

DANIEL KAWCZYNSKI MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

30 June 2020

Dear constituent

River Severn Flood Prevention

Earlier this year, our town and many other communities up and down the River Severn experienced yet another season of devastating flooding. I know that this has caused a huge amount of destruction and distress.

This cannot go on. The disruption these floods cause to our community, businesses, and the local economy are catastrophic. Earlier this year I spoke to many business owners, from hairdressers to hotels, who have seen so much hard work washed away and face thousands of pounds of repair bills.

Shrewsbury is not alone. The River Severn is the longest in the UK, and flooding impacts communities not just along its 220-mile length but on many of its tributaries too. Across the Severn Basin there are 117,000 households, and over 10,000 businesses, in at-risk zones – including over 7,000 jobs, with a GVA of £355.5 million, in the highest-risk area alone! These floods are growing both more severe and more frequent. But to date the response has not risen to the challenge. Every year the media broadcast heartbreaking footage, and some piecemeal action is taken. But there is no joined-up, long-term plan to make the Severn safe, and once the cameras are gone the long-term impact on towns like ours never makes the headlines.

I am determined to change this. On March 11, I led a special Westminster debate which saw MPs come together to call for a holistic approach to managing the river across the entire affected area. The House of Commons recognised that flood risk needs to be managed over the long-term, with a sustainable model which not only builds resilience but helps to drive economic growth and local prosperity too.

The new River Severn Partnership is the first step in this process. It brings together local government and other groups from across the region, from Mi-Wales, Shropshire, and Herefordshire to Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, around the shared goal of making the Severn Britain's most vibrant river network. Together the partners aim to not only reduce flood risk, but find innovative ways to harness our water resources for the benefit of communities the length of the river.

In order to make sure this important work is supported in Parliament, I have now established a complementary 'All-Party MP Grouping', bringing together MPs from across the House of Commons. I intend this group to provide a parliamentary platform for the River Severn Partnership and contribute to developing the new River Severn Strategy.

We will also seek to work with the Government across all the policy areas affected, including housing, growth, infrastructure, the environment and climate change, and in the coming weeks I will personally be making our case to ministers alongside other Severn MPs.

Between them, these two groups offer us an unprecedented chance to finally get the long-term, properly-funded plan that Shrewsbury and other Severn communities have been crying out for all these years. I look forward to working with our new partners, both in Parliament and out, to make sure that the awful hardship we witnessed this February finally becomes a thing of the past.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kaw', followed by a horizontal line.

Daniel Kawczynski MP
Member of Parliament for Shrewsbury & Atcham