

Yellowhammer is wrong, but that doesn't mean we ...

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The so-called [Yellowhammer report](#) is wrong. I can say that with absolute confidence. Every forecast is, and I've delivered a lot in my time, always with that caveat attached to them. But in my opinion that does not mean it is not important. That's precisely its significance.

All it really says with certainty is four things. The first is that we do not know what will happen if we hard-Brexit. The second is that we can be sure that some consequences will be very uncomfortable, at least for a while. The third is that there is no known solution to the Irish border issue, whatever Conservative politicians wish to claim. And the last, and perhaps the most significant, is that whatever happens the uncertainty of Brexit will continue for a considerable time to come: any deal only leads to more negotiation. No deal just makes that next step harder, and potentially more drawn out.

I am not saying that worrying about particular drug supplies does not matter. Or that we should not worry about civil unrest, and so on. Of course those risks need mitigation. But precisely what those risks are does still remain uncertain. The points I make are, in the event of no deal, certain within the parameters I note. And of all these the last is the greatest: there is no end in sight.

And that matters. We have an election coming. This time there will be no avoiding Brexit. In 2017 it could be pretended that it was in the distance. This time it is not. And so it will dominate all campaigns, whatever other issues parties wish to add to the mix. And what voters will need to know is that unless they vote for Article 50 revocation then the nightmare, with which most are utterly fed up, will continue. Precisely for that reason, and whether readers here like it or not, this is why I think the LibDems will do well in England and Wales and the SNP will in Scotland. Both parties have broad bases. And both are offering ways out of the current situation.

The Tories only offer more chaos. The Labour position has logic to it. And at the same time if Fiona Bruce can tear it to shreds - and she did - then so too can anyone else. However logical it is to say that you will negotiate a new deal to put to a referendum, if you then say you will campaign against that deal the conviction that you will bring to

the negotiating process has to be in doubt. And that's the flaw in the Labour logic.

So, both major parties offer more delay, prevarication, and long term uncertainty as their core election offering. And that is not what the country wants.

The nationalists and Alliance vote will rise in Northern Ireland as a result.

The SNP will not sweep Scotland, but they will have a resounding majority there.

And the LibDems will hold many more seats in England and Wales than anyone might have thought possible a couple of years ago.

And Yellowhammer can be used to predict all that. All it says is we're in a mess. What some parties will be able to offer is a certain way out of that mess. The only way to achieve that is to stay in the EU, and reform it, which I believe possible, because there is no human made institution incapable of being reformed: to claim otherwise is, very politely, to be absurd.

Yellowhammer draws battle lines. And our two main parties are drawing them badly.