



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Rachael Hamilton MSP
Member for Ettrick, Roxburgh & Berwickshire

The First Minister
The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

2nd March 2020

Dear First Minister,

As you will be aware, the Scottish Borders were badly affected by the recent Storm Dennis, which brought severe flooding after days of heavy rainfall and snowmelt.

The village of Newcastleton was worst affected, with over 70 homes evacuated. Vulnerable and elderly people had to be rehoused in various locations in the surrounding area until the flood waters subsided.

Many roads in the area were flooded and left impassable. This has meant that bus services and other transportation to and from the village has been rerouted on lengthy diversions. Dawstonburn Bridge on the B6357 was badly impacted and efforts to temporarily repair the bridge were only completed last weekend. It must be emphasised that this has only protected, not secured, the foundations of the bridge. A permanent repair cannot take place until the river level drops and a SEPA licence is received to undertake works within the river.

Given the severity and extent of the damage, we believe we need better support from the Scottish Government. I notice the swift action, which the Welsh Government took in the aftermath of the storms. A fund of £10 million was made available by the Welsh First Minister to support residents, businesses and high streets who were impacted by the storms, as well as help local authorities to deal with the clean-up and any urgent infrastructure repairs.

It has been the hard work of local people, resilience teams and the emergency services who have been getting the community back on its feet. We owe them a large debt of gratitude. Similarly to Wales, Scotland needs emergency flood funding. The duty of the Scottish Government is to assist communities badly affected by extreme weather and the small community of Newcastleton faces an unprecedented situation.

John Lamont MP and I ask that the Scottish Government acts accordingly to assist them at this very difficult time. We need to see financial support made immediately available to help Newcastleton to recover.

Kind regards,
Rachael Hamilton MSP and John Lamont MP

The Constituency Office of Rachael Hamilton MSP
7, Abbey Court, Kelso TD5 7JA
rachael.hamilton.msp@parliament.scot