

Major package of support for storm-hit areas

- Thousands of pounds to be made available for flooded homes and businesses
- Local Government Secretary triggers Flood Recovery Framework to support areas hit by Storm Dennis and Storm Ciara
- Flood-hit homes and businesses can apply for up to £5,000 to help make them more resilient to future flooding
- Flood-hit households can apply for up to £500 and 100% council tax relief
- Flooded businesses can apply for up to £2,500 and 100% business rates relief

The government has today (Tuesday 18 February 2020) announced thousands of pounds of support for people affected by flooding following Storms Dennis and Ciara.

Under the Flood Recovery Framework and as some affected areas move into recovery, families and businesses will receive funding from their local councils after a set of support packages were announced by the Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick.

Under the measures announced today:

- Flood-hit households in affected areas can apply for up to £500 in financial hardship payments to give cash quickly to those in short-term need;
- Households and businesses significantly affected by recent flooding will be eligible for 100% council tax and business rates relief for at least three months;
- Small-to-medium sized businesses in affected areas which have suffered severe, uninsurable losses will be eligible for up to £2,500 from the Business Recovery Grant;
- Flood-hit homes and businesses can apply for up to £5,000 to help make them more resilient to future flooding; and
- The Local Government Secretary also announced the government would convene the cross-Whitehall Flood Recovery Taskforce, including environment, businesses and transport ministers, to provide individual areas with bespoke support and guidance. The first meeting will take place this week.

Local Government Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Storms Dennis and Ciara have severely impacted a large number of households and businesses – and I recognise how destabilising this can be.

This extra support, including new funding, will help people in the worst-hit areas to recover and get back on their feet as soon as possible.

I'd like to thank the emergency services and key agencies on the ground for their dedication and tireless work to help everyone affected in extremely challenging circumstances.

Environment Secretary Rt Hon George Eustice MP said:

We've once again seen the devastating effects of floods on households and communities across the country. I want to thank our Environment Agency teams working on the ground around the clock with partners to deal with the ongoing impacts.

We know climate change means extreme weather events like this are more likely, and are already investing £2.6 billion in flood defences by 2021, with over 600 projects already protecting 200,000 properties. This crucial funding will help people to make their homes more resilient and better protected if flooding happens again.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

We are determined to help businesses impacted by Storms Ciara and Dennis.

Today's funding will offer vital support to small companies to get up and running, while also helping ensure greater protection against future flooding events.

Measures announced today apply to those affected in district or unitary authorities that have 25 or more flooded households as a result of Storms Ciara and Dennis.

This comes after the government activated the emergency Bellwin scheme after Storm Ciara on 10 February and Storm Dennis on 17 February 2020.

Under the scheme, local authorities dealing with the flooding can apply to have 100% of their eligible costs, above a threshold, reimbursed by the Government. This could be for items including rest centres, temporary accommodation and staff overtime.

The scheme was activated for qualifying areas in West Yorkshire, Cumbria and Lancashire which have seen significant impacts following Storm Ciara.

It has also been activated for qualifying areas in Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, Worcestershire and Herefordshire which have seen significant impacts following Storm Dennis.

With six severe flood warnings, 148 flood warnings and 188 flood alerts in place as of 16:00 on Tuesday, 18 February, the [Environment Agency is urging people to check the latest safety advice](#) as flooding impacts continue with further heavy rain expected to fall on areas already affected by the wet weather later this week.

Over 900 Environment Agency staff are on the ground operating flood defences and temporary pumps, clearing debris from rivers, inspecting flood defences and supporting affected communities. Environment Agency operational teams have put up more than 6km of temporary flood barriers across the country and our flood defences have protected nearly 25,000 properties from the impacts of Storm Dennis.

- The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) will provide a Community Recovery Grant to local councils – equivalent to £500 per eligible household – to help communities with their immediate recovery.
- The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will provide funding for a Business Recovery Grant which will provide up to £2,500 per eligible small and medium-sized businesses which have suffered severe impacts from the floods that cannot be recovered from insurance.
- Defra has announced Property Flood Resilience Scheme grants of up to £5,000 will be made available through local authorities to help homes and businesses to become more resilient to flooding by helping to pay for a range of property improvements. It will go towards the additional costs of installing fittings and materials that increase resistance to damage from water in the future, such as putting in flood doors and raising electrics off ground level.
- Bellwin is a scheme of emergency financial assistance to help local authorities meet uninsurable costs they incur when dealing with the aftermath of an emergency in their area. When the scheme is activated each local authority can claim for eligible costs above a set threshold. Bellwin is regularly activated in times of emergency to make financial assistance available to local authorities.
- The public can check their flood risk and keep up to date with the latest situation at gov.uk/check-flood-risk, or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or following [@EnvAgency](#) on Twitter.
- This announcement only applies to England. Flooding is a devolved matter for Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland.