part of our new series on the leadership contest awaiting the Conservatives, Harry Hodges explains why Michael Gove is the man who can deliver on the promise of Brexit

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/16/tory-revival-can-truly-see-populism-need-gove/>

### **Meet the real Alexander Nix. An interview with the notorious former head of Cambridge Analytica**

If you have heard of Alexander Nix, you probably think he's a villain. He is the former head of Cambridge Analytica, the data analytics company that helped Donald Trump win the presidential election. Nix and his colleagues have been accused of all sorts of other dastardly deeds: conniving with the Kremlin to hack democracy, 'dark messaging' people with racist ads on Facebook in the run-up to Brexit, and more and worse. Nix lost his job after a Channel 4 investigation into Cambridge Analytica in March last year — the exposé won a Bafta last weekend. By May, Cambridge Analytica and its parent company SCL had gone into administration, and Nix had been widely condemned as a Machiavellian crook.

<https://www.spectator.co.uk/2019/05/meet-the-real-alexander-nix-an-interview-with-the-notorious-former-head-of-cambridge-analytica/>

### **Anti-Brexit feeling expected to help SNP in European elections**

With the SNP presenting itself as the logical pro-EU option north of the border – where 62% voted to remain in the 2016 referendum – the party leader, Nicola Sturgeon, urged voters to treat both Labour and the Conservatives as pro-Brexit parties when she launched her European election campaign last week. Curtice said the polling evidence suggested Labour's vote in Scotland was more pro-leave than the rest of the UK yet, like the Tories, its support at this election had been eroding, leaving it likely to lose one of its two European seats.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/14/anti-brexit-feeling-help-snp-european-elections>

### **The end of Theresa May, writes Robert Peston**

Today's joint statement by the 1922 Committee and the PM may seem opaque but it means something very simple and unambiguous: the Tories will have a new leader, and we will have a new prime minister, by August. That is what a majority of Tory MPs want. But for reasons of decorum, they have not spelled out the exact timetable ahead of the European Union parliamentary elections, which take place on Thursday, or before the fourth and final attempt to have the PM's Brexit deal ratified, in the week beginning June 3. Theresa May is being allowed the flimsiest fig leaf of control over her destiny. But sources tell me that a majority of the 1922 executive committee want the new leadership contest done and dusted by the time the Commons rises for the summer at the end of July, to give a new leader the opportunity to shape a Brexit path with a few months to spare before the new deadline of 31 October.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2019-05-16/the-end-of-theresa-may-politics-brexit-conservatives-prime-minister/>

## **Brexit: Talks between Tories and Labour set to close with no deal**

Brexit talks between the Conservatives and Labour are about to close without an agreement, the BBC has learned. Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn will now move to a second phase, aimed at agreeing on a process for Parliamentary votes designed to find a consensus. It comes after Mrs May promised to set a timetable for leaving Downing Street following the next Brexit vote in June. Ex-Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has said he will stand in the Conservative leadership election that will follow.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-48304867>

## **EU fines major banks €1 billion over currency cartels**

Regulators in the European Union have levied a hefty fine on Barclays, Royal Bank of Scotland, Citigroup, JPMorgan and Japan's MUFG over collusion in currency trading. The European Commission on Thursday fined five major banks €1.07 billion (\$1.2 billion) for collusion in the foreign currency market. The fines would normally have been 10% higher, but they were reduced after the banks admitted their involvement.

<https://www.dw.com/en/eu-fines-major-banks-1-billion-over-currency-cartels/a-48759642>

## **European elections: is the party over for the centre-right?**

Sara Hagemann, associate professor in European politics at the London School of Economics, argues the election may determine whether Mr Orban will “remain something the EPP has to deal with internally”. Handling him as an external opponent could be easier for the party. But there are downsides: losing Mr Orban’s seats could bring the Socialists close to the top spot in the European Parliament. The Hungarian could also act as a rallying point for the right in Europe — narrowing the appeal of the EPP, much as they feared Mr Berlusconi would in 1998. With the EPP divided over Mr Orban’s fate, some observers see the Hungarian as having the upper hand. He can gamble on the EPP being unwilling to expel him later this year, while making the case for the EPP working with nationalist and anti-immigrant politicians such as Mr Salvini. “I have the impression that the identity battle for Europe’s right is a fight Orban is winning, not losing,” says Mr Vallée. “He is pulling the EPP, and in reality the entire European political structure, to the right.”

<https://www.ft.com/content/dbebc290-7589-11e9-be7d-6d846537acab>

## **Political Setbacks**

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### **How the 'men in grey suits' called time on Theresa May's premiership**

When the moment she had been dreading finally came, Theresa May raged against the dying of the light. The Conservative Party’s most powerful backbenchers had just made it clear that her premiership was at its end, but the Prime Minister pleaded with them to be given more time. Tears welled in her eyes as she made her argument for just a little longer in Downing Street. She dabbed at her nose with a handkerchief. Yet the sympathy and patience of the 1922 Committee had run out. “She voiced her view about Brexit, which she regards as a debt of honour,” said one of those present. “She was emotional - a lot more emotional than I have ever seen her before.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/16/men-grey-suits-called-time-theresa-mays-preiership/>

### **Jean-Claude Juncker says £350m bus slogan was a lie as deputy calls Brexit Britain 'Game of Thrones on steroids'**

The ‘Boris Bus’ Brexit slogan that Britain sends £350m to Brussels a week that could be spent on the NHS is a lie, Jean-Claude Juncker has said. The president of the European Commission made the accusation as his deputy said British politics after Brexit was like “Game of Thrones on steroids”. Mr Juncker, who is reaching the end of his five year term, said he was wrong not to attack Vote Leave’s 2016 referendum claim, which was famously emblazoned on the side of a red bus. “So many lies were told, and so many of the consequences resulting from a ‘no’ were misrepresented, that we, as the commission, should have spoken out,” he told Austria’s Der Standard newspaper.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/05/16/350m-brexit-bus-slogan-lie-says-jean-claude-junker/>

### **Labour HUMILIATED as BBC Question Time audience LAUGH at party's Brexit position**

Richard Leonard, a member of the Scottish Parliament, claimed voters should back Labour to stop a no-deal Brexit. The UK will take part in European Parliament elections next Thursday, with polls suggesting the Brexit Party will come out on top. Theresa May's Conservatives look set to struggle, and are likely to be pushed into third or fourth place. Addressing the audience Mr Leonard said: "We've had three years since the referendum, two years of failed negotiation and one bad deal presented by Theresa May. "The test next Thursday is whether people are prepared to countenance a no-deal Brexit or not. "The choice will be between an insurgent Brexit Party or defeating them, and defeating what they stand for. "Now my view is the best way to do that is to vote Labour next week." At this point a section of the Question Time audience began laughing.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1128285/Brexit-news-EU-exit-Labour-Party-BBC-Question-Time-European-Parliament-Theresa-May>

### **@ByDonkeys Brexit Party leader @Nigel\_Farage hasn't written a manifesto so we've done it for him, based on statements by him and his candidates.**

Brexit Party leader @Nigel\_Farage hasn't written a manifesto so we've done it for him, based on statements by him and his candidates. Billboards going up across the country this week. See more at <http://TheBrexitParty.com> (location: Radford Rd, Coventry)

<https://twitter.com/ByDonkeys/status/1128946811400589312>

### **Revealed: Former Brexit minister accused of breaching ministerial code in meeting with Spanish far right**

Brexit department claims Chris Heaton-Harris "wasn't acting in a ministerial capacity" – but he discussed Brexit with the controversial far-right Vox party, prompting calls for an investigation.

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/dark-money-investigations/revealed-former-brexit-minister-accused-breaching-ministerial-code-meeting-spanish-far-right/>

### **European elections: Majority of voters in EU countries predict union will 'fall apart' within 20 years, poll shows**

Support for the European Union among citizens in its member states is at a record high, but at the same time so is the belief the bloc will have disintegrated within 20 years, polling ahead of this month's election shows. The survey by the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) shows Slovakian voters have a particularly pessimistic view regarding the future of the union, with 66 per cent saying they thought it was "realistic" to say the "EU will fall apart in 10 – 20 years".

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/european-elections-2019-eu-collapse-war-20-years-ecfr-survey-a8916616.html>

### **The polls are clear - Labour's Brexit tactics are failing spectacularly**

In the case of Labour's strategy towards next week's European parliament elections, one central fact is now beyond dispute. The recent slump in the party's support has been caused by the desertion of voters who want the UK to stay in the European Union: not partially caused, or possibly caused, but totally. This is clear from a detailed analysis of recent YouGov surveys by its political team. In common with other pollsters, it has picked up a sharp reduction in Labour's support, from 21% in late April to 16% last week. Uniquely, YouGov can link its data to how people voted in the 2016 referendum and the 2017 general election – relying not on voters' sometimes fallible memories, but how they told YouGov they voted at the time of both contests.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/16/labour-brexit-remain-voters-european-elections>

### **Tory warning: Party risks collapse amid threat MPs will resign en masse for Brexit failure**

Conservative MPs will be forced to reconsider their political futures if the result of the 2016 Brexit

referendum in which 17.4 million Britons voted Leave, was to be ignored, Tory MP Philip Hollobone has warned.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1128186/Brexit-news-Nigel-Farage-Brexit-Party-latest-EU-UK-Philip-Hollobone-The-resa-May-resign>

### **Nigel Farage Fails 8 Times To Say What Brexit Offers In Car Crash BBC Interview**

Nigel Farage failed to spell out what Brexit will offer when repeatedly asked by a BBC journalist. The Brexit Party leader was challenged by the broadcaster's Wales political correspondent Arwyn Jones eight times to set out what leaving the bloc would deliver for south Wales. Farage, whose party has the sole policy of crashing out of the EU without a deal, was in Merthyr Tydfil for a campaign rally ahead of the European elections on May 23. Jones said the nation was a net beneficiary of EU funding "to the tune of £250m a year" and asked Farage what Brexit would deliver if Welsh agriculture was damaged by Brexit. Farage, noted for his confident media performances, appeared to flounder before suggesting the UK would be "in charge of" the steel industry.

[https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/nigel-farage-fails-5-times-to-say-what-brexit-offers-in-car-crash-bbc-interview\\_uk\\_5cdd384fe4b0b4728ba38dd2?ncid=other\\_twitter\\_cooo9wqtham&utm\\_campaign=share\\_twitter](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/nigel-farage-fails-5-times-to-say-what-brexit-offers-in-car-crash-bbc-interview_uk_5cdd384fe4b0b4728ba38dd2?ncid=other_twitter_cooo9wqtham&utm_campaign=share_twitter)

### **New Brexit Party AM calls Tommy Robinson 'courageous'**

One of the Brexit Party's new AMs has called far-right activist Tommy Robinson a "courageous character". David Rowlands said the ex-English Defence League (EDL) leader "reflects the views of a great many people". The comments contrast with those of Brexit Party leader Nigel Farage, who has called Robinson, whose real name is Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, a "thug". The Brexit Party said Mr Rowlands' was giving a personal view that did not "in any way" reflect the party's position.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-48295617>

### **Anti-Brexit campaigners have put up a series of billboards taking aim at Nigel Farage and Brexit Party**

Anti-Brexit campaigners have put up a series of billboards taking aim at Nigel Farage and the Brexit Party by highlighting past statements he and his candidates gave made. Photos show the billboards in place at locations including Taunton in Somerset, Coventry, and Neath in South Wales, with slogans such as "attack the NHS" and "less maternity pay" next to comments attributed to Brexit Party members. The billboard in Coventry cites a quote Mr Farage gave during a speech where he said: "We need to move to an insurance-based system of healthcare." They all feature the Brexit Party branding and logo. The group Led by Donkeys wrote on Twitter: "Brexit Party leader Nigel Farage hasn't written a manifesto so we've done it for him, based on statements by him and his candidates. "Billboards going up across the country this week."

[https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/anti-brexit-campaigners-put-up-2877403?utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=sharebar](https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/anti-brexit-campaigners-put-up-2877403?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=sharebar)

*Additional sources: (This is Local London)*

### **Big tobacco secretly bankrolling anti-NHS think tank whose bosses donate thousands to Tory leadership contenders, an investigation reveals**

A secretive think tank which called for the NHS to be scrapped while its heads pour millions into the Conservative Party – and its MPs’ – coffers is being funded by big tobacco, an investigation has found. British American Tobacco is one of the groups funding the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), a free market think tank which is notoriously close-lipped about its donors. The IEA has been an outspoken critic of public health measures for tackling smoking, obesity and harmful drinking, and past funders include organisations affiliated with gambling, alcohol, sugar and soft drinks industries. Health experts said the findings, in the British Medical Journal (BMJ), raise the prospect of a future Conservative leader aligning with big business at the expense of the public's health. The IEA has dubbed the NHS one of the most "inefficient and overrated health systems in the world" and a 2016

report argued for a private health insurance model in the UK with top-up payments.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/big-tobacco-funding-conservatives-nhs-hancock-raab-davis-a8916561.html>

### **MPs to probe 'dark money' after Brexit Party 'fake members' loophole revealed**

MPs will launch a probe into “dark money” in elections, after the Mirror revealed online loopholes could let millions in foreign cash pour into British politics. A Mirror investigation yesterday found it was possible to join Nigel Farage’s Brexit Party as a supporter under the name “Vladimir Putin” and the address of the Kremlin.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/mps-probe-dark-money-after-16156850>

### **Led By Donkeys take aim at Nigel Farage in new anti-Brexit billboard campaign**

Anti-Brexit campaigners Led by Donkeys are putting up a new set of billboards, and this time they've decided to use them to 'release' Nigel Farage's party's manifesto. "Nigel Farage has refused to publish one ahead of the elections so we've done it for him based on his own words and the statements and policies of his Brexit Party candidates," said Led by Donkeys on their website, adding that they think it's important to hold Farage and his candidates to account.

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/led-by-donkeys-brexit-party-campaign-1-6053529>

*Additional sources: (Oxford Mail)*

### **'They never started': inside Tory European election campaign**

There is no party manifesto. No launch event. No speech by the leader. Barely any money is being spent. And officials are struggling to find enough activists to even stuff envelopes, let alone knock on doors. This is the Conservative Party’s European election effort – an all but invisible campaign that will probably lead to their worst showing in a nationwide election in at least a century. Inside Conservative campaign headquarters, the strategy is that minimum exertion will give Theresa May an excuse for doing so badly after the results of the polls come in on 26 May. Centrally, the party is resigned to losing half their MEPs, and possibly coming fifth. The candidates picked by the party are a mixed bag from both the leave and remain wings. Many of them are not even bothering to tweet or update their websites about the European elections, let alone engage in pounding the streets.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/may/16/inside-tory-european-election-campaign-brexit-mep-candidates>

### **Jess Phillips ‘sick’ at interview with Ukip candidate who joked about raping her**

Carl Benjamin, the Ukip MEP candidate who joked online about raping her. Mr Benjamin, who is standing for for the party in South West England, appeared on the BBC’s Victoria Derbyshire programme to defend his jokes, accusing the BBC of “killing off” comedy. He also said he had spoken to rape survivors who had applauded his comments

<https://www.expressandstar.com/news/uk-news/2019/05/16/jess-phillips-sick-at-interview-with-ukip-candidate-who-joked-about-raping-her/>

### **Tory ministers condemned for rejecting MPs’ definition of Islamophobia**

In December, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims called on the Government to accept guidelines on anti-Islamic abuse which states: “Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.” In a Commons debate on Thursday however ministers will say that unlike the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition on anti-semitism, which it supports, the proposal on Islamophobia “has not been broadly accepted”.

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/home-affairs/news/103893/tory-ministers-condemned-rejecting-mps%E2%80%99-definition-islamophobia>