

Green Party: Defra figures show government is leaving UK exposed to flood risk



Green Party

28 September 2017

***Deputy leader Amelia Womack visits community group taking action on flooding**

***Party calls for Government focus on natural flood defences**

Responding to new figures [1] showing spending on flood management in England is expected to fall, the Green Party has warned that communities are being left “hopelessly exposed”.

In a visit to a community flood defence scheme in Hebden Bridge [2] Amelia Womack, Green Party deputy leader, also urged the government to “end its fixation with concrete” and invest in more sustainable and natural means of flood management.

Womack said that this means spending money on natural flood defences, sustainable urban drainage schemes, and action on climate change, not just concrete walls. Womack pointed to the work of Green councillors in Stroud who have demonstrated that natural flood defences are cheap, effective and have wide ranging benefits for local habitats and biodiversity.

Amelia Womack, Green Party deputy leader, says:

“Today’s figures show that total spending on flood management will have fallen below 2005 levels by 2020.

“For communities already affected by devastating flooding this news is totally unacceptable. But it also means that many more communities across the country are likely to be put hopelessly at risk.

“The problem this government has is its total fixation with concrete. While that has to play in some elements of flood management it should never be the be-all and end-all. Cheaper, less intrusive, and more environmentally friendly forms of flood management are being trialled across the country. The government needs to sit up and take notice.

“We need a commitment to natural flood management from our Government – empowering local authorities to work with landowners in the uplands of catchment areas. Cheap and ecologically sound methods of natural flood management can slow the flow before reaching settlements in the lowlands, saving homes and lives from the misery of flooding.”

Notes:

1. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647580/Funding_for_Flood_and_Coastal_Erosion_in_England_Sep_2017.pdf>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647580/Funding_for_Flood_and_Coastal_Erosion_in_England_Sep_2017.pdf>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647580/Funding_for_Flood_and_Coastal_Erosion_in_England_Sep_2017.pdf

2. Today Amelia Womack is visiting Treesresponsibility – a community group in Hebden Bridge, one of the communities affected by the severe Boxing Day floods of 2015. Since 1998, Treesresponsibility has planted an average of over 12 acres of new woodland per year as a form of flood mitigation.

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