

Arkengarthdale Parish Council

PRESS RELEASE

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Arkengarthdale Parish Council faces struggle in flood funding

Following the flash floods that have devastated much of Arkengarthdale's landscape, the Parish Council has been working with the community to identify the urgent repair work required to protect properties, livestock and businesses in the future.

The Duke of Norfolk has enabled the Council to start work immediately through his very generous donation of £5,000. A further £10,000 is hoped to be forthcoming from Richmondshire District Council in the form of an emergency loan. However, whilst this will allow for certain projects to commence it will not support the extensive works required to repair the vast amount of damage caused by the flood.

To help prevent further erosion and damage to the land, and potential flooding to properties and businesses, the main priority is clearing approximately four miles of the Arkle Beck from the top of the dale down to Sleigill. This is essential to protect the community and maintain the sustainability of the dale for residents and visitors alike.

It is estimated that over £25,000 is required to carry out the urgent works so the Parish Council are facing a shortfall of at least £10,000. Immediately following the flood, a disaster fund was set up, managed by Two Ridings Community Foundation, and the kind donations from many businesses and members of the public have been overwhelming. The Council has applied for support from the fund, but has been advised that Parish Councils are currently not eligible as the priorities lie with households and small businesses affected by the flooding. This situation apparently may change in the future, however the council needs the funding now."

Stephen Stubbs, Chairman of Arkengarthdale Parish Council says: "We have a clear strategy of what is required in terms of repair and preventative maintenance to help ensure residents and businesses are protected from unexpected heavy rainfall in the future. Our number one priority is get businesses up and running, to safeguard the community and livelihoods as well as continuing to be a go-to destination for walkers, cyclists and other visitors. The work needs to be done as a matter of a matter of urgency and it is, therefore, very frustrating not to be able to access this funding knowing that the general public have donated money to support the Dales in good faith."

Already, an incredible amount of repair work has been carried out through the Parish Council's co-ordinated approach. The Council's action immediately after the flood to remove debris, in particular at Whaw where a footbridge had blocked the main bridge into the village, almost certainly prevented further flooding in the days after the flash floods. A tremendous response from volunteers and the Yorkshire Dales National Park saw the completely blocked bridleway to Storthwaite cleared and opened in a day.

Another priority for the Council is to remove and replace chippings throughout Langthwaite which were contaminated with silt, mud and diesel from three oil tanks which disappeared during the flood.

The Council is appealing for a common-sense approach for the allocation of the flood appeal donations to be widened to allow Parish Councils to access immediate emergency funding.

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Images: Photographs of Whaw during the flooding and the aftermath of the flood showing a footbridge and debris blocking Whaw bridge.