



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP

*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities
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**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

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To: All MPs in England

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Dear Colleague,

Activation of the Flooding Recovery Framework and the Bellwin Scheme for Storms Ciara and Dennis

I am writing to inform you that yesterday (18 February 2020) I announced that the government has activated the Flooding Recovery Framework in response to the severe weather and significant impacts across multiple local authorities that followed Storms Dennis and Ciara. I know that the storms have significantly impacted a large number of households and businesses and I recognise how destabilising this can be.

You will be aware that following the immediate impacts of both storms, I activated the emergency Bellwin scheme, for Storm Ciara on 10 February and Storm Dennis on 17 February 2020. Under the Bellwin scheme, local authorities dealing with 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 provides re-assurance to local authorities that they can undertake emergency spending and will have it repaid.

The scheme was activated for qualifying areas in West Yorkshire, Cumbria and Lancashire which have seen significant impacts following Storm Ciara, and for qualifying areas in Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, Worcestershire and Herefordshire which have seen significant impacts following Storm Dennis.

As some affected areas begin to move from their initial response to the recovery phase, I have announced under the Flood Recovery Framework. This will help people in the worst-hit areas to recover and get back on their feet as soon as possible. Support under the framework is available to all district or unitary authorities where 25 or more households were flooded as a result of Storms Ciara and Dennis.

The support is as follows:

- **Community Recovery Grant:** eligible local authorities will receive funding equivalent to £500 per flooded household to help communities and vulnerable people in areas severely affected by the flooding with their immediate recovery. It is for local authorities to decide how to allocate this to meet local need. This could include but is not limited to individual household hardship payments.
- **Business Recovery Grant:** eligible local authorities will receive £2,500 per eligible small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) which have suffered severe impacts from the floods which cannot be recovered from insurance.
- **Council Tax Discount:** Government will reimburse eligible local authorities for the cost of providing 100% council tax relief, for a minimum of three months, for residents whose property has been flooded, or which is considered unliveable, as a consequence of either storm.
- **Business Rates Relief:** Government will reimburse eligible local authorities for the cost of providing 100% relief from business rates, for a minimum of three months, for those business directly impacted by either storm
- In addition to the framework, Defra have announced the activation of the **Property Flooding Resilience Grant** for eligible flood-affected areas. Flood-hit homes and businesses can receive up to £5,000 to help them make changes which will reduce damage levels should flooding reoccur. Defra will shortly provide guidance to district and unitary authorities.

I am convening a cross-Whitehall Flood Recovery Taskforce, including environment, business and transport ministers, to provide individual areas with bespoke support and guidance. Discussions will include how we can help people to make their homes more resilient, and how we can offer vital support to small companies to get up and running, while also helping ensure greater protection against future flooding events. The first meeting will take place tomorrow.

I am very grateful to the emergency services and key agencies on the ground for their dedication and tireless work to help everyone affected in extremely challenging circumstances.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Jenrick." The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP