



South Yorkshire's Community Foundation



South Yorkshire Flood Disaster Appeal Fund Final Evaluation Report

***Data included in report correct at time of publication: 20th August 2021*

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Forward

We are pleased to present our final Flood Evaluation Report that describes how South Yorkshire's Community Foundation (SYCF), together with many partners, helped and supported the people and communities impacted by the Floods in November 2019.



Through the South Yorkshire Flood Disaster appeal, a fantastic job was done of raising funds to support the victims of the flooding and the total amount of funding (including match funding from Central Government and National Lottery Community Fund) reached a staggering £1,484,410.48.

With this funding we were able to provide financial support to some 1468 households and 14 community groups to help in the slow return to normality, it is now believed that everyone who was displaced has now returned to their homes.

It is well over a year since the disaster, and what an incredibly tough year that has turned out to be. Recovery from the flooding has been beset by the additional problems and challenges caused by the Covid 19 pandemic which not only caused additional stress and anxiety, particularly for the victims of flooding, but also further hindered the efforts of agencies to provide support – financial or otherwise to those affected.

SYCF were no exception. The office was closed in March because of the pandemic, and since then all our employees have been working from their own homes. This has enabled us to continue to process all applications for flood grants and to pay monies out to individuals, helping them return to their homes, providing funding to replace essential items and to carry out urgent repairs.

At the time of writing we still do not know when we will be able to return to normal office working, and we would like to thank all our employees for their diligence and hard work in helping to maintain our service throughout these difficult conditions.

We have now dealt with all the applications made for flood grants and are considering how we can help to better prepare people for future flood events. Our future approach looks at supporting Community Groups to help increase community resilience, and to help with the ongoing impacts such as debt management, and advice on insurance as well as support for mental health.

Looking ahead, with particular regard to the issue of flooding, we can say in that this has not been a one-off disaster, and that it is only a matter of time before we have yet another flood event. With the increasing risks attached to climate change, disasters like this will always be a threat to our land and riverways. Fortunately, given we have not spent all the appeal funds, we already have the beginnings of a future flood fund which will stand us in good stead for any future disasters.

We cannot fully eliminate the risk of future flooding, but by working alongside other partners and agencies we can seek to build resilience, collaborating on future solutions to mitigate against future disasters such as flooding and help manage the risk.

Through this recent event we have, as an organisation, learned many lessons in respect of the ways we have been able to respond to the crisis, and this will stand us in good stead should we need to respond to a similar situation in the future.

Finally, we would like to offer grateful thanks to all those individuals, companies and organisations who donated to our Flood Disaster appeal and also to those individuals and organisations who were able to contribute in other ways and offer their services pro bono.



Ruth Willis, CEO



Professor Chris Booth-Mayblin, Chair

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1 PURPOSE

In May 2020 an Interim Report was published by South Yorkshire's Community Foundation (SYCF) to update and inform our donors, communities and other stakeholders about the actions taken by SYCF immediately following the floods of November 2019 in the South Yorkshire region.

This Final Evaluation Report draws to a conclusion the approach adopted by SYCF to support the victims of the floods. The data collected has enabled an analysis to be made about the distribution of funding and the people affected, however of equal importance, the report uses case studies to provide real life insight into how individuals were personally affected and how SYCF was able to make a real difference to individuals, groups, and communities in terms of the immediate aftermath and months following.

The Flood Disaster Appeal fund has now been closed to applications, the final grants have now been paid and the data from applications has been collated.



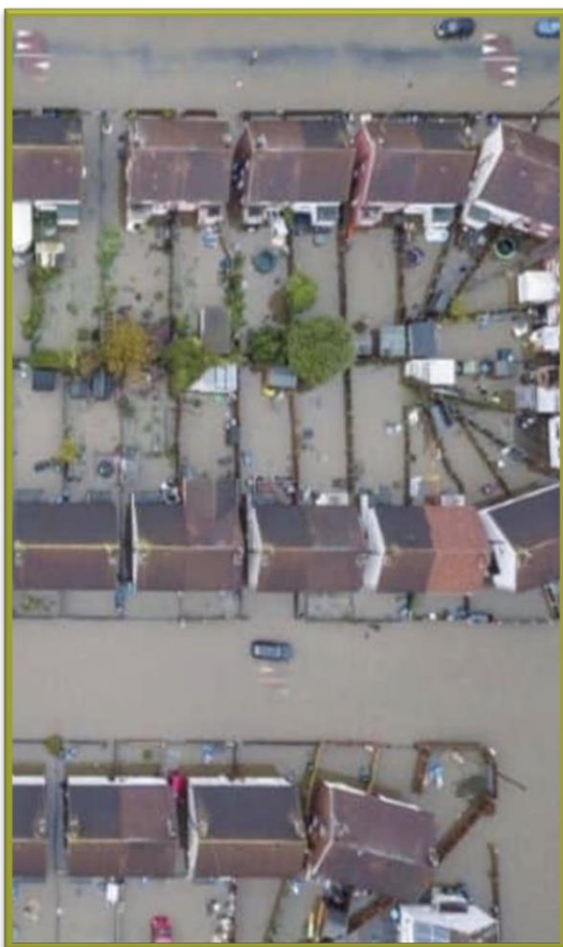
The data has enabled an evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the Flood Disaster Fund, and the part that SYCF played as the key distributor of the funding and major partner alongside the efforts of the four Local Authorities, community groups and representatives, Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), local

businesses, National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) and other charities and trusts.

The report concludes with the identification of issues and lessons to be learned as well as recommendations to be considered for future flood disasters.

2 INTRODUCTION

In late October 2019, England experienced above average rainfall, with the South Yorkshire region identified as an area with a high risk of potential flooding. The ground was therefore already saturated when persistent torrential rain began to fall on 7th November 2019. This resulted in the floods, which affected Yorkshire and Humber, the West Midlands and some parts of South East England. It was reported that a whole month of rain fell within a 24-hour period at the rate of 50 to 100mm. The heavy rainfall continued on and off until 18th November 2019, affecting many households in these areas. Some 100 flood warnings were set in place across the country with the worst affected areas being in South Yorkshire.



It is estimated that some 500 properties were directly affected by flooding and a further 1,200 properties advised to evacuate. Sadly, two fatalities were also attributed to the floods across the Sheffield City region.

The resulting impact of the flooding continued over the following months, with some people unable to return to their property pending essential repairs, while many others suffered the continued effects of loss of possessions and in some cases, household income. This was further exacerbated by the Coronavirus pandemic which has left some householders stranded in temporary accommodation.

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November 2019 floods: South Yorkshire



2019 was the wettest autumn on record. The November 2019 floods had a devastating impact on communities in South Yorkshire. Here's how we responded to the incident:



of November's monthly average rainfall fell between 7 & 8 November, after two months of rain in October



homes and businesses impacted by the floods



pumps in operation during the incident



cubic metres of water passed through our gauging station



properties were protected by our defences

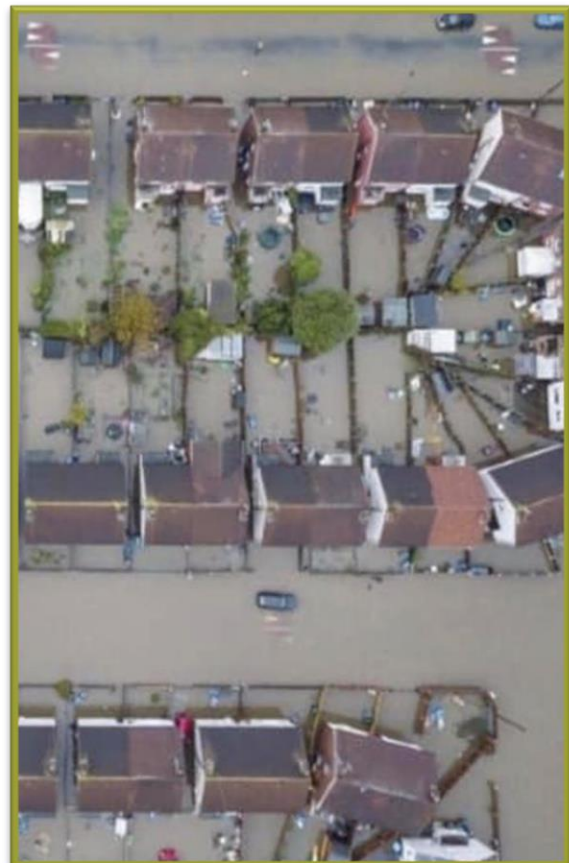


media enquiries received over the incident

The Local Authorities responded as follows:

Doncaster:

The village of Fishlake was one of the worst affected areas and firefighters rescued more than 40 people from this area alone. The army was also brought in to help. Many of the residents of Doncaster also helped with the rescue. A local resident and his son rescued more than 30 people using an inflatable boat in the area of Bentley. Many areas across the borough were affected after the persistent heavy rain left rivers and canals swollen and overflowing. Over 363 million litres of water had to be pumped away during the week following the flood and Doncaster MBC alone spent over 7,000 staff hours on clearing the street scene.



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The Government's Flood Information Service had issued flood warnings for the River Dearne at Darton and Barugh, the River Dearne at Burton Grange and Lundwood, the River Dove from Aldham Bridge to Low Valley including Wombwell Ings Caravan Site, and Brook Dike at Wath Upon Dearne.

Residents in the areas of Bentley, Toll Bar and Scawthorpe, were also warned not to leave their homes unless absolutely necessary, but in the event the extent of the flooding meant many residents had to leave their homes.

Barnsley:

Barnsley MBC warned residents through Facebook that homes and businesses were likely to be flooded, causing damage to some buildings, and that rapid flow or deep flood water was likely to pose a life-threatening risk. Delays and some cancellations of train and bus services were advised, and warnings given that flooding was leading to difficult driving conditions and some road closures.

Warnings were also given that some areas could be cut off by flooded roads and that power cuts and loss of other services to some homes and businesses was a possibility. Residents in Low Valley, Wombwell, were among those who had to flee their homes after the River Dove burst its banks flooding their properties, and Barnsley Council's Highways team was brought in to deal with severe flooding on Station Road. There were also reports of problems being made worse by off-road vehicles driving fast into flood waters causing violent waves to flood into homes

Rotherham:

The high levels of the River Don led South Yorkshire Police to issue warnings that the Dinnington, Whiston and Parkgate areas of Rotherham were all likely to be affected.

Pupils from over a dozen schools were given the day off after flooding hit Rotherham with some closing for several weeks whilst they battled the aftermath of the flooding.

The railway tracks at Rotherham Central railway station, used by both Arriva Rail North railway services and the Sheffield Supertram tram-train, were flooded. On 7th November M1 junction 32, the M18 turn-off was reduced to two lanes due to floodwater. On 12th November flooding led to an oil spillage which led to the RSPCA having to rescue 60 swans. On 15th November it was reported that all Supertram services were operating as normal with the exception of the tram-train due to the floods affecting the route in the Rotherham area.

Plans to switch on the Christmas lights in Rotherham were cancelled until further notice because of the floods. Rotherham Parkgate retail park was also closed because of flooding with 85% of the shops re-opening on 16th November.

Sheffield:

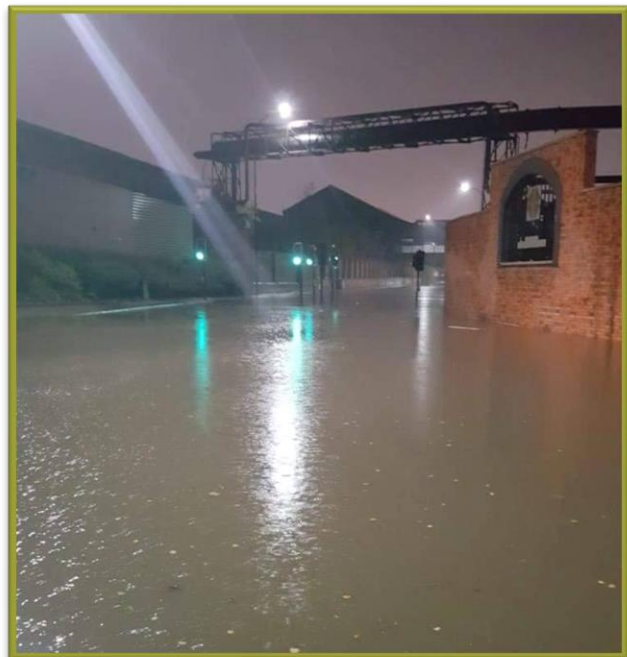
As heavy rain was forecast throughout Yorkshire until 3.00am, the City Council decided that Sheffield Town Hall would remain open throughout the night to accommodate people stranded as a result of the floods. Emergency contractors were working at "full capacity" to prevent further flooding with a "full emergency service" that ran across the city.

Meadowhall shoppers found themselves stranded due to the rapid nature of the flooding and as a result were forced to spend the night there as the rain continued. Some shops stayed open late into the night to try and help those stranded, for example Carphone Warehouse allowed people to charge their phones in the store. On the day of the flooding, Meadowhall had been scheduled to host its 'Christmas Live' event featuring acts including Ella Henderson, Tom Zanetti, and Jonas Blue. This was cancelled at the last minute, but not before several people had already set out for the event and were in the Meadowhall Centre. The rain fall was by now torrential and initially, authorities told customers not to leave in the middle of the deluge. However, by 8.45pm the police advised that people were being "assisted to leave".



Several animals were also affected by the flooding, and the RSPCA water rescue team was on standby after the initial flood to issue guidelines on how people could keep their pets and livestock safe.

Between 7th November and 11th November, the 24-hour RSPCA emergency hotline received 73 calls concerning horses, cattle, goats and sheep trapped by flooding. On 12th November, three boats commenced various rescues missions. The team saved ten pigeons, one chicken, one cockerel, two rabbits, two adult guinea pigs and five baby guinea pigs from a property.



During this time, train and tram services were suspended. Northern Rail issued three routes of "do not travel" advice for passengers. Flooding forced the closure of lines between Sheffield and Gainsborough, Lincoln, Manchester Victoria and Hebden Bridge. Railway stations at Rotherham Central and Kiveton Park also closed.

At junction 34, the slipway on the M1 was closed and shoppers were trapped in the centre of Meadowhall.

Within 24 hours of the flooding, South Yorkshire's Community Foundation set up the South Yorkshire Flood Disaster Relief Appeal to help provide support to all the people affected by the November 2019 flooding across South Yorkshire. The Foundation was well placed to distribute the funding, building on the experience of recent involvement by community foundations in disaster recovery, as well as our own experience of the 2007 floods.

Targeted use of social media served to maximise the awareness of the disaster and enable fundraising to start immediately, including the SYCF website, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and working with our local media partner BBC Radio Sheffield, all served to maximise the awareness of the disaster and enabling fundraising to start immediately. Links with South Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum (SY LRF), responsible for emergency planning, and the four Local Authorities was key to ensure a coordinated approach.

The original Appeal target was £50K but was well exceeded, and the fund totalled just over £742,205K including gift aid and other pledges. In addition, The National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) contributed £80K for community groups providing supported to the flooded areas and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) agreed to match fund the Appeal by £742,205K meaning a total Flood Disaster Fund of £1,484,410.48.

HELP US TO RAISE MONEY TO **SUPPORT** PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES HAVE BEEN HIT BY THE **FLOODS**.

MONEY RAISED WILL GO TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN DISPLACED FROM THEIR HOMES AND HAD THEIR PROPERTIES DAMAGED BY THE FLOOD WATERS.

WWW.JUSTGIVING.COM/CAMPAIGN/SYFLOODS

South Yorkshire's Community Foundation
BBC RADIO SHEFFIELD

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE
FLOOD DISASTER
APPEAL**

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3 HOW SYCF HELPED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The impact of the 2019 flood within the South Yorkshire region varied from area to area, with some experiencing greater impacts than others. SYCF responded quickly providing hardship grants to all affected households. By March 2021 grants had been awarded totalling over £1.4 million supporting over 1468 households and funding community groups to help build the long-term resilience of the communities affected. We have supported a local community centre which acted as an emergence centre for flood victims, purchased equipment for community flood wardens, funded debt advice, insurance and benefit advice and credit union services to help mitigate the financial impact of the floods on families

Grant making

Based on our past experience, a phased approach to distributing grant aid was agreed to ensure a speedy and equitable response. This meant that we were able to provide both instant support to all flood victims to deal with the immediate aftermath, and a more targeted approach thereafter to ensure that funding was given to the most vulnerable and in need.

- Phase 1 funding

The priority in the immediate aftermath of the floods was to provide financial support by the means of grants to all people affected by the floods to help with urgent needs such as the costs of living in temporary accommodation, or provision of items to enable people to stay in their homes.

Phase 1 grants were available soon after the launch of the appeal to help flood victims in crisis. Flat-rate hardship grants of £200 were made to any household affected by the flooding on receipt of a completed application and did not discriminate between individual households affected. The addresses of flooded properties were verified by the four Local Authorities.

The first payment was made on 25th November, 17 days after the flooding. Phase 1 was closed on 10th January 2020. A total of 857 households applied for and received

grant payments, from a possible 1,000 households that were reported as being affected. Anecdotally it is understood some did not apply because either they felt that they had only suffered minimal impact (i.e. only flooding to gardens), or because they felt well equipped financially to deal with the recovery of their own properties and possessions themselves and wanted others to benefit. A total of £191,900 was provided through phase 1 grant aid payments, broken down as follows between the four Local Authorities:

	Doncaster	Rotherham	Barnsley	Sheffield	Total
Phase 1 Applications	610	154	62	41	867
Phase 1 Grants paid	£120,600	£30,400	£12,200	£28,700	£191,900

- 10 properties did not fit the criteria – 7 x Doncaster, 2 x Rotherham and 1 x Barnsley
- Sheffield properties received a payment of £700 per household due to the local authority contribution of £500 for each residence

- Phase 2 funding

This second phase introduced substantially higher grant payments and applications were accepted from 6th February 2020 with the first payments being made on 24th February 2020. Grants totalling £632,884.65 were made, broken down between the four Local Authorities as follows:

	Doncaster	Rotherham	Barnsley	Sheffield	Total
Phase 2 applications Received	213	46	29	4	292
Phase 2 grants paid	£619,510.58	£85,166.07	£74,992	£3,200	£632,884.65

- 45 properties did not fit the criteria – 30 x Doncaster, 11 x Rotherham and 2 x Barnsley and 2 x Sheffield

For the second phase, a more measured and strategic approach was developed (The Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan) to ensure that the second round of funding was targeted at those most in need. This was able to build on the information collected from phase 1 applications and put in place the guiding principles used to direct hardship payments to the most vulnerable individuals and families affected by the recent flooding.



The grants were available to households looking for aid in repairing their homes and replacing essential items following on from the flood damage and were also available to those who had home insurance under certain circumstances such as a high excess on their insurance plan, insurance claims not paying for enough of the repair work required. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic changing the circumstances of many of those flooded we adapted the grants to reflect this new impact on people's lives

The priorities also included community groups to enable community support and recovery. The Plan set out the priorities to be adopted and a second application form was used to establish vulnerability and scope the needs of individual households. This second grant provided funding of up to £5,000 and was aimed at households which met one or more of following criteria:

- Had members over the age of 70

- Had members under the age of 5
- Had members with a disability – physical and/or mental health
- In receipt of benefits, or
- On a low income e.g. on or below Living Wage.

All applicants were asked to provide proof of income and/or benefits as part of the application. Three priorities were agreed within the Framework for Phase 2 funding and included:

1. Addressing Material Comfort	2. Remedial Works (Working with partner agencies)	3. Community Recovery
<p><i>For Uninsured Households:</i></p> <p>This addressed the replacement of basic items lost through flooding, enabling residents to live in their homes.</p>	<p><i>For Uninsured Households:</i></p> <p>This provided top up funding enabling additional remedial works to be provided through partner schemes</p> <p>Grants could also be made available for essential remedial works to make the property habitable</p>	<p><i>For Groups involved with providing relief or assistance in connection with the Appeal Aims:</i></p> <p>Groups will be supported to provide services which support individuals, families, or communities with disaster recovery, and which help build stronger, more resilient communities.</p>
<p><i>For Insured Households (Contents):</i></p> <p>This enabled a payment to be made to help pay any insurance excess.</p>	<p><i>For Insured Households (Buildings):</i></p> <p>This enabled a payment may be made to help pay the insurance excess.</p>	

- Phase Three funding

These grants were provided for people who had already received a grant in Phase 1 and/or Phase 2 of the South Yorkshire Flood Disaster Relief programme, but still found that they needed additional support due to a change in financial circumstances. All applicants were asked to demonstrate their change of financial circumstances to fit the hardship criteria.

21 Grants have been paid to individuals totalling £46,705.13

	Doncaster	Rotherham	Barnsley	Sheffield	Total
Phase 3 applications Received	44	1	1	0	46
Phase 3 grants paid	£43,705.13	£0.00	£3,000	£0.00	£46,705.13

- 25 properties did not fit the criteria – 24 x Doncaster and 1 x Rotherham

SYCF Flood Relief Fund Grants were also available for Community Groups. These grants were intended to fund community groups and organisations supporting the recovery and resilience of communities following the South Yorkshire Floods in late 2019.



14 community organisations have received funding for £400,116.00. 2 from Barnsley, 7 from Doncaster, 4 from Rotherham and 1 from Sheffield.

Community Groups helped included:

<p>Rotherham: *Joint Citizens Advice project - £37,492.50 Total: £259,415</p> <p>*Anston Parish Council – £66,000 (consortium bid)</p> <p>*Whiston Parish Council - £12,000</p> <p>*Rotherham United Community Sports Trust - £14,109</p>	<p>Barnsley: Burton Grange Community Centre - £1,772</p> <p>*Joint Citizens Advice project - £37,492.50 Total: £259,415</p>
<p>Doncaster: *Joint Citizens Advice project - £37,492.50</p>	<p>Sheffield: *Joint Citizens Advice project - £37,492.50</p>

Total: £259,415	Total: £259,415
*St Peter's Church, Bentley - £107,073	
Community First Credit Union - £600	
*Bentley Baptiste Foodbank - £3,300	
Fishlake Flood Wardens - £5,302	
*Aurora Wellbeing Charity - £15,000	
*People Focus Group - £15,000	

*These grants are totals paid for projects spanning a 3-year period

Additionally, when the floods first hit, SYCF provided relief funding from an existing fund to help organisations on the front-line supporting flood victims to keep going. £5,000 was awarded to Stainforth4All and £5,000 to Moorends Miners Welfare and Community Development Centre to help them meet costs and demand as they suspended their regular activities and instead acted as community flood response hubs.

Accountability

For phase 1, it was agreed that because of the urgency to get grants paid, and in such great numbers that flat rate payments could be authorised by the SYCF Chief Executive.

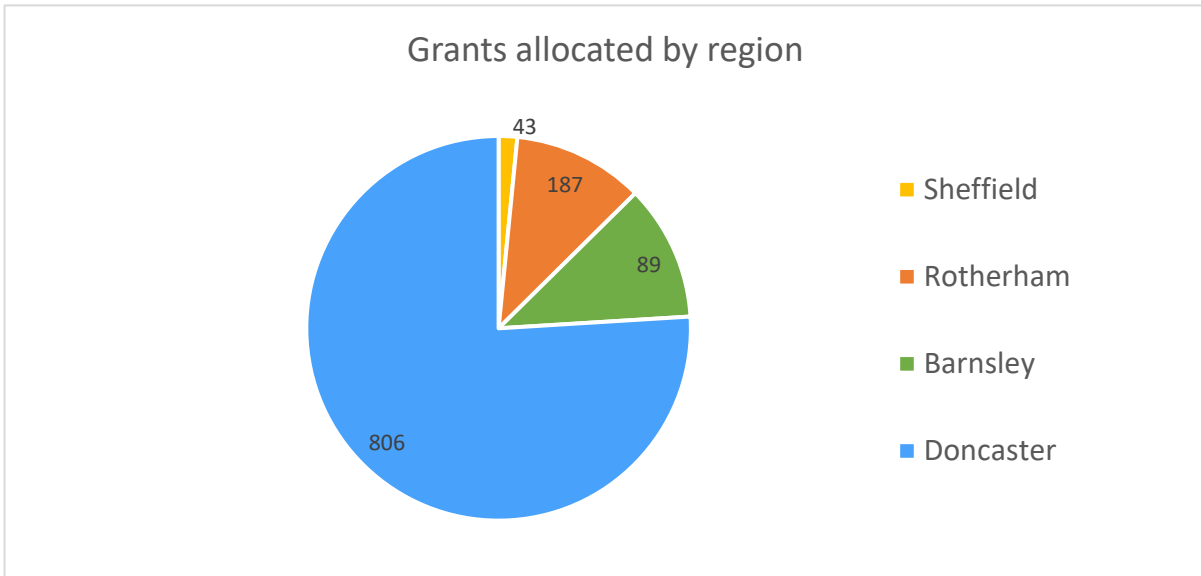
For Phases 2 and 3 and in view of the higher levels of grant payments, each application was scrutinised by a panel comprising of the SYCF Chief Executive and Grant Panel Chairs, some of whom are also Trustees. This approval ensured a consistent and equitable distribution of funds with a transparent and auditable decision-making process.

It should be noted that some applications for phases 2 and 3 were rejected on the basis of a failure to meet the set criteria. Of the 292 applications for phase 2, 45 were rejected and for the 46 applications for phase 3, 25 were rejected.

4 HOW THE GRANTS WERE DISTRIBUTED

4.1 Grant Making

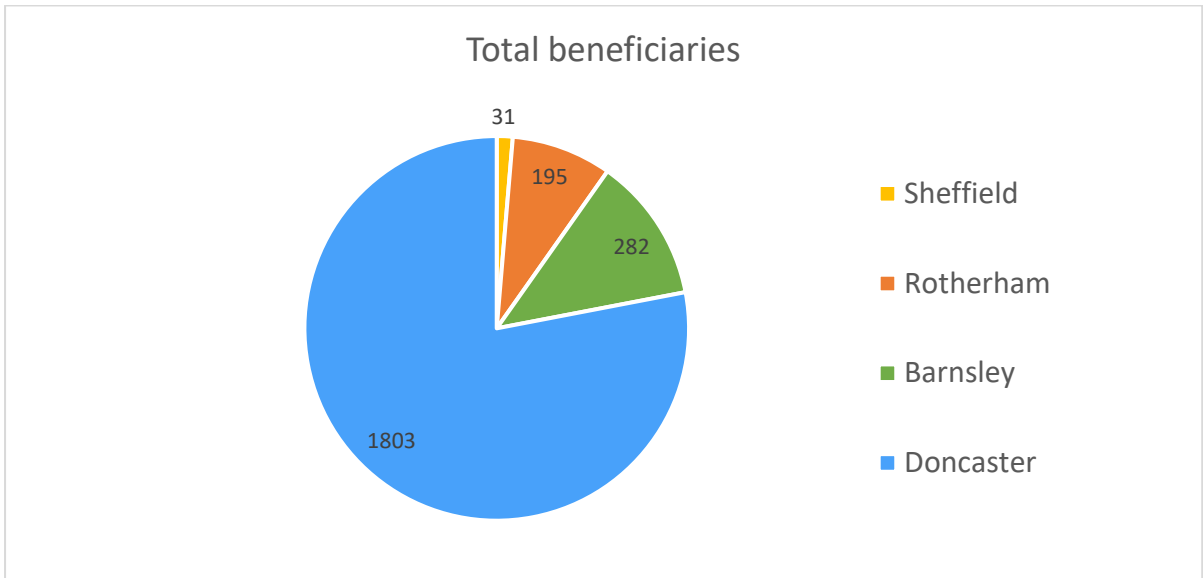
Grants allocated	Sheffield	Rotherham	Barnsley	Doncaster	Total
Phase 1	41	152	61	603	857
Phase 2	2	35	27	183	247
Phase 3	0	0	1	20	21
Total	43	187	89	806	1125



4.2 Beneficiaries

Total beneficiaries*	Sheffield	Rotherham	Barnsley	Doncaster	Unknown	Total
Phase 1	19	126	209	1329	8	1691
Phase 2	12	69	71	422	0	574
Phase 3	0	0	2	52	0	54
Total	31	195	282	1803	8	2319

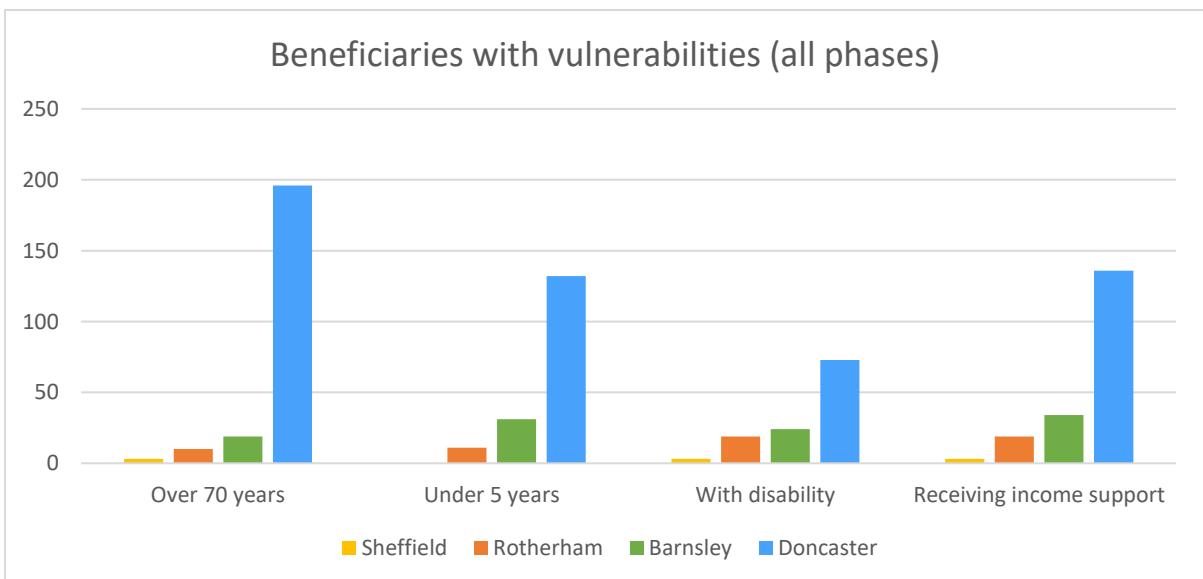
* A small number of grants allocated in Phase 1 have no data available for the number of people resident in recipient household. Likewise, most recipient households without a recorded location have no recorded number of residents. For this reason, the totals given here are less than the true values.



4.3 Beneficiaries with vulnerabilities

Beneficiaries with vulnerabilities (all phases)*	Sheffield	Rotherham	Barnsley	Doncaster	Totals
Over 70 years	3	10	19	196	228
Under 5 years	0	11	31	132	174
With disability	3	19	24	73	119
Receiving income support	3	19	34	136	192
Totals	9	59	108	537	713

Data for beneficiaries with disability or receiving income support available for phases 2 and 3 only. Note also that totals may include double counts (e.g. for individuals that are over 70 years and have a disability).



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5. THE IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

A vast amount of data was collected through the application process to enable a focused evaluation of the impact of the funding in terms of who and where the grants were targeted. However, of equal importance in evidencing the success of the Flood Disaster Fund is the qualitative data collected. This has been done mainly through the case studies developed, describing the real-life issues faced by flood victims and showing just how the grants were able to help. The case studies and quotes demonstrate the appreciation felt by both individuals and the communities.

Case Study – Community Money Advice (CMA) Bentley

CMA Bentley was established by St. Peter's Bentley in January 2020, immediately after the floods. The centre provides confidential, free and impartial face-to-face debt and money advice to people in the local community. They help and support each client by assessing their particular situation and discussing all the options available to them, enabling them to choose the debt solution that they feel suits them best.

Support from the Flood Disaster Fund allowed the centre to hire a Centre Manager, which has hugely boosted the capacity of the team, which is otherwise made up of volunteer debt advisors. CMA Bentley have helped people get back in control of over £90,000 worth of debt and two of their clients have secured Debt Relief Orders (DROs) which have effectively written off more than £25,000 of debt and given them a fresh start.



Quotes

We received so many comments and thankyou's for our help...here are just a few

"I can't thank you enough for your help. Both my wife and myself are crying with happiness. We really do appreciate your help and the help of everyone concerned. Many thanks."

"Thank you so much it means we can get mum back to her safe place."

"Thank you this will relieve so much stress and mean how home can now be clean and septic flood free."

"Thank you I am very grateful for the grant I have received and would like to express my thanks to the people who donated to the fund and to all of you at SYCF for carrying on working to get grants out in these difficult times."

"If you are putting together any feedback to folk who made the donations of these funds, please pass on that this family are most grateful and would not have felt able to get back on track had it not been for the generosity and decisions made by the panel."

Thank you so much for this, it will greatly help in replacing what has been lost."

"Thank you so much for all your help, understanding. This will help us so much you wouldn't believe. I can start getting in touch with heating companies now, and hopefully have some hot water for when we move back in our home."

5 ADDING VALUE THROUGH WORKING TOGETHER

Partnership working played a key part in the success of the Appeal and we were also delighted to be able to work alongside a number of other organisations in order to maximise the money raised.

BBC Radio Sheffield - our official Flood Appeal Partner – immediately lent their support to the flood relief appeal with extensive coverage of its impact and calls to donate to help flood victims. Working with our Media Partner – BBC Radio Sheffield- meant that the fundraising got off to a flying start.

The total Flood Appeal raised £1,484,410.48, which was much greater than we had hoped, but in addition we were able to lever in so much more to give greater added value. We estimate that around £360,000 of pro bono services, donations and work has been leveraged as a part of the flood relief appeal. This includes:



- BBC Radio Sheffield who also acted as a donation point at their building in Sheffield and put on a Flood Appeal Concert (pictured, left) which raised thousands of pounds for the appeal and provided free tickets to flood victims to provide them with a break away from their ordeal.
- Other donations such as hundreds of free tickets for flood victims from the Yorkshire Wildlife Park.
- Fundraising events and campaigns done by local businesses and special events such as a free Christmas Lunch at the OYO Sheffield Metropolitan Hotel for families affected by flooding.

- The House Restoration Project involved working with Doncaster



Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC), where SYCF contributed just under £60,000 to support the repair of twelve owner occupied homes in Bentley and Fishlake in partnership with local businesses Keepmoat, Hull based Orchard Training & Education and Jewsons. All the businesses provided extensive pro bono

support to ensure the successful repair of the homes. Also, part of the partnership was St. Peter's for Bentley and local resident Dean Edwards for Fishlake who identified the homes of greatest need.

Since the floods, DMBC have undertaken the following to try and prevent future flooding for some residents:

- Works to elevate the caravans at Willowbridge Caravan Park in Bentley, to ensure flood water goes under the caravans rather than inside.
- Clearing out of gullies, culverts, and drains around the Bentley and Fishlake areas.
- Providing funding to support residents with making their homes resilient to any future flooding.
- Campaigning for flood defence monies for government.

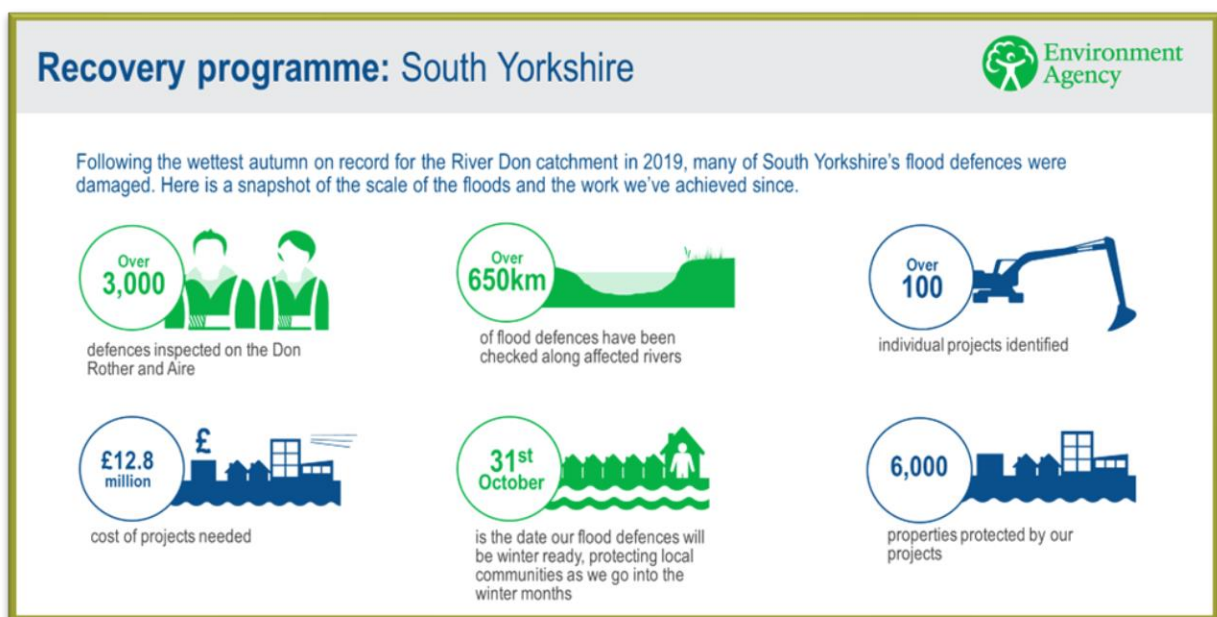
Since the November 2019 flooding the Environment Agency (EA) has inspected over 3000 flood defences along the Rivers Don, Rother and Dearne. The EA and local authority partners have been repairing damaged assets and improving flood defences to better protect communities this winter. The EA Recovery programme in South Yorkshire comprises around 100 projects worth £12m.

They have also put measures in place to make flood defence assets 'winter ready' with either:

- a permanent repair completed;
- a temporary repair with permanent work to be completed by the end of March 2021; or
- robust contingency measures in place.

These projects will improve the condition and performance of critical flood defence assets for communities including Fishlake and Bentley in Doncaster.

Despite the restrictions imposed by Covid-19, progress has been maintained on construction of vital flood defence projects across South Yorkshire. The £14m scheme to refurbish Bentley Ings Pumping Station will be completed later this year and a £3m project to replace the Sheaf screen in Sheffield is underway and expected to be complete by March 2021. These will better protect 1,700 homes and 700 businesses.



RECOGNISING LOCAL HEROES IN DONCASTER

On 19th March 2021, at Bentley Pavilion, the High Sheriff of South Yorkshire officially recognised the help given by Doncaster individuals who went the extra mile in supporting their community during the flooding in Doncaster of November 2019

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Cllr Jane Nightingale has practically been in wellies ever since the horrific night of 6th November 2019. She has been on the front-line supporting Bentley citizens with food parcels, being a shoulder to cry on, shifting sandbags and shovelling mud and the rest. A true Doncaster Hero.

Natasha Mead and the DMBC Communities Team were a force to be reckoned with when it came to the clean up after the floods. Militantly door knocking and ensuring help reached everyone who needed it. Doncaster is proud of you!



Hull based Orchard Training supported their Yorkshire community with the House Restoration Project – stripping, plastering, decorating, refitting, and restoring flood destroyed homes. They gave victims their lives back.

Other awards included:

- Reverend David & Catherine Berry, St Peter's Church, Bentley
- Shane Millar, Custom Windows and Doors, Bentley for providing a hub for the Bentley Community during the aftermath of the floods
- Peter Trimmingham & Pam Webb, Fishlake, Doncaster
- Alison Wade, South Yorkshire's Community Foundation for making over 2,000 payments to flood victims
- Michelle Dickinson, South Yorkshire's Community Foundation for supporting flood victims throughout the application process

6 EVALUATION - FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Some 12 months after the Flood Disaster, an evaluation of the Foundation's response to the Flood Disaster was carried out highlighting both the actions that worked well plus lessons to be learned and applied to possible future disaster events.

The key lessons include:

Finding	Lesson
It is felt that initially SYCF were expected to be more involved at ground level- fundraising and working with individuals. However, the organisation is not ordinarily geared up to work with individuals	Developing the Strategic Framework was crucial to provide clarity, focus and transparency for the direction being taken by SYCF and for other partners
From the public's perspective, there was some confusion over the different grants available and who paid what. A general lack of understanding of SYCF as 3 rd sector body, meant that many individuals thought it was a another public sector body - and treated it as such - which was both difficult and challenging for some staff to deal with. It is felt that credit is due to SYCF in dealing sensitively with individual households given the high number of applications.	More clarity of SYCF status is required in these circumstances
Good working relationships with other partners - in particular Local Authorities - are essential to both ensure a coordinated approach and allow for exchanges of information where possible to speed up grant payments	Although there were good strategic relationships, it took more time to develop operational working relationships with people and officers working on the ground
There were a number of issues raised when processing grant applications that were linked to the outcome of insurance claims. The vast majority owner occupiers had taken out house insurance, but in some circumstances were not covered for flooding and/or the cash settlements were not sufficient. There were also many others who did not have insurance - particularly in the rented sector	The Government commissioned a comprehensive review, focused on the Doncaster area, into the reasons why people did not have sufficient insurance cover, identifying the extent to which and reasons why, people did not have sufficient insurance cover and what action might improve protection against future events. It sets out a number of recommendations that are relevant for all areas that are potentially at risk of flooding. SYCF gave evidence to the Government following the experiences of the floods.

<p>The Foundation utilised its existing software to process applications and pay grants, The online application process did however cause problems for some individuals who for a variety of reasons were unable to access the internet. Local hubs/community centres were vital in assisting these vulnerable applicants,</p>	<p>It is recommended that consideration should be given as to how hubs and other local area offices could be better prepared in a future disaster e.g. training regarding how the process worked and evidence needed to support applications. Important to work with partners to reduce any barriers for future applicants. We also supported vulnerable residents to complete their applications over the telephone.</p>
<p>A conservative approach was taken with the initial £200 grant payments as the extent of funding available was unknown.</p>	<p>Larger payments could have been made if earlier notification of match funding had been given.</p>
<p>Information shared by two Local Authorities helped to speed up payments for residents in their areas.</p>	<p>It would have been useful to have accurate and timely accurate lists from all Local Authorities regarding which properties had been flooded. Waiting for this information did delay some payments. Data sharing protocols need to be clarified for the future.</p>
<p>Not many applications have been received from Community Groups. It is unclear as to why, although many flooded properties were very dispersed.</p>	<p>Need to consider promoting awareness of funding available through website and possible email out. Recommend some thought on attention to groups to promote awareness and encourage applications.</p>

Overall, the evaluation found that:

- South Yorkshire Community Foundation responded quickly and flexibly to the disaster and were well placed to administer the grant funding efficiently and effectively. Having access to the UKCF Toolkit developed by community foundations who had experienced disasters more recently gave SYCF a basic set of working guidelines and a template Fund agreement.
- Websites and Media partners and social media were crucial to the vital promotion of the scale and extent of both the Flood Disaster and raising awareness of the Appeal Fund.
- Setting up the Just Giving Page up within 24 hours of the disaster was the most effective way of drawing in funds ensuring maximum benefit from the immediate reaction to the floods, and allowing for gift aid to be applied automatically. **It is however recognised that some people also needed to be able to use alternate ways of donating such as posting in cheques and making BACs payments.**

- Having a reserve fund from a previous Flood disaster was very useful as it helped kick-start the fund and was used toward the Appeal target.
- Fund-raising events made an important contribution- in terms of both raising funds and awareness. **For the future it is worth considering producing a generic fund-raising pack that could be used for multiple events.**
- Partnership working was key to success and links with the South Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum (SY LRF), responsible for emergency planning, and the four Local Authorities were crucial to ensure a coordinated approach, with many benefits derived from multiagency meetings and the interlinking of projects, partners, and agendas such as Doncaster MBC restoration project
- Much was achieved in the areas of community engagement, showing the value of community-led actions at grass roots level – e.g. St Peters, Stainforth4all.



7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The impact of the work of SYCF has been to help individuals, families and communities recover more quickly from some of the worst floods in living memory floods. The legacy is one of increased community resilience, awareness, and a step change in terms of knowledge, tools, and skills in relation to improving community resilience to flood risk

Taking into account the findings and lessons learned it is recommended that:

- Multi-year funding for Community groups is needed to continue to build resilience against future flooding events.
- Develop relationships with other funders and donors to increase the amount of support available for disaster survivors, to ensure mobilisation of funds at an early stage of any disaster as well provide pro bono assistance to the worse affected areas of South Yorkshire.
- It is important to continue and promote the collaborative working, the sharing of information and agendas within and between local authorities and SYCF in order to improve initiatives as well as building a pool of shared knowledge and resources.
- For future events, there needs to be a focus on developing early operational working relationships with people and officers working on the ground.
- Work with the partners of the SY LRF Humanitarian and VCSE Groups to develop future working relationships and arrangements for information exchange and cooperation.
- Consideration should be given as to how hubs and other local area offices could be better prepared in a future disaster, e.g. training regarding how the process worked and evidence needed to support applications. Important to work with partners to reduce any barriers for future applicants.
- Ensure lessons learnt feed into the work being carried out by the National Emergencies Trust (NET), UKCF, and the Voluntary Sector Emergency Partnership (VCSEP).

REFERENCES

[Independent Review of Flood Insurance in Doncaster](#)

[Environment Agency - South Yorkshire Flood Recovery Information Page](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC)

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC)

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC)

Sheffield City Council (SCC)

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Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF)

The Staff Team at SYCF

BBC Radio Sheffield

All those who were affected by the floods and are re-building their lives/homes

Community Groups working to support their communities in the aftermath