

10 Steps to complete our Community Resilience Plan

1. Getting Together

Preparing a Plan will require voluntary input from across the community, and the harnessing of local knowledge and resources.

To initiate this journey requires an open meeting with members of the local community and the parish council, to encourage wider consideration of the key question:

How could we better survive the first 48 hours of an emergency?

The emergency services and the County Emergency Planning Team may be able to help with information.

2. Organising the Work

Essential to seeing through the preparation of a Plan is the effective coordination of the work involved and the championing of the use of the Plan once it is completed.

Coordination is the role of a Community Resilience Working Group (also known as the "Group"). It should comprise several volunteers with a good range of local knowledge. The Group should be led by a Community Resilience Coordinator and deputies with the time and ability to guide the work of the Group, and the development of the Plan.

3. Knowing the Unknowns

A key task for the Group is not to try and second guess every possibility but to think about the types of events that are likely to occur, giving some context for the Group's work in resilience planning.

We should think about:

- **Social Risks** – people with limited mobility, no access to transport, etc.
- **Environmental Risks** – areas that flood regularly, heritage sites, etc.
- **Infrastructure Risks** – bridges, major traffic routes, industrial sites, etc.

4. Identifying Skills and Resources

Our community has access to a range of local skills, knowledge, physical resources and support organisations. The key to acting promptly and effectively in an emergency is having identified these in advance.

- **Who is good at what?**
- **What resources do we have?**
- **How will we communicate?**

5. Legal Issues

The use of resources in an emergency may raise a range of legal and financial issues. Thinking about these in advance and putting in place any necessary agreements can minimise any difficulties. These issues cannot be left until the emergency takes place because they may result in real constraints on what can be done.

- **Buildings and Equipment Insurance** – agreements with owners and insurance to cover usage.

- **Equipment Use** – types of equipment that might be used, circumstances in which it will be used, prepare risk assessment of the activity, any training that will minimum the risks that can be identified, etc.
- **Insurance for Volunteers** – personal liability insurance (existing Parish Council insurance may cover), safe working arrangements, etc.
- **Costs** – e.g., room hire, materials used, etc.

6. Organising Key Facilities

Think in advance about the facilities that we may need to effectively manage an emergency and to support local people who are affected.

- **Local Control Centre** – somewhere where the Group and representatives of the Emergency Services can meet to review the situation and plan and coordinate their actions. Reliable communications are at the heart of responding to an emergency situation.
- **Temporary Places of Safety** – e.g., Village Hall, Martindale Centre, Horsted Club.

7. Keeping in Touch

In developing our Plan, we will have identified a significant number of people who will be important in our response, people with significant resources, skills or knowledge, local volunteers and professional advisors.

It is essential that we record the contact details of all these people, and make sure that the information is readily accessible by key people such as members of the Group and the Emergency Services.

- **Telephone Tree / Cascade** – including alternative arrangements for staying in contact if usual communications have been disrupted.
- **Data Protection** - as the Plan will contain personal data it is subject to data protection legislation.

8. Activating our Plan

With all the main components of our Plan in place, people, skills and resources, we need next to think how our Plan will be Activated when a real emergency arises.

9. Taking Control

When an emergency happens, and we begin to Activate our Plan, we will need to coordinate what happens next.

A critical first step in the process will be to hold a meeting of the key people involved.

- **Where will the meeting take place?**
 - **Who should attend?**
- **Prepare a Meeting Agenda template**

10. Testing our Plan

Having prepared the Plan it is important to test the arrangements that have been put in place to make sure that they work. Identifying possible problems and resolving them will ensure things go smoothly when we do it for real.

There are several types of exercise that we can use to test our arrangements and train participants, these include:

- **Discussion based** - based on a completed Plan and are used to develop awareness about the plan through discussion. May also be used for training purposes (e.g., emergency preparedness and emergency response).
- **Table Top** – a scenario based simulation of an emergency which can help validate our Plan.
- **Live Play** – a good tool, but expensive to set up on the day, and demands the most extensive preparation.