

# Nigel Farage says he wants to 'build a powerful lobby group' to tackle the 'major national scandal' of 'de-banking' - as its revealed banks are shutting up to 1,000 accounts a day

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[Nigel Farage](#) has said he wants to build a 'powerful lobby group a powerful' to tackle the 'major national scandal' of de-banking.

The former [UKIP](#) leader launched a new website as part of his campaign to hold the UK's financial giants to account after he received an overwhelming number of messages from people who have had their bank accounts cancelled.

He said in an interview with [The Telegraph](#) that the AccountClosed.org site aims to identify the main reasons for accounts being cancelled and highlight the banks who are the 'worst offenders'.

The start of his campaign comes as The Mail on Sunday revealed today that banks are [shutting more than a thousand accounts](#) every working day.

Mr Farage himself recently had his Coutts account closed because of his political views which led to the [resignation of Dame Alison Rose](#), the chief executive of its parent bank NatWest, and [Coutts chief executive Peter Flavel](#).



Nigel Farage (pictured) has created a new website to help people who have had their bank accounts cancelled amid a 'major national scandal' of debanking



Mr Farage had his Coutts account closed because of his political views which led to the resignation of Dame Alison Rose (pictured), the chief executive of its parent bank NatWest, and Coutts chief executive Peter Flavel

Mr Farage told the Telegraph: 'I'm beginning to have the impression this is much, much bigger than any of us could have contemplated,' he said.

'This is about the right to free speech, about having a country where people are treated fairly in an age when you frankly can't function on a personal level, let alone a business level, without a bank account.'

Mr Farage highlighted that there were 'dozens' of reports from small businesses having their accounts closed for trading in cash, which he found particularly concerning.

The about page of the website says: 'Welcome to AccountClosed.org - a passionate and dedicated campaign group committed to advocating for the consumer rights of individuals and small medium businesses who have faced unjust treatment from banks and financial services companies, particularly when their accounts have been abruptly closed and essential services withdrawn.

'We stand united to make a difference in the lives of those affected and seek to bring about positive change in the UK financial landscape.'

It adds that AccountClosed.org was founded as an 'unincorporated association by a group of legal and finance professionals' who have a 'wealth of expertise and experience in dealing with financial matters and consumer rights'.

The Mail on Sunday reported that the number of bank accounts closed has risen in recent years from under 50,000 in 2016 to almost 350,000 last year.

Details of the sheer scale of account closures were obtained under a Freedom of Information request made to City watchdog the Financial Conduct Authority.

They come as crisis-hit NatWest continues to reel from the fallout of the Nigel Farage affair. Dame Alison Rose was forced to quit as chief executive last week after NatWest's private banking arm Coutts closed the account of the former Ukip leader due to his political views.

Almost 90,000 individuals are estimated to have been categorised as 'politically exposed persons' by the banks. These include MPs and other figures deemed to be at risk of abusing their positions for private gain and who require extra checks.

Separate figures from the Financial Ombudsman Service show NatWest,

which is 39 per cent taxpayer-owned, had the joint highest number of complaints about decisions to close bank accounts last year, along with Barclays.

The FCA data on 'debanking' obtained by The Mail on Sunday is based on annual returns from almost 250 lenders who have shut accounts solely because of concerns over financial crime such as money laundering and fraud.



Mr Farage first revealed he had been ditched Coutts on June 29 and claimed it was due to his political views

On Sunday, the former MEP told GB News, where he works as a presenter, that 'every option is on the table' with regard to taking legal action against NatWest after it shared his personal information.

He told the broadcaster: 'Nobody with profile who has been de-banked has come forward.'

'Two reasons: one, a sense of shame, humiliation and embarrassment, but, secondly, it would damage their prospects of getting any other bank account.

'But what I've learnt is this - it isn't just high-profile people with strong opinions that are being closed down by banks that have become completely politicised in the most extraordinary way.

'What I've learned in the three weeks since I came out, as it were... I've just been inundated by small businesses, by folk all round the country. People in absolute fear, terror, lives being ruined, thousands of businesses being closed.

'These are people who have done nothing wrong whatsoever.'

Mr Farage first revealed he had been ditched Coutts on June 29 and claimed it was due to his political views. But on July 4, a BBC story quoted a source at the bank saying his account was closed for failing to meet minimum wealth thresholds.

Alison Rose later revealed she had been the source of the BBC article and admitted the information she provided had been incorrect.

After attempting to cling on to her role she resigned in the early hours of 26 July, while Peter Flavel stepped down with immediate effect the next day.

NatWest boss Howard Davies has vowed to stay on in his role until April 2024 as planned despite mounting pressure for him to step down as well.

On Friday, City minister Andrew Griffith, who led the Government response to the issue, said Sir Howard should remain in post.

Nigel Farage demands NatWest's chairman Sir Howard Davies step down



NatWest boss Howard Davies (pictured) has vowed to stay on in his role until April 2024 as planned despite mounting pressure for him to step down as well

Mr Farage said: 'I do not want what has happened to me to happen to anybody else. And it's clear from today's newspapers, it has been happening to an awful lot of people.

'I want this to be a turning point in this whole appalling behaviour from banks. Whether it's high-profile figures or people running a fish stall, what has happened within this industry is wrong.

'It's become, frankly, self-serving in its own interests. It's damaging Britain and I want real change.

'I want to see a cultural change but Government and Parliament needs to go through the legislation, this simply isn't working. It's not just ruining lives in Britain, it's damaging businesses in Britain.

'The information we've got out today is that 1,000 bank accounts a day are being closed. Every single day 1,000 people, whether it's their personal or business accounts, are being closed down.

'There are tens of thousands of people out there, maybe more, who are being wronged by the banks whose lives have been ruined, they have had no-one to speak for them.

'They've been suffering in silence and that's why I've launched this website today - [accountsclosed.org](https://accountsclosed.org). If you've been closed down, if you've been suspended, then come and tell me who you are, help me to help you.'

Last night Energy secretary Grant Shapps became the [latest political figure to fall victim](#) to the 'de-banking' scandal as he revealed that he and his entire family have their accounts cancelled because he has been designated a 'politically exposed person'.



The cabinet minister and MP for Welwyn Hatfield in Hertfordshire, said that one bank said he had to show them a massive 18 years worth of payslips before they would let him be a customer.

The furious politician, 54, told The Sun on Sunday that lenders have 'gone too far with this' and should instead 'get on with the job of being good at banking' and not 'second guess society'.

Former prime minister Liz Truss has also backed Mr Farage, writing in [The Sunday Telegraph](#) that 'heads have rightly rolled' in the wake of the row.

It came as senior Tory MP David Davis, writing in [The Sun](#), suggested he will bring forward a Private Member's Bill in the Commons to 'guarantee everyone has a right to a bank account'.

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