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Hopkins critical of flood defence funding drop

Kris Hopkins, the Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Keighley and Ilkley, has criticised the Government for reducing the amount of money Yorkshire will receive for flood defences over the next three years – despite it being the second most likely region to flood in the country.

Figures just made public show Yorkshire is likely to get just three quarters of the funding it requires between 2009 and 2011, placing the future of several projects in grave danger.

Yorkshire has been awarded £43.8m for spending on maintenance of existing defences and building of new barriers for the coming financial year – 96 percent of the £45.5m it asked for.

But the shortfall will come for the financial year 2009-10 when the region has been told it is only likely to receive £52.3m, just 74 percent of the £70.6m requested.

In 2010-11 it has been provisionally awarded £57.6m, just 78 percent of the £73.4m it says it needs.

Cllr Hopkins said he believed the Government was “hugely misguided in placing Yorkshire to the back of the queue yet again.”

He continued: “This week’s heavy rain is a grim reminder of the flooding problems we faced in Yorkshire last summer and in 2000. We must do everything we can to avoid a further repeat.

“In the grand scheme of things, the level of funding requested by Yorkshire is not huge, especially in light of the dreadful consequences when flooding occurs.

“A Government’s primary duty is to protect its citizens and, in failing to allocate sufficient funding to tackle the dangers of flooding in Yorkshire, it is letting local residents down.”

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