



The Rt Hon. Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

6th March 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

Flooding Relief Across Merthyr Tydfil

Over the past three weeks, families, businesses and communities across Merthyr Tydfil (and across south Wales) have been devastated by the damage caused by Storms Dennis, Ciara and Jorge.

Over 250 properties across Merthyr Tydfil have been flooded as a result of the storms and we are sure you will appreciate the considerable anxiety and distress this has caused to the people we represent.

Preliminary information from Merthyr Tydfil Council shows that there are 31 repairs schemes needed as a direct result of the storms at an estimated cost of some £10 million, and further requests are still being received to inspect other areas. It is highly likely that additional repair schemes will be required. The list below (not exhaustive) outlines some of the repair projects:

- Three road bridges are damaged together with one footbridge requiring substantial repairs.
- Eight landslides occurred each creating different challenges to remediate. Some are detailed below.
 - Vehicular access to the village of Pontsticill was cut off, temporary works have been carried out to ensure access is maintained but substantial work will be required to prevent further landslides in this area.
 - One landslide caused the evacuation of a number of properties in the village of Troedyrhiw.
 - One landslide caused the closure of the well-used Taff Trail which forms part of the National Cycle Network (NCN 8), and bridleways damaged.
 - One landslide caused the collapse of a high-pressure water main and two 11,000-volt power cables that were serving the Pontsticill water treatment works. The treatment works provide clean water to 300,000 properties.
 - One landslide undermined a road that contains a gas main and a 22inch high pressure water main. The road has been stabilised temporarily however remains closed thereby separating the village of Quakers Yard and Trelewis.

- 19 culverts were severely damaged with some being destroyed completely. Work is required immediately to prevent communities being flooded from any further rainfall.
- The Taff Fechan nature reserve has suffered severe damage to footways, established trees and other vegetation. Minor landslips have changed the landscape in this area and require a major clean up.
- The River Taff between Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff has suffered from river embankment erosion in two significant areas thereby undermining a road bridge and footpath.
- Numerous mature trees have become unstable in various villages and require felling to ensure the public remain safe.
- We have experienced damage to roads however the extent is still being assessed and quantified. It is likely that resurfacing of roads will be required.
- Merthyr Tydfil Council has not yet been able to inspect all their bridges or culverts as the river levels are still too high. A specialist diving company has been appointed to carry out underwater inspections of all structures. The results may provide more evidence of further damage.
- One sinkhole appeared within a property due to the volume of water running off the mountain side and undermining the garden area.

Whilst the Welsh Government has been quick to make available support for people and businesses affected by the flooding, it cannot be responsible for the considerable cost of remedial work throughout Wales.

We therefore ask that the UK Government urgently make available adequate funding and expedited process to support communities as and when finalised bids are submitted.

Thank you for giving this matter your attention and we look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely,



Gerald Jones MP
Member of Parliament
Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney



Dawn Bowden AM
Assembly Member
Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney



Cllr. Kevin O'Neill
Leader
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough I
Council

Cc All Merthyr Tydfil Councillors
Rt Hon. Mark Drakeford AM – First Minister of Wales
Rt Hon. Simon Hart MP – Secretary of State for Wales