

## Conservative Donors Pour Cash into Key Election Battlegrounds

Conservative donors have poured more than £2.5m into key election battlegrounds to shore up support for MPs, such as Liam Fox and Penny Mordaunt, who are in danger of losing their seats. The 2024 election will be the highest-spending UK contest, after the government raised national election limits to £34m per party – leaving the Conservatives and Labour in an arms race to raise cash. Tory candidates and their associations in some of the most closely contested seats have been bringing in £50,000–£100,000 from donors over the last year, as tight local spending limits kick in only during the last five weeks of the campaign.

## Conservative Candidates Rush Out Mailshots Before Spending Deadline

A last-minute splurge by candidates is expected next week before the campaign deadline of 30 May. MPs and activists across the parties said they were rushing out mailshots before the regulated period for spending kicks in, and tens of thousands of pounds were being spent on targeted letters and surveys. A briefing pack for Conservative candidates urges them to spend as much as possible between now and 30 May getting targeted social media adverts and campaign material out, as whatever can be delivered and posted between now and 30 May will not count towards candidate election expenses.

## Experts Warn of Powerful Donors Influencing Results

Experts have warned that the parties are increasingly getting their funds from a small number of big donors with the power to influence results in marginal seats – despite Labour's commanding lead in the national polls. The prime minister has made light of his disastrous general election announcement, but experts warn of the dangers of powerful donors influencing results in marginal seats.

Venezuela está viviendo otro momento oscuro.

El presidente Nicolás Maduro, el líder autoritario que está en el poder desde 2013, se ha declarado ganador de otra elección que los observadores internacionales han llamado antidemocrática. Sus fuerzas de seguridad han arrestado a cientos de opositores políticos. Y las nuevas protestas en su contra parecen estar perdiendo fuelle.

¿Hay alguna esperanza de democracia en Venezuela perdida? Los líderes de la oposición están tratando de avanzar, y los Estados Unidos han reconocido a su candidato como el ganador de las elecciones del domingo. Pero el Sr. Maduro no parece estar cerca de renunciar al poder.

¿Qué exactamente tomaría eso?

La respuesta - según analistas, científicos políticos y una revisión de la historia - depende en gran medida de las fuerzas de seguridad del gobierno.

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