

[This Tory Government needs to recognise the value of the Serious Fraud Office – Nick Thomas-Symonds](#)

Nick

Thomas-Symonds MP, Labour's Shadow Solicitor-General, commenting on the Government's failure to guarantee the SFO's (Serious Fraud Office) future as an independent entity, said:

"This Tory Government needs to recognise the value of the Serious Fraud Office and its importance to our international reputation for tackling cases of bribery and corruption.

"It would be a grave mistake to dispose of the SFO and its unique structure. Ministers must provide clarity on its future immediately."

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Scotland does not want to go back to the "division and uncertainty" of another referendum, Nicola Sturgeon was told today.

At First Minister's Questions, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said the party would reject the proposals set out by the SNP on Monday.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"The Scottish Conservatives reject the proposals set out by the First Minister on Monday.

"A referendum cannot happen when the people of Scotland have not been given the opportunity to see how our new relationship with the European Union is

working.

“And it should not take place when there is no clear political or public consent for it to happen.

“Our country does not want to go back to the divisions and uncertainty of the last few years.

“Another referendum campaign will not solve the challenges this country will face.

“We don’t want it. We don’t need it.”

[Tory manifesto commitment on mixed sex wards in tatters as incidents rise 50% in a year](#)

Tory manifesto commitment on mixed sex wards in tatters as incidents rise 50% in a year

Theresa May has been accused of abandoning yet another Tory Manifesto commitment as new figures reveal the number of NHS patients in mixed sex wards running 50% higher than this time last year.

New figures published by NHS England today show that hospitals breached mixed sex accommodation rules 1750 times during January and February this year – compared to 1164 in the same period last year

Mixed sex accommodation breaches have gone through the roof since Theresa May took over last July – with 5618 in the 8 months since she became Prime Minister, compared with just 4259 in the whole of 2015.

Ending mixed sex wards was a key pledge of David Cameron’s Government in 2010 and the 2015 Conservative Manifesto included a promise to “continue to eliminate mixed

sex wards”.

Labour

said today’s figures showed that Theresa May’s decision to restrain NHS spending was pushing hospitals to the brink.

Jonathan

Ashworth MP, Labour’s Shadow Health Secretary, said:

“Tory

cuts to social care have seen hospital attendances rocket and now it seems Theresa May has given up on her manifesto promise to eliminate mixed sex wards.

Patients expect dignity and respect when they’re being treated in hospital but

this Government is letting them down. The Government has overseen a catastrophic collapse of patient standards and this failure on mixed sex wards

is yet another sign that England’s hospitals are at breaking point.

“The

Prime Minister needs to get a grip and explain what she is going to do to fix the crisis which she has created. Every day that goes by brings more news of patient care getting worse under this Government. Quite simply the Government’s

policy of underfunding and mismanaging the NHS has left hospitals on the brink.”

Ends

Editors notes

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The [Conservative Manifesto 2015](#) (P37) said: “We will ensure that English hospitals and GP surgeries are the safest in the world, places where you are treated with dignity and respect. We will continue to eliminate mixed-sex wards.”

“Mixed

sex wards virtually gone.” *Jeremy Hunt, Speech to Conservative Party Conference, 1 October 2013*

<http://www.ukpol.co.uk/jeremy-hunt-2013-conservative-party-conference-speech/>

“The

number of hospital-acquired infections continues to go down and *mixed-sex* wards

have been virtually eliminated.” *Jeremy Hunt, Hansard, 23 October 2012*

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2012-10-23/debates/12102347000022/NHSCost?highlight=mixed%20sex#contribution-12102347000044>

“We said that we would sort out mixed-sex wards and hospital-acquired infections—promise delivered.”

*David Cameron, Hansard, 18 March 2015,
Column 756*

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Mixed sex accommodation breaches available here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/mixed-sex-accommodation/msa-data/>

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There were 1040 breaches in January and 710 in February – a 50% rise on the combined 1164 for the same two months last year.

[We need protection from terrorism, but pointless laws serve no purpose – Diane Abbott](#)

Diane Abbott MP, Labour’s Shadow Home Secretary, responding to comments from the new independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, said:

“This review is welcome. Max Hill makes some good points on removing laws that are never used. We need protection from terrorism, but pointless laws serve no purpose.

“He also highlights the fact certain communities, in particular Muslims, feel unfairly targeted. This will add to wider concerns around the Government’s Prevent strategy, which should also be reviewed.”

[These statistics show a worrying increase in both poverty and](#)

inequality – Debbie Abrahams

Debbie

Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on the Households Below Average Income statistics, said:

“These statistics show a worrying increase in both poverty and inequality. Four million children and two million older people are now living below the breadline. Those living with a disabled person are more likely than ever to be struggling to make ends meet.

“This is a direct result of this Government's seven wasted years of austerity and punitive social security cuts.

“The Tories' shocking failure to tackle the increasing costs of basic essentials, stagnating wages and their ruthless slashing of social security is leaving working families worse off up to 2020.”

“Labour would reverse cuts to in-work support, ban the exploitative zero hours contracts being used on hundreds of thousands of workers, and guarantee a real Living Wage.”