

Michael Winstanley - Conservative Candidate, Makerfield

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Last updated: 25 May 2026 **By-election date:** Thursday 18 June 2026

Bio

Detail	Info
Full name	Michael Winstanley
Party	Conservative
Constituency	Makerfield
First-time candidate	Likely

How They Got Selected

Named as Conservative candidate on 20 May 2026. Selected amid questions over Kemi Badenoch's approach to the by-election — the Conservatives have been largely absent from the campaign narrative, with the race dominated by Labour vs Reform.

Polling

Date	Pollster	Winstanley %	Notes
23 May	Survation / Sunday Times	2%	Trailing far behind main contenders

What It Means

The Conservative vote in Makerfield has collapsed. Once a Labour-Conservative marginal, the party is now a fringe presence — polling at just 2% and being squeezed by both Reform UK (right) and Labour (centre-left). The Tories are effectively spectators in this by-election.

Twitter/X Discussion

“ Source: Nitter search, May 2026

Winstanley gets modest Twitter coverage, mostly from Wigan locals and Conservative accounts. Key themes:

- **Former Mayor of Wigan:** "Michael Winstanley, he's a former Mayor of Wigan and a really good candidate to have. Sadly he'll be squeezed out of the picture by a bloke with questions to answer about how he refers to women and a bloke who is only doing this to further his career. It's all so wrong." — a local defending him against the national circus
- **Conservative Party promo:** Conservative accounts tweet about him positively — "Michael Winstanley, Conservative candidate for the Makerfield by-election, is sending the right message loud and clear — we are the party with the best plans and the serious vision for Britain"
- **Squeezed candidate narrative:** Widely predicted to come 5th or 6th, with one tweet predicting him to be "ahead of Labour" only as a joke. Multiple tweets question why Tories should even bother: "Shouldn't you as a Conservative be supporting Michael Winstanley?"
- **Loony Party comparison:** "Do you think that the Tory party in the by election in Makerfield will get more votes than the Monster Raving Loony Party?" — the fact this is a genuine question reflects how far the Tory vote has collapsed

Reddit Discussion

Barely discussed on Reddit. When mentioned, it's usually in the context of how far the Conservatives have fallen in their former heartlands. The "2% polling" figure is cited as evidence of the party's existential crisis in the North.

- [BBC — Conservatives name Michael Winstanley](#)
- [The Telegraph — Questions over Kemi Badenoch's approach to Makerfield](#)
- [PollCheck — Makerfield By-Election](#)

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