

Background and Context

During the afternoon of Monday 16 August 2004, heavy rainfall in north Cornwall caused a flash flood in the village of Boscastle on the north Cornwall coast, within North Cornwall District Council's area of responsibility.

The first rainfall was recorded above Boscastle at about 12.30 pm, with heavy rainfall over a concentrated area.

It is estimated that over 1,400 million litres of rain fell in just two hours.

The River Valency, which runs through the centre of the small village, quickly became a torrent and overflowed. An estimated three metre depth of water poured through the village, washing away cars, trapping residents and tourists and leading to a major rescue operation.

How the Topic was Handled

- Publication of the Local Authority telephone lines for general planning advice and building control.
- Individual householders were left to make their own arrangements with insurers regarding repairs to their own properties.
- Means for the free disposal of household items damaged by the flood were provided.

Lessons Identified

- Better co-ordination of repair agencies to prevent one organisation's repair being affected, and in some cases damaged, by another's efforts.
- Provide a single point of contact to co-ordinate insurance assessment work.
- Better co-ordination of contractors and the siting of skips.
- Provide a central contact for all utilities and insurance work.

Contacts for Further Information

North Cornwall District Council - <http://www.ncdc.gov.uk/>

Additional Documents

[Multi-Agency Lessons Identified Report - Major Flooding at Boscastle and Surrounding Areas of North Cornwall - 16 August 2006](#) [PDF]