

Kendal Flood December 2015 project interview

Jonny Gios, born 1979

Community worker, Sandylands Methodist Church

Interviewed August 2016

336f/ Summary Sheet

Track 1, pp. 1-3

Heavy rain in the days before Saturday 5 December continued on the morning of the flood. Watched Environment Agency flood alerts and saw they were getting worse. Saw an 'at risk' assessment of Stock Beck and knew that Sandylands would be hit. Went to Sandylands Methodist Church (SMC) and saw water appearing on the street. Brownies' party in the Church was cancelled.

Sent out messages asking for volunteers to help on social media.

Cars driving too fast through Sandylands, bow waves. Tried to slow them down

Sent volunteers out door-knocking to collect details.

The SMC was an Emergency Evacuation Centre so had good equipment and resources. Water continued to rise. Rescued a lady and children from a house and brought them to SMC. The church began to flood.

Track 2, pp.3-4

The Police and Mountain Rescue evacuated the SMC. People taken to Leisure Centre Evacuation Centre. He then went to the Town Hall Evacuation Centre (THEC) to help. Description of the scene at the THEC. Hundreds of people there. Walked home (with difficulty) to Burneside Rd. Then returned to SMC to try to save his car. Description of flooding in Kendal at this time. Very high water in Sandylands. Sandylands was a dark, silent and eerie place at this time.

Track 3, pp.4-6

On Sunday morning returned to SMC. Description of journey – water still deep.

It was still flowing through Sandylands Rd. Description of damage to SMC.

Worried about local people without insurance. Farmer helped them to clear SMC.

Then volunteers began door-knocking to collect information on those flooded.

Created a large database on over 900 homes. Very busy through December.

Songs of Praise and other publicity. This was good for bringing in funding.

Track 4, pp. 6-7

After Christmas the emphasis shifted to flood recovery. The SMC remit was to help and register people and give out cleaning materials.

Helped with advice and grant applications through the SMC Cabin.

Some people needed more help than others.

Reflects on the way Kendal people pulled together through the flood and its aftermath.

Details of community events organised by SMC. Looking forward to 'Thank You' tea for volunteers. He is proud to live in Kendal.