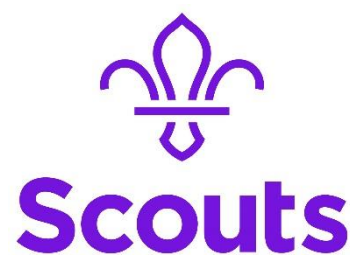


# Doncaster flood story



**This blog was written by a Red Cross volunteer who was supporting people in Doncaster a week after the floods.**

It was the look on the face of a young lad whose birthday it was. He'd come into a rest centre with his brother and mum, and they were all a bit upset at having to leave home. Someone from the council had arranged for a prescription of the boys' asthma inhalers – in the family's hurry to leave, they had left them at home. The Red Cross went down to the local supermarket and picked the prescription up. But, as we'd got wind it was the little lad's birthday, we thought it'd be nice to get him a cake while we were there.

When we came back, we lit the candles and the whole centre stopped to sing 'Happy birthday'. The look of sheer joy on his face brightened up a day that he could have otherwise remembered only for what went wrong.

## **We're trying to treat people as individuals**

When I think about what we did for that little lad, it's a good example of what the Red Cross is trying to do across much of South Yorkshire and the East Midlands. A lot of what we do is just trying to treat people as individuals, acknowledging them as they come into the rest centres, and making sure that they aren't forgotten in the trauma of the day.

Our role has been to speak to people as they arrive at the rest centres, register them, and basically take a measure of how they have been affected. Elsewhere, the Red Cross has picked up sleeping stuff for people and gone door-to-door to check on the most vulnerable. Some of the stories I've heard have been quite shocking. One man I met at the rest centre showed me some photos of his family home. The water level was up to his chest by the time they left. They rescued what they could put upstairs but anything downstairs is gone.

I couldn't help thinking that I'm safe and dry and my home is safe and dry – but they've have lost everything. They've worked hard, they've been here five years, everything they've accumulated in five years is just lost. It's devastating for them. You support as best you can, but it's hard.

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