



Clr Charlie McCoubrey,
Leader of the Council,
Conwy County Borough Council,
By Email

Office of Janet Finch-Saunders MS,
29 Madoc Street,
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23 October 2023

URGENT

Re: Storm Babet

The Welsh Parliament,
Cardiff Bay,
CF99 1NA.
0300 200 7245

Janet.Finch-Saunders@senedd.wales

Dear Leader of the Council, Clr McCoubrey, Charlie,

I am writing following an extremely distressing weekend for numerous residents here in Llandudno.

As you are aware, we first spoke about the impact of Storm Babet on Friday morning, myself having witnessed first hand how bad the flooding was in Craig-y-Don. Sadly, the situation deteriorated.

Across the whole town there were examples of serious flooding, with residents in distress in areas such as Liddell Park, the Oval, and the Tre Creuddyn estate.

Some residents resorted to trying to protect their homes by locking themselves in and placing towels beside doors holding flood water back; others were evacuated; and some were trapped because they had no means through which to escape from their homes safely. There was fear and upset across the town. Whilst there are several examples of distress I could highlight here, there are two key themes:

1. Conwy County Borough Council was not prepared;
2. Conwy County Borough Council was not communicating effectively.

In terms of the first theme, evidence of a lack of preparedness is that constituents across the town are still reporting blocked drains to this day. It would be appreciated if you could clarify when the drains in every part of Llandudno were last cleared. A copy of the completed work schedule up to 19 October 2023 would be most helpful, and detail as to when they will all be cleared next.

Additionally, many residents have expressed frustration at the fact that sandbags were unavailable. Whilst I am aware that the County Council does not provide these to private residential properties, the policy does require review. Indeed, when your home is on the verge of being flooded, any reasonable person will wish to do anything they can to protect their property. To deprive them of the last defence, a sandbag, is immoral and causing upset.

With regards to the standard of your Authority's communion, I can personally vouch that there was a serious problem with getting in contact with your officers. As you know, I was on site in Llandudno, so resorted to speaking to North Wales Police and the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service. The Police informed me that there was no plan in place to manage the crisis, and a firefighter indicated to me that there was a complete lack of clarity, with mixed messaging such as there being pressure to be in both Llandudno and Llanfairfechan. [Cont...]

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[Cont...]

Many of us living in the town remember the 1993 flood. We hoped that the Local Authority would have learnt the relevant lessons so to ensure that a similar crisis did not happen again. The flooding over the last few days has shown to us all that our community has been left vulnerable, without a clear plan to mitigate flood risk, let alone provide support during a major flood event. For the sake of the wellbeing of our residents, I urge you to bring forward a new flood risk management plan for Llandudno.

Yours sincerely,

Janet

Janet Finch-Saunders MS/AS