

Greens warn UK is “paying the price” for government failure on floods



21 January 2021

- **Amelia Womack: “People are paying the price for decades of tokenistic action when it comes to flood risk management”**

The Green Party has accused the government of chronic failure over its inadequate response to flooding.

As Storm Christoph caused devastation in parts of England and Wales [1], Green Party Deputy Leader Amelia Womack has said the UK and Welsh governments must immediately implement a long-term plan to improve natural flood defences and reassess planning regulations which still allow for new buildings on flood plains.

Womack said:

“Every year, flooding across the UK impacts families and businesses. To add to this devastation, this year it comes 10 months into a global pandemic putting added strain on individuals and communities.

“Climate change increases our likelihood of extreme and damaging weather across the country. Yet, the government’s announcements of further funding for flood defences are more often than not too little, too late and lack a practical plan for the future.

“Concrete flood defences after an event won’t solve the impact the climate and ecological emergency is having on our flood risk. We need a long-term vision to reassess how we work with the land by improving natural flood defences, and working with our environment which has been proven to be far more effective.

“Given this happens every year we need to adapt our planning system to the climate changed world and recognise that we can no longer build homes and commercial premises on floodplains.

“People are paying the price for decades of tokenistic action when it comes to flood risk management. We need the UK government to start showing true global leadership by introducing the policies that will reduce our carbon emissions as soon as possible and restore our ecosystems. Taking real climate action will not only help reduce the impact of climate change, but will also help us create thousands of good quality jobs in our communities.”

Greater Manchester is one of the areas hit hardest by the latest storm.

Melanie Horrocks, Green Party candidate for Mayor of Greater Manchester, said:

“My thoughts are with everyone affected by these floods, which have come at the worst possible time. A huge thanks to the staff of local councils, dealing with yet another front line emergency. Councils have been stretched more than ever over the past year, and now have to deal with this at the same time. It makes it all the more important that the government provides more support for councils, for businesses affected, and for those who will end up self-isolating as a result.

“The planning system makes it far too easy for flooding risks to be increased. This week should be a wake-up call for those wanting to build on vast swathes of the green belt across Greater Manchester. All public funds need to be divested away from fossil fuels investments, and the only responsible approach for the future of Greater Manchester is one which includes reduced airport use, not expansion.

“Yet again, records are being broken by the consequences of extreme weather. This is the new normal. Politicians at every level need to step up, urgently, to stop climate change spiralling beyond anything we can influence.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-55743246>

[Tweet](#)

[Back to main news page](#)

[Let's block ads! \(Why?\)](#)