



# Emergency Planning Newsletter

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## HELPING YOU TO HELP YOURSELVES

### National Community Resilience Programme

Since November 2008, work has been underway within the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS), including three national consultation workshops, to determine what the Government contribution should be to build and enhance community resilience across the UK.

As a result of this consultation, CCS has designed a phased programme of work which will deliver guidance, support and a mechanism by which communities can talk to each other, local responders and voluntary sector partners to assist building their resilience. A final consultation is now underway and seeking views from the public:

[www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/communityresilience](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/communityresilience)

The aims of the Community Resilience Programme are to:

- Increase individual, family and community resilience against all threats and hazards.

- Support and enable existing community resilience, expand and grow the successful models of community resilience on other areas.

- Ensure effective dialogue takes place between the community and the practitioners supporting them.

- Raise awareness and understanding of risk and local emergency response capability in order to motivate and sustain self reliance.

- Provide a shared framework to support cross sector, regional and local activity in a way that ensures sufficient flexibility to make community resilience relevant and workable in each local area/community.

The work programme has been divided into the following phases:

- Phase 1.** Learning from those already engaged in

community resilience and identifying good practice. (Nov 08 - Feb 10).

**Phase 2 (Current).** Consultation on the draft documents, seeking validation from local experts on the content, approach and branding. (Feb 10 - Jun 10).

**Phase 3.** This phase has two strands. Firstly, enabling local areas to use revised/refined documents to target existing community groups, organisations and networks who are not yet engaged in preparing for emergencies (Jun 10 onwards). The second strand to Phase 3 is the support to and seeding of local initiatives to build resilience giving local communities the opportunities and tools to be able to undertake resilience and preparedness activity.

### New Flood Codes and Messages

In response to the Summer 2007 floods, Sir Michael Pitt stated that "people should be at the heart of what we do" and that our flood warning service needs to be improved to stimulate a more effective response from response agencies and the public.

The Environment Agency have acted on feedback from professional partners and the public to address concerns that the existing codes are not well understood. They have developed new public flood warning codes through a process of extensive

research and testing with the public and partners. These will be **Flood Alert, Flood Warning** and will use use new icons. **Severe Flood Warning** will be retained and will also have a new icon. Telephone messages will be simplified and made more clear. The change reflects a shift from impact based warnings to likelihood based warning service.

From Spring 2010 the new public codes are going to be:

**FLOOD ALERT - Flooding possible, Be prepared.** Flood Alerts will be issued directly from Floodline Warnings Direct and will advise people to be prepared for possible flooding from rivers or the sea. It will be targeted to specific areas and will tell people they are at

risk of possible flooding and need to be alert and stay vigilant. People can choose whether or not to receive this information. Floodline and the Environment Agency website will contain up to date information on the situation.

**FLOOD WARNING - Flooding is expected.**

**Immediate action required.** Flood Warnings will be issued directly from Floodline Warnings Direct and will advise people that flooding from rivers or the sea is expected in communities and will encourage them to take action. All properties in flood warning areas will be encouraged to sign up for this service. Floodline and the EA website will contain up to date information on the situation.

## Civil Contingencies Act - Enhancement Programme

When the Civil Contingencies Bill went through Parliament in 2003 - 4, a statement of intent was made to review the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) after two to three years of becoming legislation. This would allow responders sufficient time to establish new structures needed to fulfil their duties. This is consistent with the Government policy that it is best practice to review legislation every three years to ensure that the original intentions are being met.

Evidence from various sources - including independent reviews and findings from the National Capabilities Survey 2008, suggests that the implementation of the CCA has been, on the whole, successful and has made a significant contribution to enhancing emergency preparedness in the UK. Given that the CCA has generally been embedded well, CCS proposed that this would be a light touch

review, to fine tune the framework and update the supporting guidance.

However, during the initial stages of the work, evidence emerged that there were a broad range of CCA areas that would merit a more thorough review to ensure that the CCA continues to provide a modern, consistent and effective platform for UK Civil Protection. The CCS now has an Enhancement Programme which is project based and is in the second stage of a four stage programme. Any amendments to the Act will require further passage through Parliament.

Provisionally, the Enhancement Programme will be looking at the following areas:

- Recovery.
- How is the Act working in its current form.
- Potential new responders.
- National and regional duties.
- Critical National Infrastructure.

## Communities in Action - Braunton

Braunton Parish Council have worked hard to produce a sound Community Emergency Plan. The plan is available on the Parish website:

[www.brauntonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.brauntonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Any Parish starting the Emergency Planning process may find this a useful example to review.



## Your Local Resilience Forum (LRF)

The Emergency Services, Local Government, Health Services and many other organisations have come together to form the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Resilience Forum (LRF).

The LRF and other member organisations have plans in place to respond to local risks and hazards. The aim of these plans is to save lives, contain danger protect the public and to minimise the effects so we can all return to normality as soon as possible.

During a major or widespread incident resources could be stretched and services may need to be prioritised. That is why it would be helpful if individuals and communities can prepare themselves and their families for emergency situations.

Each and every household can help by making their own plans and knowing what to do in an emergency. For more information go to:

[www.dcsprepared.org.uk](http://www.dcsprepared.org.uk)

## Red Cross Informed Prepared Together Project

This very useful project is led by the Red Cross / EU Office in Brussels and is co-financed by the European Commission.

The principles of being **Informed**, being Prepared and working **Together** to build **Resilience** are an outcome of the Informed Prepared Together Project and build on the learning gathered from a wide range of initiatives, activities and projects across the European Union Member States and European Economic Area Countries.

The project states that emergencies and disasters are about people. Addressing the human aspects of an emergency in an integrated, person-focused and joined up manner should be at the heart of civil protection planning and response and based on capacity and capability.

Rebuilding homes, businesses and towns is a difficult challenge. Rebuilding the lives of survivors, the bereaved and the wider community is no less important.

The project has delivered a family of products and resources intended to support organisations, communities and citizens to work together in civil protection. It includes principles and guidance on the human aspects of emergencies and disasters, booklets, leaflets and cards providing useful tips and advice on how to involve citizens. There is also a useful guide for a community based exercise!

There is wealth of information in the resource library available on the website to download and print.

[www.informedprepared.eu](http://www.informedprepared.eu)



## What is emergency planning?

Emergency planning should aim where possible to prevent emergencies occurring, and when they do occur, good planning should reduce, control or mitigate the effects of the emergency. It is a systematic and ongoing process which should evolve as lessons are learnt and circumstances change.

Emergency planning should be viewed as part of a cycle of activities beginning with establishing a risk profile to help determine what should be the priorities for developing plans and ending with review and revision, which then re-starts the whole cycle.

Plans should focus on at least three key groupings of people - the vulnerable, victims (including survivors, family and friends) and volunteer personnel.

- **Vulnerable people** may be less able to help themselves in an emergency than self-reliant people. Those who are vulnerable will vary depending on the nature of the emergency, but plans should consider: those with mobility difficulties (e.g. those with physical disabilities or pregnant women); those with mental health difficulties; and others who are dependent, such as children.

- **Victims** of an emergency - which includes not only those directly affected but also those who, as family and friends, suffer bereavement or the anxiety of not knowing what has happened.

- **Volunteer personnel** should also be considered. Plans sometimes place unrealistic expectations on management and personnel. Communities should ensure their plans give due consideration to the welfare of their own personnel. For instance, the emergency services have health and safety procedures which determine shift patterns and check for levels of stress.

Communities should aim to create and maintain plans which cover three different areas:

- **Plans for preventing an emergency** - in some circumstances there will be a short period before an emergency occurs when it might be avoided by prompt or decisive action. e.g. Fitting flood gates etc.

- **Plans for reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of an emergency** - the main bulk of planning should consider how to minimise the effects of an emergency, starting with the impact of the event (e.g. alerting procedures) and looking at remedial actions that can be taken to reduce effects. The evacuation of people may be one direct intervention which can mitigate the effects of some emergencies. Recovery plans should also be developed to reduce the effects of the emergency and ensure long term recovery.

- **Plans for taking other action in connection with an emergency** - Not all actions to be taken in preparing for an emergency are directly concerned with controlling, reducing or mitigating its effects. Emergency planning should look beyond the immediate response and long term recovery issues and look also at secondary impacts. For example, the wave of reaction to an emergency can be quite overwhelming in terms of media attention and public response. Plans may need to consider how to handle this increased interest.

- **Thresholds, Triggers and Plan Activation** - As obvious as it sounds, emergency plans should include procedures for determining whether an emergency has occurred and when to activate the plan in response to an emergency. This should include identifying an appropriate person who will take the decision, in consultation with others, on when an emergency has occurred.

The maintenance of plans involves more than just their preparation. Once a plan has been prepared, it must be maintained systematically to ensure it remains up-to-date and fit for purpose at any time if an emergency occurs.

### Types of emergency plans

It may be important for a community to have more than one emergency plan. It is often the case that communities have **generic** plans and **specific** plans dealing with specific risks they face and identified as such in the risk assessment; for example flooding.

**Generic plans** are the core plan which enables the community to respond to, and recover from a wide range of possible emergencies. They should hence include procedures which would be used in all instances for e.g. ensuring the safety and welfare of the community and volunteers and the provision of sufficient resources for responding to the emergency.

**Specific plans** relate either to a particular emergency or kind of emergency, or to a specific site or location. Specific plans are a detailed set of arrangements designed to go beyond the generic arrangements when they are likely to prove insufficient in a particular case. A specific plan usually relies on a generic plan. Some communities may have specific plans for conducting specific functions in response to an emergency. Communities should use their risk assessments to decide whether specific plans are necessary or desirable.

### **Exercising plans and training volunteers**

Communities should test the effectiveness of their emergency plans by carrying out exercises, and should ensure that key volunteers involved in the planning for or response to an emergency receive appropriate training. The plans themselves should explicitly identify the nature and frequency of training and exercising required.

Further guidance on community preparedness is available on the Devon County Council website:

- ↗ [www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk)
- ↗ Safety and Emergencies
- ↗ Emergencies
- ↗ Emergency Planning - Community Planning

## Exercise Watermark Update

Exercise Watermark aims to test flood resilience across England and Wales. It is a Defra led exercise that will be delivered by the Environment Agency and take place in March 2011. It will involve a number of live and table top exercises, set against severe weather conditions incorporating flooding from sea, rivers, surface water and possibly reservoir failure and groundwater flooding.

The aim of the Exercise is to conduct a wide ranging and publically engaging exercise that tests the arrangements across England and Wales to respond to all aspects of severe, wide-ranging flooding.

The Exercise will have a 'core' component in which all the scenario(s), principal exercise

injects and exercise management system will be developed and operate during the live play.

'Bolt on' exercises may be developed and run by a whole range of organisations including utility and essential services sectors, other category 2 organisations and businesses.

'Plug and Play' functionality will mean businesses, community groups, schools and other organisations who may be at risk of flooding, can participate and/or observe the exercise during the course of the week, drawing on the material used in the core exercise.

The exercise plan states that communities should be at the heart of the exercise. To achieve this, it is suggested that weekend community demonstrations and flood fairs should be organised. Staged.

## Have you put ICE in your mobile?

Eight out of ten people in the UK carry a mobile phone most of the time. The emergency services are trained to check for the ICE number.

Standing for 'In Case of Emergency', ICE allows the emergency service to contact someone. Think carefully about who you choose as an ICE partner because that person may need to give consent to medical treatment. If you want more than one ICE contact, save them as ICE1, ICE2 etc. There is no easier way of letting the emergency services know who to contact if you are in an accident. If you don't carry a mobile you can keep the same information in a wallet or purse.

## First Point of Contact

Did you know your City, District or Borough Emergency Planning Officer is your first point of contact for assistance? You will find them listed below for reference. Remember they are all there to help you!

Also, the Devon County Council website has lots of useful information for both individuals and communities:

-  [www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk)
-  Safety and Emergencies
-  Emergencies

*Peter Dale will become the District EPO for West Devon from 1 April 2010 in addition his role with South Hams.*

## Town & Parish Emergency Planning Workshops

Emergencies and/or natural disasters affect communities in different ways. A more resilient community is likely to recover more rapidly from such an event. Devon County Council has partnered with the Environment Agency and District Councils to deliver a series of workshops around the County. These workshops will provide initial guidance and information to help communities develop their own Emergency Plan.

The outline schedule for the Emergency Planning workshops currently being rolled out across the county is now in place. These multi-

agency events have received very positive feedback from all those attending the pilot sessions in East and West Devon earlier in the year. Invitations will be sent to Parishes in advance, so keep an eye on the post!

<b>East Devon</b>	<b>1 Jul 09</b>
<b>West Devon</b>	<b>15 &amp; 16 Sept 09</b>
<b>Torrige</b>	<b>2 &amp; 4 Mar 10</b>
<b>North Devon</b>	<b>8 Mar 10</b>
<b>Mid Devon</b>	<b>Late May 10</b>
<b>Teignbridge</b>	<b>Early Sept 10</b>
<b>South Hams</b>	<b>Mid Sept 10</b>
<b>Exeter</b>	<b>Nov 10</b>

Teignbridge	East Devon	North Devon	Helping you To Help Yourself			Exeter/ Mid Devon	South Hams/ West Devon	Torrige
								
Ian Flood-Page 01626 215835 iflood@teignbridge.gov.uk	Jane Tancock 01395 516551 jtancock@eastdevon.gov.uk	Paul Bourton 01271 388312 paul.bourton@ncrt-hdevon.gov.uk				Peter Brown 01392 265904 peter.brown@exeter.gov.uk	Peter Dale 01803 861278 peter.dale@southhams.gov.uk	Ruth Staddon 01237 428806 ruth.staddon@torridge.gov.uk