

## Kendal Oral History Group Interview 0315F

Kendal Flood Project Interview

Sarah & Dave Benjamin

R1 – Sarah born 1974

R2 – Dave born 1960

Interviewed July 2016

0315f Summary Sheet

Track One, pp. 1-3

Lived in new housing association (HA) house on old auction mart site, Appleby Rd.

Responded to a cry of help from Sandylands Church.

Sarah knocked on doors checking who was in the houses, Dave manned phones.

Dave received a phone call from London asking him to check on elderly parents in the Duke of Cumberland

In mid-afternoon they were told their house was about to be flooded.

Sandylands Church flooded and evacuated. Town Hall Reception Centre opened.

Track Two, pp. 4-5

When they got to their house water was up to the letter box

Dave started collecting belongings and had to be forced out by a neighbour.

Unwilling to leave despite his illness.

It was 15 minutes between no water and three foot of water and still rising.

Track Three, pp. 5-7

Went to the neighbours' house.

Daughter rang and got Mountain Rescue to come and collect them (Dave's illness)

There was a very strong current on the road which made the journey hazardous.

The rescue boat had to stop by the Porsche garage. They were very frightened.

Too dangerous to go any further. Amphibious vehicle took over. Ambulance took them to the Town Hall. Sarah's brother-in-law was driving the ambulance

Track Four, pp. 7-9

Went to Town Hall – a hive of activity. Were offered accommodation with a family in Collin Croft. They gave them food and a bed and also cleaned and dried their clothes

Bizarre sight of people shopping in Kendal town centre on Sunday morning.

SLDC put them in Stonecross Manor Hotel for a week. There was a 'Blitz spirit' that night amongst those people flooded. This was the start of community building.

Track Five, pp.9-12

Contacted insurance company. Details of looking for accommodation.

They paid £4,600 to secure a flat above K Village. Gazumped by a van hire firm.

Removed everything from the house. Problems with the HA and rent arrears.

Track Six, pp.12-14

The fact that they were renting their home made the flood disaster easier to deal with. Help from St. Thomas's Church to move into K Village. Everyone so generous.

Now, almost ready to move back to their home.

Dave spends much time at Sandylands Church and is friendly with the Chaplain

Track Seven, pp. 14-15

They had a helpful loss adjuster but were under-insured (never again!)

Details of looking for a new house

The builders have done a good job in their present house