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Hopkins backs Conservative Leader's stance on NHS

Kris Hopkins, the Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Keighley and Ilkley, has given his personal backing to David Cameron's aim to make the Conservatives "the party of the NHS."

Speaking alongside Mr Cameron during a visit to Airedale General Hospital in Keighley earlier today (Thursday), Cllr Hopkins said the NHS had been badly mismanaged by the Labour Government over the last 10 years.

"Airedale is one of the jewels in Keighley's crown but Labour's centralised approach has the potential to put the hospital's achievements and reputation at risk. Local people rightly demand a very high quality of patient care and it is vital that this is maintained," he said.

"The dedication and professionalism of the staff at Airedale is quite awe-inspiring. We must ensure that the key decisions are taken at the right level by the right people including patients, not imposed by a high-handed and target-obsessed Government in Whitehall."

Cllr Hopkins said he strongly supported Mr Cameron in his objective of the Conservatives replacing Labour as the party of the NHS.

"It is excellent to be able to welcome David here to Airedale where, over several hours, he has been able to meet many members of staff, patients and volunteers and also play his own part as a volunteer in several aspects of daily life in the hospital," he said.

"As the Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Keighley and Ilkley, my job is to continue to work very hard to convince local people that our goal of becoming the party of the NHS is based on the firmest of foundations – namely that Conservatives wish to improve the NHS for the benefit of all."

Mr Cameron praised the work of the hospital and its staff, commenting: "There's a great spirit about this hospital. There's a sense it's a really important part of the community. The Government like to say the days of the district general hospital are over. But I say 'come to Airedale.' They're doing a great job."

The Conservative Leader said that too often as a politician, hospital visits amounted to little more than a “rush through” with little opportunity to meet people.

"Instead, today, I have had a bit more time," he said. "I've been able to spent time going around with the volunteers on ward rounds, serve in the shop, talk to the management of the hospital and have lunch with some of the consultants."

Mr Cameron added: "Having taken time to listen to the challenges the hospital faces, what they're doing, the issues that worry them, it was really great. The Government know it is time to move on but they're stuck in a rut trying to come to terms with the new world."

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