

Reform rides the crest of the Farage wave

From one to twenty-eight, the Reform UK speedboat overtook all the well-established political groups with a sensational result barely predicted by a Daily Telegraph March opinion poll focused on Cornwall.

Tories sink to (nearly) the bottom

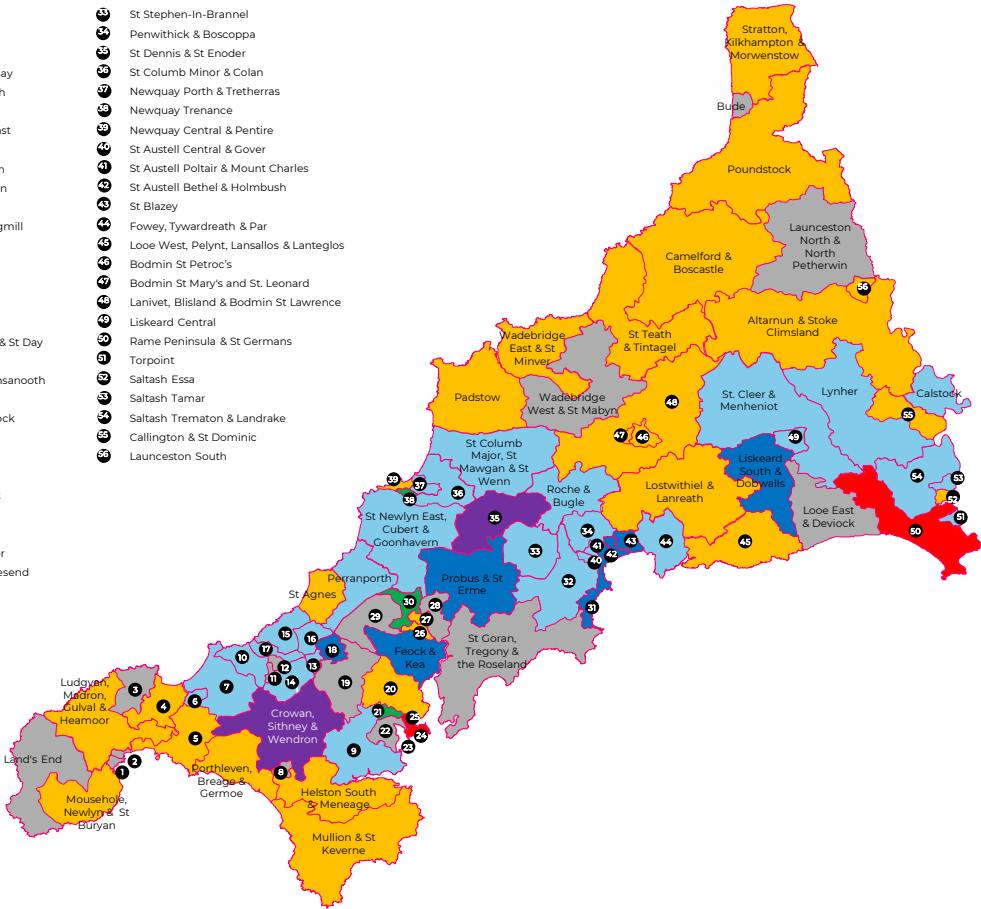
Despite devastating losses, this wasn't the Conservative's worst performance at the ballot box – this came in 1997. But the former cabinet member for planning, Olly Monk, lost his seat to Reform UK. Had former leader Linda Taylor stood for election, she may also have lost. Her successor lost by nearly 700 votes in St Ives East, Lelant, and Carbis Bay.

Smaller political groups bob along the waves

While the electoral ups and downs were shared by Reform, the Lib-Dems, and the Tories, the remaining political groups largely stayed the same, including Labour whose four Cornish parliamentary triumphs in the General Election were not repeated ten months later locally.

Turnout:
No figure provided.

- 1 Penzance Promenade
- 2 Penzance East
- 3 St Ives West & Towedack
- 4 St Ives East, Lelant & Carbis Bay
- 5 Long Rock, Marazion & St Erth
- 6 Hayle West
- 7 Gwinear-Gwithian & Hayle East
- 8 Helston North
- 9 Constantine, Mabe & Mawnan
- 10 Camborne West & Treswithian
- 11 Camborne Trelowarren
- 12 Camborne Roskear & Tuckingmill
- 13 Pool & Tehidy
- 14 Four Lanes, Beacon & Troon
- 15 Illogan & Portreath
- 16 Redruth North
- 17 Redruth South
- 18 Redruth Central, Carharrack & St Day
- 19 Lanner, Stithians & Gwenna
- 20 Mylor, Perranarworthal & Ponsanooth
- 21 Penryn
- 22 Falmouth Trescobas & Budock
- 23 Falmouth Boslowick
- 24 Falmouth Arwenack
- 25 Falmouth Penverris
- 26 Truro Boscawen & Redannick
- 27 Truro Moresk & Trehaverne
- 28 Truro Tregolls
- 29 Threemilestone & Chacewater
- 30 Gloweth, Malabar & Shortlanesend
- 31 Mevagissey & St Austell Bay
- 32 St Mewan & Grampound
- 33 St Stephen-In-Brannel
- 34 Penwithick & Boscoppa
- 35 St Dennis & St Enoder
- 36 St Columb Minor & Colan
- 37 Newquay Porth & Tretherras
- 38 Newquay Trenance
- 39 Newquay Central & Pentire
- 40 St Austell Central & Gover
- 41 St Austell Poltair & Mount Charles
- 42 St Austell Bethel & Holmbush
- 43 St Blazey
- 44 Fowey, Tywardreath & Par
- 45 Looe West, Pelynt, Lansallos & Lanteglos
- 46 Bodmin St Petroc's
- 47 Bodmin St Mary's and St Leonard
- 48 Lanivet, Blisland & Bodmin St Lawrence
- 49 Liskeard Central
- 50 Rame Peninsula & St Germans
- 51 Torpoint
- 52 Saltash Essa
- 53 Saltash Tamar
- 54 Saltash Trematon & Landrake
- 55 Callington & St Dominic
- 56 Launceston South



HOLD:
NO OVERALL CONTROL (based on
councillor numbers before election)



Surf's down for the Tories as Reform rides the Cornish wave

Lib-Dems double in size – Labour tread water

Internal controversy and defections, vast distances of coastline, and wretched opinion polls (both national and in Cornwall) compounded by heavy losses in the 2024 General Election. Just about every condition for a Conservative wipeout in the UK's capital of surfing was ticked off ahead of 2 May.

And so, it proved as the Conservative vote collapsed from the high national watermark of 2021, Reform UK captured twelve of their twenty-eight seats in electoral divisions which touched the coast, and the March opinion poll for the Daily Telegraph proved overly optimistic with an underestimate of Reform UK's success by fifteen divisions.

Without doubt, the electoral pressure from the left (from the Lib-Dems, traditionally strong in Cornwall and doubling in size) and right contrived to compress Conservative support, leading to Reform UK becoming the largest party but well short of a majority.

Although Labour held their own with a net loss of one seat, the omens for the next national elections (due 2029) are not great should Reform UK sustain their momentum.

Take the Camborne and Redruth parliamentary constituency. Nine of the sixteen wards are now represented by Reform UK and none by Labour.

How Labour withstands the Farage tidal surge if his popularity continues to rise next time is a question party strategists will tackle, not just here but also in similar emerging Reform UK strongholds nationwide.

So, what now? The Lib-Dems leader, Cllr Leigh Frost, has already said a 'definite no' to a coalition with Reform; similar stances may follow from other political groups. While Reform UK say any coalition without them would be 'undemocratic.' Whoever takes control faces an incredible array of challenges, each with the potential to destabilise a coalition of any form.

The top is devolution. Too small in the government's eye to become its own combined authority, but with a limited Cornish appetite to join forces with Devon and a 'Devonwall' solution, the choppy waves of devolution may smash any coalition into the rocks without careful navigation.

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