

[Derek Mackay suggests signing up to CFP could be 'trade-off' to rejoin EU](#)

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- Derek Mackay suggests signing up to CFP could be 'trade-off' to rejoin EU

30 Jul 2019



A senior SNP minister has signalled that signing back up to the Common Fisheries Policy would be a “trade-off” for an independent Scotland re-joining the EU.

Finance Secretary Derek Mackay made the comments in response to questions about SNP policy on fishing in a radio interview.

Discussing the prospect of an independent Scotland re-joining the EU, Mr Mackay added the SNP “accepts there would be trade-offs in any political deal”.

The MSP also claimed that “every part” of Scotland, including those “with more fishing interests than others” voted Remain in 2016.

However, research by the University of East Anglia showed that the Westminster constituency of Banff and Buchan – including Europe’s largest white fish port of Peterhead – voted Leave by a majority of 54%.

Scottish Conservative MP for Banff and Buchan David Duguid said:

“Derek Mackay has let the cat out of the bag here and confirmed the SNP would sell out our fishermen in a heartbeat.

“SNP have tried for years to look both ways on fishing.

“But the truth is their plans to break up the UK and rejoin the EU were always going to mean our fishermen would be stuck with the hated CFP.

“However, his claim that fishing communities didn’t vote for Brexit is plain wrong. A majority, estimated at 54%, in Banff and Buchan voted to leave the EU.

“Boris Johnson made clear yesterday that we will be out of the CFP by December 2020 at the latest and that fishing won’t be used as a bargaining chip in negotiations with Brussels.

“Those comments are already being welcomed by fishermen in ports like

Peterhead, Fraserburgh and Macduff.

“If the SNP dragged us back into the CFP after separation, it would rightly be viewed as the ultimate betrayal of our fishing communities.”

[Ruth comments following Prime Minister meeting](#)

29 Jul 2019



Below are comments from Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson following her meeting with new Prime Minister Boris Johnson today.

“First and foremost, the Prime Minister and I spoke about our shared determination to strengthen the Union and to make the case against Nicola Sturgeon’s plans for a second referendum on independence.

“We also discussed the many ways the UK Government can work in Scotland, for Scotland, to boost our economy and support key Scottish businesses.

“On Brexit, the Prime Minister has made clear the government’s preference is to leave the European Union with a deal. I back him wholeheartedly in that aim.

“Indeed, all 13 Scottish Conservative MPs backed a deal the last time one was presented in the House of Commons, as did the Prime Minister.

“The SNP’s warnings about No Deal are utterly hypocritical.

“Nicola Sturgeon has already made clear that SNP MPs will vote against any deal the new Prime Minister brings to parliament, just as they voted against the deal brought forward by Theresa May three times.

“Rather than complain from the sidelines, it’s time the First Minister worked with colleagues across the UK, and supported a deal that delivers on the referendum result, gives clarity to Scottish business, delivers for the Scottish fishing industry, and works for us all.”

[Scottish Conservatives unveil agritourism plan to help revitalise rural Scotland](#)

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- Scottish Conservatives unveil agritourism plan to help revitalise rural Scotland

26 Jul 2019



As the first day of the Border Union Show gets underway the Scottish Conservatives have published a plan to accelerate the growth of the agritourism sector in Scotland.

The plan will harness and develop the dynamism of rural entrepreneurs and, in many cases, their existing assets as well as capitalising on the current trend for eco-tourism.

There is a great opportunity to establish a world-class agritourism industry in Scotland, helping to revitalise rural economies and communities, particularly farmers wishing to diversify, according to the Scottish Conservatives.

Tourism is the backbone of the Scottish economy, however, income from this sector is not evenly distributed with almost three times the number of visitors going to Scottish cities rather than rural areas.

At the same time, Scottish farmers are increasingly struggling and face intense pressure to diversify in order to maximise their income.

The Scottish Conservative plan would:

- Establish a centralised rating and quality control scheme for agritourism businesses
- Encouragement of agritourism business models that promote good environmentalism and tackle climate change.
- Create a rural agritourism start-up fund.
- Develop a tier of agritourism qualifications from modern to graduate apprenticeships.
- Involve agritourism in the final stages of the rollout of R100 programme

Rachael Hamilton, Scottish Conservative shadow tourism secretary said:

“Agritourism forms part of the rural economy in many countries across the world.

“Scotland has massive potential to make a success story of agritourism, with so much to offer from excellent food and drink experiences to our dramatic and captivating landscapes.

“Helping farmers develop their farm business further and in turn boosting the rural economy of Scotland is vitally important.

“Our policy paper sets out key recommendations that the Scottish government and the sector should act upon in order to grow the sector.

“There is already fantastic agritourism businesses out there, let’s help many more to develop and flourish”.

[Taxpayers ‘facing consequences’ of SNP’s shipyard negligence](#)

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- Taxpayers ‘facing consequences’ of SNP’s shipyard negligence

19 Jul 2019



Scottish taxpayers may have to come to the rescue of the SNP’s botched approach to shipbuilding, it has been warned.

It was reported this morning that ministers want to nationalise the Ferguson shipyard on the Clyde.

This is despite the nationalists brokering a rescue deal for “political gain” just weeks before the 2014 independence referendum.

But since then, costs for the construction of two new CalMac ferries have soared, with businessman Jim McColl – who rescued the yard in the first place – set to lose millions of pounds as a result.

Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said:

“Responsibility for this mess begins and ends with the SNP government.

“It was Alex Salmond and his ministers who sought political gain when they brokered the deal to save Ferguson before the independence referendum in 2014, in a headline-grabbing move.

“Now, five years later, Scottish taxpayers are facing the consequences of

that action.

“Nationalising the yard isn’t the answer and it won’t help Ferguson as it seeks to bid for new contracts.

“However, it appears the SNP’s desire to control everything in Scotland – on the taxpayer’s expense – trumps common sense.

“SNP ministers now must sit down with management to find a way forward – not walk back to the 1970s and a solution that won’t work.”

[Calls for official probe after more Sick Kids delays announced](#)

18 Jul 2019



The scandal of Edinburgh’s new Sick Kids hospital must be probed by the Scottish Parliament, an MSP has said.

Shadow health secretary Miles Briggs made the call after it emerged the opening could be delayed even further after a raft of new checks were announced.

Jeane Freeman, the health secretary, said today NHS National Services Scotland had been commissioned to investigate “all buildings systems in the new hospital” and to make sure the ongoing work there complies with national standards.

She also confirmed that KPMG had been hired to “conduct an independent audit of the governance arrangements” for the hospital, while a formal “recovery plan” had been issued to the health board.

All of this is likely to mean more delays to the opening of a facility which was meant to be up-and-running in 2012.

Now the Scottish Conservatives are demanding the whole saga is investigated by Holyrood’s Health Committee.

The project has been plagued by problems from the start, including a row about how much money the Scottish Government would stump up for the hospital, and a multi-million pound fundraising scheme which ended in debt, sparking a criminal investigation.

Scottish Conservative shadow health secretary Miles Briggs said:

“All of these measures announced by the SNP government will only delay things further.

“This is a much-needed facility which was supposed to open in 2012 – the SNP has been in charge the whole time and must take final responsibility for the failure of this project.

“Families and staff will look at this announcement and wonder why these things weren’t demanded of the construction firms from the outset.

“After all, the nationalists have had seven years of delays in which they could have ensured these boxes were ticked.

“The only way to establish the extent of what has gone wrong, why it has happened, and how we can ensure it’s not repeated, is to have a full Scottish Parliament inquiry.

“It’s the very least patients, their loved ones and the hardworking staff deserve.”