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Nicola Sturgeon has a duty to spell out her so-called 'next steps' on independence before people vote on June 8, the Scottish Conservatives have said today.

It comes after the First Minister responded to a slump in support for separation this week by saying she would not publish her proposals before the election.

This is despite promising before the Easter break that she would set these plans out as soon as the Scottish Parliament returned.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"The First Minister could not have been clearer last month – she told the people of Scotland she would set out her next steps on her unwanted referendum plan after Easter and keep us all informed.

"Yet now that a General Election has been called she has gone back on her word.

"The reason is obvious: as always with the SNP they desperately try to play down independence in an election campaign because they know it's unpopular.

"Her claim earlier this week that her campaign isn't about independence is a joke. But her refusal to set out her position clearly before we vote is deadly serious.

"The Prime Minister and I have set our own position on this matter very clearly and people can have their say on our judgement on June 8.

"How can it be right that people should vote on June 8 without a clue what the First Minister plans to say on the single biggest issue facing Scotland come June 9.

"Don't we all have a right to know? Nicola Sturgeon has a duty to set out her position as promised so we can all take a view.

"The position of the Scottish Conservatives is crystal clear.

“A second referendum isn’t needed and it isn’t wanted. We will continue to stand up against the SNP’s plans – which is why more and more people are turning to us at this election.”