

“How would my community survive the first 48 hours of a serious emergency?”

BE PREPARED!

**COMMUNITY
EMERGENCY
PLANNING**

**SMALL COMMUNITIES &
PARISH MEETINGS**



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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.

Community Emergency Plans can help to minimise the impact of an emergency and help communities to recover more quickly. This guidance is aimed at smaller communities where a simpler approach to Community Emergency Planning may be more appropriate.

What is a Community Emergency Plan?

A Community Emergency Plan is a simple document which identifies potential 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.
- Raises awareness of those who might be at greater risk, or need additional support in the event of an emergency.
- 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 statutory authorities and emergency services are not immediately available.
- Improves communications between statutory authorities and the local community.
- Organises people to 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.

Get Together and Take Stock

- What potential emergencies might your community face?
- What local skills, equipment, and facilities are there?

Write it Down

- What are the triggers?
- Who will do what, and how will you communicate?

Be prepared

- Ensure all local residents and relevant agencies know about the Plan
- Test and review the Plan to ensure it is up to date

The process of doing a Plan:

Get together

A small group is needed to produce the Plan and may form the basis of the Community Response Group (CRG).

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 e.g. flash flooding or power outages, but also ensure your Plan is general enough for any emergency situation.

Talk to residents and businesses to assess what resources are available locally, including: skills, equipment, and facilities. Who in the community is willing to help in the event of an emergency, and what can they offer?

Your community may have experienced emergency situations before; what happened and how could better coordination and prior planning have improved your response?

Is there an appropriate 'Place of Safety', such as the village hall or local pub, to provide shelter, supplies, and access to information?

Also consider, who might be:

- At greater risk in the event of an emergency?
- Harder to contact to inform of an emergency?
- Less able to respond and act on information?

Write it down

A simple Community Emergency Plan template for smaller communities is available to help you do this.

What are the triggers which would activate your Plan? Consider early warning systems such as flood / severe weather warnings?

Communication is vital, if possible have more than one way to contact people and consider what you would do, for example if telephone lines are down.

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. You could circulate an amended version without contact information.

Test it & review

Test your Plan against different scenarios, if possible involving relevant agencies. Contact information in the Plan also needs to be kept up to date.

A simple Plan includes:

- Aim and Objectives of the Community Emergency Plan.
- 'Community Response Group' contact details.
- Possible Emergencies & Risk Assessment.
- Triggers to activate the Plan
- Community resources: names, contact details, how they will help, what they can offer.
- Key contacts: authorities, emergency services
- Plan to review and update

Additional resources:

Appendix A: template plan for smaller communities and Parish Meetings is also available in Word format for use.

A detailed Ten Step Community Emergency Planning Toolkit and Keswick Community Emergency Plan Video Case Study are available here: www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/WhatWeDo/CommunityEmergencyPlanning

Also contact Hellen Aitken at ACT for more information about the support we can offer.

For more information please contact ACTion with Communities in Cumbria on Tel: 01228 817224 or visit our website: www.cumbriaaction.org.uk

ACT champions community and rural issues

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Appendix A: Community Emergency Plan template for Parish Meetings / smaller communities

(Name of Your Community) **Community Emergency Plan**

1. PURPOSE

Definition of an emergency:

An emergency / major incident is any event or circumstance (happening with or without warning) that causes or threatens death or injury, disruption to the community, or damage to property or to the environment on such a scale that the effect cannot be dealt with by the emergency services, local authorities and other organisations as part of their normal day-to day activities.

Aim of the Community Emergency Plan:

To increase resilience within the local community before, during and after emergencies, and to link into the county and district councils', and emergency services' emergency response structures. This Plan documents how (*insert name of your community*) would respond in an emergency situation e.g. while awaiting the assistance of statutory authorities / emergency services, or in support of them.

It is not the role of the community to take on the responsibilities of these agencies e.g. to save life, to take any risks to themselves or to cope for long hours without agencies' help and support.

Objectives:

- Identify the risks to the community and relevant response actions
- Identify vulnerable people / groups in the community
- Identify resources in the community available to assist during an emergency
- Provide contact details for the Community Response Group(CRG), key community resources, the Emergency Services, and County and District Councils.

2. COMMUNITY RESPONSE GROUP (CRG)

*Insert 3 names and contact details here. Mark with * the person who will coordinate, and be the point of contact with local authorities / emergency services.* Copies of this Emergency Plan are restricted, and will be held by the CRG members. The Plan will also be accessible to local authorities and emergency services via the Cumbria Community Messaging System (CCMS).

| Name | Tel: | Email: | Postal address |
|------|------|--------|----------------|
| * | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

3. POSSIBLE EMERGENCIES AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment of the types of emergencies that would have an impact on our community and how local emergency planning could help. (*Example given below, insert examples for your community*)

| Type of emergency | Potential risks | Actions to address those risks |
|--|--|---|
| <i>Mains electricity power failure during cold weather conditions.</i> | <i>Residents with no access to power for a prolonged period of time. Most vulnerable are those with only electric power, heat, and cooking facilities. Also older residents, the sick, and very young are most at risk in cold conditions.</i> | <i>Identify residents most at risk. Activate 'telephone tree' to check on residents. Open up Place of Safety (Village Hall) for hot refreshments and information point. Coordinate hot refreshments delivery to housebound residents.</i> |

| Type of emergency | Potential risks | Actions to address those risks |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

4. ACTIVATION OF THE PLAN

This plan will be activated when an emergency has occurred or if warnings are received, prior to an anticipated event. It will also be activated when emergency services need support or are not able to attend immediately e.g. in severe weather.

If this is the case, the CRG will assess the situation, ring Emergency Services if necessary, and consult with the District Council (see contact below). The CRG will then put all or part of the Plan into effect as appropriate.

5. COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Volunteers have indicated what tasks they may be prepared to carry out if an emergency occurs and what resources they can offer. *(Add names etc in the table below, to be contacted by CRG as needed.)*

| Name | Contact | Offer of help / resources |
|------|---------|---------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

The information in this list is restricted to the Community Response Group. It is not for general distribution. Unrestricted copies of the Plan may be made available by deleting this contact list before distribution.

An **electronic** copy of the **unrestricted emergency plan** will also be made accessible to local authorities and emergency services via the secure Cumbria Community Messaging System (CCMS) - contact ACTion with Communities in Cumbria for details of how to do this.

Place of Safety:

District councils are responsible for setting up a central rest centre during an emergency. However, it may be necessary to set up a temporary place of safety within the community e.g. for visitors or for people evacuated from their homes. In our community, the place of safety will be *(insert place)*. The CRG will contact the keyholder and other volunteers as necessary.

During an emergency, volunteers will keep a record of actions taken. These will be entered in to a central log, kept by the CRG, so that they can be evaluated, and the plan altered if necessary. Information can be entered at the time, or directly after the emergency.

6. COMMUNICATION AND CONTACTS

Contact details for statutory authorities, emergency services can be found below.

| Organisation | Tel: | Website / Email: |
|--|---------------|--|
| Emergency Services | 999 | |
| District Council: <i>(insert name)</i> | | |
| Daytime | | |
| Out of hours (if different) | | |
| Cumbria County Council: (in case of concern for vulnerable adults or children) | | |
| Daytime | 01228 606060 | www.cumbria.gov.uk |
| Out of hours (if different) | | |
| Highways Hotline: | 0845 609 6609 | |
| NHS: | | www.nhs.uk |
| Environment Agency: | | |
| General Enquiries | 03708 506 506 | enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk |
| Floodline (24 hr) | 0345 988 1188 | www.gov.uk/flood |
| United Utilities: (24 hr - water) | 0345 672 3723 | www.unitedutilities.com |
| Electricity North West: | 0800 195 4141 | www.enwl.co.uk |
| National Gas Emergency Service: (24hr - gas leak / emergency) | 0800 111 999 | www2.nationalgrid.com/UK/Safety/Gas-emergency |
| Parish Meeting Clerk/Chair: <i>(insert name)</i> | | |
| Daytime | | |
| Out of hours (if different) | | |
| Local Place of Safety key holder: <i>(insert name – with person's permission)</i> | | |
| Daytime | | |
| Out of hours (if different) | | |

8. PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE

In order to keep this plan up to date, contact lists will be revised as needed, and the plan reviewed *(*how often and when)*, by *(* name of group)*.

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For more information please contact ACTION with Communities in Cumbria on Tel: 01228 817224 or visit our website: www.cumbriaaction.org.uk

