

Background and Context

On the night of Friday 7 / Saturday 8 January 2005, severe storms and unprecedented rainfall on already saturated ground fell across Cumbria. Over the Friday night and into Saturday, this caused extensive flooding and storm damage particularly in the Carlisle area.

The impacts of this included:

- 3 deaths
- 1,925 homes and business flooded - to 2 metres
- 3,000+ people homeless for up to 12 months+
- 40,000 addresses without power
- 3,000 jobs put at risk.

How the Topic was Handled

The following Recovery Structure was quickly put in place:

Management Team

- Carlisle City Council (chair)
- Cumbria County Council
- Environment Agency
- Government Office for the North West (GONW)
- Police
- Chairs of Working Groups

Working (Sub) Groups

- Welfare (chair - Carlisle City Council)
- Housing/Homelessness (chair - Carlisle City Council)
- Business Support (chair – North West Regional Development Agency)
- Infrastructure & Assets (Jointly chaired by Carlisle City Council and Cumbria County Council)
- Finance (chair - Cumbria County Council)
- Media (chair - Police Media Manager)

The Working Groups evolved over time in response to need:

- Welfare & Housing merged after three months once demands reduced and ran for 18+ months in total
- Business Support mainstreamed in agencies after five months
- Infrastructure & Assets completed reinstatement then closed
- Finance ran until (extended) Bellwin claims finalised
- Media quickly reverted to individual agencies but with sustained co-ordination

Lessons Identified

An effective recovery structure with working groups under the most appropriate chairmanship is essential.

The structure may need to evolve over time.

Contacts for Further Information

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Additional Documents

[Carlisle Storm and Flood January 2005 Recovery Phase Debrief Report](#) , produced by Carlisle City Council and Cumbria County Council.

[Recovery Guidance for Cumbria](#) document produced as a result of work done by the Recovery Planning Group for a Sellafield incident, recovery exercises held in the County and elsewhere, other recovery documentation and the learning from foot and mouth and flooding in Cumbria.