

Emergency Planning Guidance

- **Introduction**
- How would your community survive the first 48 hours of a serious emergency? You may be cut off from the emergency services, or if the incident covers a large area, they may be occupied elsewhere.
- How can you work together to be better prepared and support each other in difficult times?
- Community Emergency Plans can help to minimise the impact of an emergency and help communities to recover more quickly.
- This guidance and template CEP provides an overview of the process and the key elements to include.

- **What is a Community Emergency Plan?**
- A Community Emergency Plan is a simple document which identifies the potential impacts of emergency situations that could occur in a community, and sets out what residents and businesses can do before, during and after to:
 - Be prepared
 - Know what to do
 - Bounce back
- It also identifies key contacts in the community who will coordinate the Plan (Community Response Group - CRG), including one person who will be the point of contact with local authorities and emergency services.
- It is not the role of the community to take on the responsibilities of these agencies e.g., to save life, to take risks themselves, or to cope for long hours without agencies' help and support

- **Why have a Plan?**
- Lets individuals know what they can do in advance to reduce risk and be prepared.
- Raises awareness of those who might be at greater risk or need additional support.
- Helps people feel included, know what to do, and how to respond in the first few hours.
- Helps the community to cope on its own if authorities and emergency services are not immediately available
- Improves communications within the community, and between statutory authorities and the local community.
- Organises people to take appropriate action and work with statutory authorities effectively.
- Links up local knowledge, facilities and people - Outside help may have limited knowledge of your local area, particularly if the nature or scale of an emergency means help comes from even further away.

The process of doing a Plan:

- Get together a small group is needed to produce the Plan and often forms the basis of the Community Response Group (CRG) to coordinate delivery.

- Approach local authorities, emergency services, and other relevant agencies, to make them aware that you are doing a Plan, and to ask how they can assist you.
- Take stock Identify potential emergencies, the impacts on the community, and what actions can be taken.
- Consider whether these are general enough to be applied to other emergency situations.
- Talk to residents and businesses to assess what resources may be available to assist in an emergency e.g., communications, skills, facilities, equipment.
- Are there volunteers willing to help?
- If your community has experienced emergencies before, what happened and how could better coordination and prior planning have improved your resilience and response?
- Is there an appropriate 'Place of Safety', such as the village hall or local pub, which could provide shelter, and access to information or supplies?
- Also consider, who might be:
 - at greater risk, harder to contact; or less able to respond and act on information received in an emergency.
 - Consider all potentially vulnerable individuals. These could be parents with new babies, people recently discharged from hospital as well as more obvious vulnerable people such as those that are older.
- Write it down: **A Community Emergency Plan template is available to help you do this:**
- Consider the triggers which would prompt you to activate your Plan e.g., flood / severe weather warning, power cut in cold conditions etc.
- Communication is vital, if possible have more than one way to contact people and consider what you would do if phone lines were down.

Assess the risks

- Carry out a simple risk assessment for the actions in your Plan and consider whether any training or protective clothing etc. is needed.
- **An example and template risk assessment are available to help you:** attached in email
- Let people know The Plan itself will contain personal contact details and may not be appropriate to make publicly available.
- However, it is important that everyone knows about the Plan and what it means for them.
- An unrestricted copy of your Plan should be sent to the Cumbria Community Resilience Network, to be made accessible to local authorities and emergency services, via the secure Resilience Direct system.
- Test it & review Test your Plan against different scenarios, if possible, involving relevant agencies.
- Keep details up to date and review it annually.

A simple Plan includes:

- Community Response Group' contacts
- Triggers to activate the Plan
- Possible emergencies, impacts and actions
- Community resources: names, contact details, and how they could help
- Key contacts: authorities, emergency services
- A plan to review and update