

Flooding in Boscastle, Cornwall

On 16th August 2004, 75mm of rain fell in just 2 hours, the same amount as normally falls in the whole of August.

Over 2 billion litres of water flowed into two rivers (the Valency and Jordan) and both burst their banks.

The water travelled downstream at speed through the village of Boscastle. Floodwater gushed into houses, shops and pubs. Cars, walls and even bridges were washed away. The church was filled with six feet of mud and water. Trees were uprooted and swept into gardens. The weight of water eroded river banks, damaged gardens and pavements.

The financial cost of the floods was millions of pounds, and included the following:

- The rescue operation - involving helicopters, lifeboats, and the fire service.
- The loss of 50 cars.
- Damage to homes, businesses and land.
- Loss of tourism, a major source of income for the area.

The flooding also had several other key impacts on Boscastle:

- Environmental damage to local wildlife habitats.
- Coastal pollution caused as debris and fuel from cars flowed out to sea.
- Long-term disruption to the village, as a major rebuild project had to be carried out.
- Long-term stress and anxiety to people traumatised by the incident.