

ESCHWEILER FLOODS UPDATE 24-07-2021



***Dear friends in England,
we are touched by your spontaneous willingness to help. It means a lot to us that you feel with us. It also means a lot to us that you have started this great fundraising campaign. It is really generous and can help those who have lost so much. The situation is depressing and it will take years to restore everything.
Best wishes from the Eschweiler Partnership Association.***

Translation of mail from Manfred Esser, former Mayor, Committee Member of Eschweiler Twinning
It is so uplifting for all of us to know that friends far away from the disaster are still standing by our side with compassionate thoughts and real help. Although Brigitte and I were spared, when one is focused on what is happening here, we can hardly express our surprise and delight to find that those whose lives have been deeply affected can receive your compassionate help. Thank you, thank you, thank you all Manfred

Dear Friends

Several members have asked for an update on the situation in Eschweiler. The flood water has now receded and the clear up operations started as soon as power and water were able to be restored after a couple of days. Eschweiler Hospital had to be evacuated and one of the first priorities is to try to get that back in action. Some major equipment such as a brand new MRI scanner were badly damaged but groups of volunteers have been cleaning up and repairing what they can.

Many houses with cellars are used to house heating oil tanks and boilers as well as freezers etc. Most were flooded within about five minutes and have to be pumped out by the Fire Brigade. There is slimy smelly mud everywhere right up to first floor level. Flood damage like this is not normally covered by standard building insurance in Germany. In addition many people have suffered damage and loss of cars and other property.

Eschweiler Stadt have apparently been very good and all credit to Nadine Leonhardt - who has only been Mayor for a year – for organising the rescue operations, the army and disaster help force were assisting. Some short-term help is being given to residents most badly affected and they are working with the German Red Cross to distribute water, food and clothing. Showers and communal washing machines have been set up. Most impressive is the help by other members of the community giving furniture, clothes as well as help and local businesses doing what they can.

Last night I watched a “Children in Need” type programme on German TV to benefit those affected in the area of flooding. It was shocking to see some of the images and hear the stories. Eschweiler was featured but other areas nearby were worse affected, such as the Ahr Valley which Twinning visited for wine tasting a few years ago. You might remember that the houses here are very old and some literally floated away.

A very big thanks to those of you who have generously donated to our appeal to help the families in Eschweiler who have been affected by the floods. Some people have little or nothing left. I know that our help is really appreciated and that they are so grateful for our support. If you would still like to donate, the details are

Reigate & Banstead Twinning Association, Flood Appeal HSBC Reigate Sort Code: 40-38-10, Account: 81060333 Cheques to Reigate & Banstead Twinning Association 64 Church Street Reigate RH2 0SP

Many thanks again everyone for your help.

Janet Powell