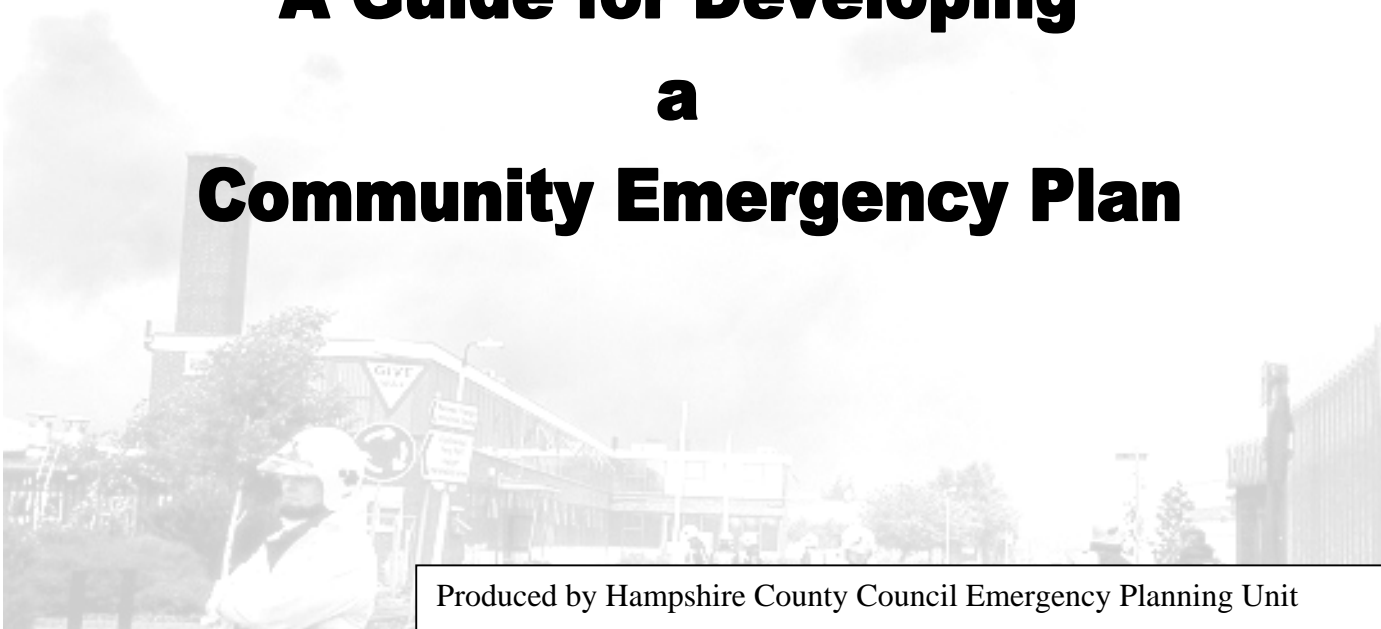




Is your Community prepared for an Emergency?

A Guide for Developing a Community Emergency Plan



Produced by Hampshire County Council Emergency Planning Unit



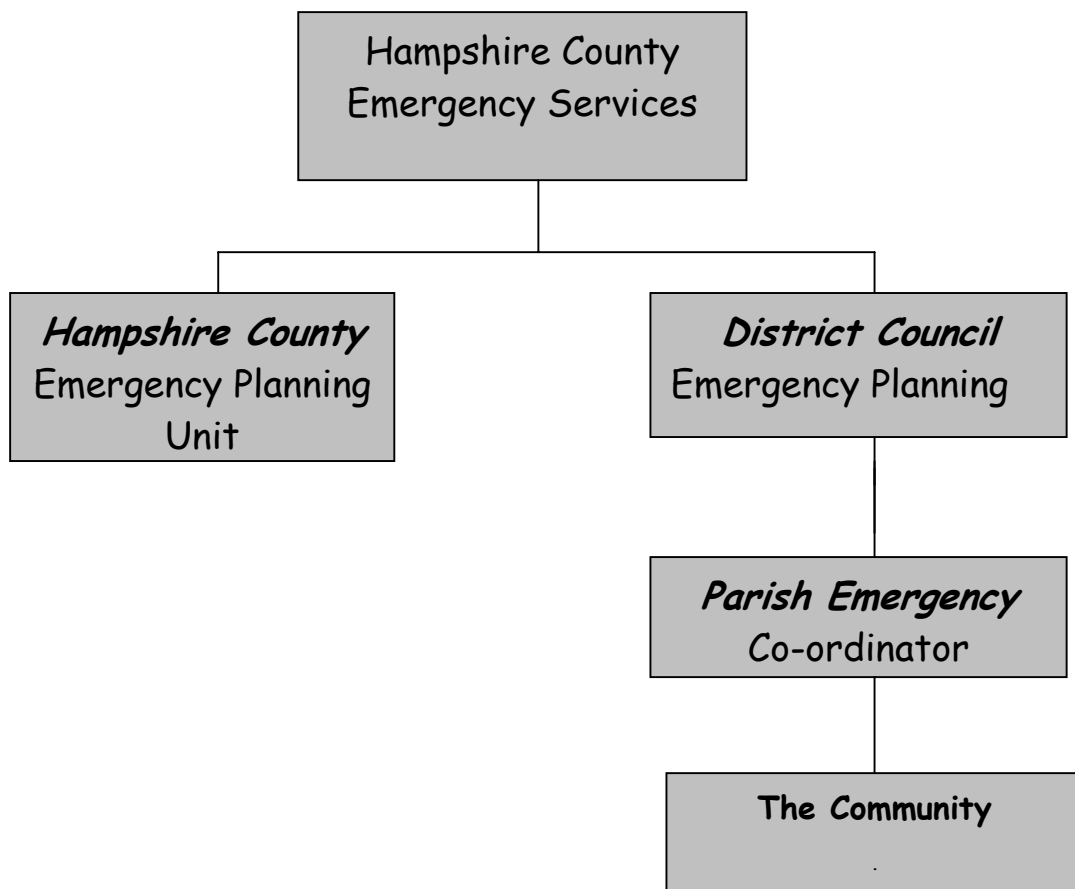
Hampshire
County Council

The Emergency Planning Unit would like to acknowledge the contribution of Norfolk Major Incident Team in preparing this guide.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 There is no statutory responsibility for town and parish councils to plan for, respond to, or recover from emergencies. However it is good practice for communities to identify hazards and make simple plans on how they may respond when faced with an emergency.
- 1.2 This document does not place any formal requirement on town and parish council to make emergency plans. Any participation by the Parish/Town council is purely voluntary.
- 1.3 It should also be recognised that the Parish/Town council is not an emergency service. It is not trained, equipped, empowered or resourced to carry out the functions of an emergency service. The response should generally be confined to looking after the welfare of people in the community or helping to maintain the infrastructure.
- 1.4 Whilst Hampshire County Council Emergency Planning Unit and the District Emergency Planning Liaison officers will provide advice and assistance in preparing emergency plans, the completion and maintenance of the plan by the town or parish council remains the responsibility of that town/parish council.
- 1.5 This plan is generic and can be applied to any town/parish council in Hampshire. No changes should be made to the framework without first consulting with County Emergency Planning Officer.
- 1.6 This Emergency Guidance is intended as general information about planning for emergencies. To the extent provided by law Hampshire County Council excludes any liability arising from the use of these plans. Nothing in these plans removes the requirement to have adequate insurance in place.

2. Community Emergency Structure



During a major emergency the Emergency Services will lead the operational response.

As the structure suggests the County and District Councils provide support to the Emergency Services. They also undertake a number of actions specific to them.

The Emergency Co-ordinator for your Parish would enhance the link from the community to the response via the District Council and the role of the Parish is to provide self-help and support the District/County Emergency Planning Officers.

3. Why Plan?

Any emergency can have a real impact on the well-being of your community. The emergency services, District/County Council and other professionals may well find themselves overloaded and not able to support you immediately. Even after some time the support from other agencies may be limited.

It would help them and those living or working in your community, particularly the vulnerable, if you could promote or activate some self-help. Indeed the value of planning at the community level cannot be under-estimated.

So what emergencies may severely disrupt your community?

Well, they can occur due to:

- *Natural Occurrence*
- *Human Error, or*
- *Criminal Act*

Examples include:

- *Flooding*
- *Fire*
- *Extreme Weather*
- *Failure of Gas, Water, Electricity or Telephones*
- *Chemical Spill*
- *Transport Accident/Incident e.g. Aircraft, Shipping, Road, Rail*
- *Disease*

4. What are the possible consequences of an emergency?

If an emergency effects your community you can expect some of the following consequences to occur. They may be short term or in many case the consequences can last for years after the emergency.

- *Injury or loss of life*

- *People needing support, welfare and care*
- *Environmental damage*
- *Loss or damage to property*
- *Possible evacuation*
- *Contamination of air, ground or sea*
- *Loss or disruption of the transport infrastructure*
- *Loss of power*
- *Loss of water*
- *Disruption*
- *Loss of communications - telephone/radio/TV*
- *Media intrusion*
- *Loss/disruption to local business and economy*
- *Spotlight on the community*

5. How can the Parish/Town Council help the community?

Obviously the council will look to professional responders to provide help but if the emergency is widespread or complex and the emergency responders are very busy help may not be immediately available or may be a long time in coming. When it does eventually come it may be limited.

The following list is not exhaustive but gives an idea of the kind of help that may be provided:

- *By identifying local risks, resources and vulnerable groups*
- *By using local resources to help in the response by providing support to emergency services*
- *By helping those that are vulnerable and by providing care, support, information or practical help*
- *By initiating a crisis management group to provide a point of contact and determine priorities*
- *Maintaining communications within the community and with the District Council*
- *Managing the response of Parish voluntary organisations*
- *Representing the community*
- *Assisting with community recovery*
- *Assisting with managing emergency funds*

6. Preparing the Community Emergency Plan

In an emergency situation anyone should be able to pick up the plan and activate it. It should therefore be:

- *Simple to understand*
- *Easy to follow*
- *Concise and to the point*
- *Kept updated - particularly contact details*
- *Aimed purely at the Parish/Town level i.e. be realistic about what the plan can achieve.*
- *Recognise that other plans and arrangements exist and that the Parish/Town Plan is complimentary to these.*

7. Plan Guide

Use this guide to complete the plan template. The guide provides a description of the relevant part of the plan and the requirements.

7.1 Parish/Town

The recognised name of your Parish, Town or Community

7.2 Borough/District

The Borough or District Council which your area sits in.

7.3 The Emergency Plan Co-ordinator/Deputy

The Emergency Co-ordinator is the key focal point in the community for planning and responding to an emergency.

The Emergency Co-ordinator must:

- *Be responsible for the completion and maintenance of the Community Emergency Plan.*

- *Provide the focal point for the community in response to an emergency.*
- *Provide the point of contact for the District Emergency Liaison Officer.*

The Emergency Co-ordinator should:

- *Reside in the community.*
- *Have the backing of the Town/Parish Council to represent the community.*
- *Have a good understanding of the community and surrounding area*
- *Be able to activate the support of the community and speak on behalf the community.*
- *Ensure that the identification of the vulnerable is a principle aim.*
- *Ensure that the vulnerable are a priority.*
- *Ensure that communications are maintained within the Town/Parish and with the District Liaison Officer wherever possible.*
- *Ensure that confidentiality is maintained where necessary.*
- *Be covered by insurance for making decisions affecting the community.*
- *Consider the assembly of a Council Community Crisis Team.*

7.4 Effective Date

The date when the plan was last updated.

7.5 Distribution List

The distribution list identifies who has a copy of the plan. This is important in knowing who to inform when there are any amendments to the plan. When new plans are distributed the holders should be notified to destroy old copies.

7.6 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the plan describes precisely what it is trying to achieve and the objectives show what specific tasks need to be undertaken to meet the aim.

7.7 Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment

Definitions

'Hazard'	Is anything that can cause harm to your community.
'Risk'	Is the chance "high or low" , that someone or something in your community will be harmed by the hazard.
'Risk Assessment'	Is the process of identifying the hazards present within your community, and an estimate of the risks involved, having taken into account any precautions that are already in place.

There are many hazards that may disrupt your community, these could possibly include:-

- *Flooding*
- *Utility failure (electricity, water, gas, telephones)*
- *Fire or explosion*
- *Transport accident (road, rail, air, sea)*

- *Extreme weather*
- *Disease*

The risk assessment analysis in the Plan Template lists a number of hazards that could impact on your community, any mitigation in place or possible and the Risk Matrix score.

You will need to consider and add to the table, any additional hazards that are identified in your community.

Hazard	In this column list the hazards that have been identified in your community. This list will need to be reviewed and updated regularly.
Hazard Impact	<p>List the physical disruption that may be caused. Consider any vulnerable members of the community i.e. Care homes, Schools etc.</p> <p>e.g. Flooding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loss of access and utilities (electricity, phones, etc.) ▪ Water damage to homes, and buildings, ▪ Pool lane prone to flooding including the location of the care home.
Mitigation In Place	<p>List what you currently do that prevents or reduces the likelihood and or the impact of the hazard on your community</p> <p>e.g. Flooding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitoring Flood warnings issued by the Environment Agency
Mitigation Possible	<p>List what additional actions can be taken to prevent or reduce the likelihood or the impact of the hazard on the community</p> <p>e.g. Flooding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Floodgates / sandbags stored and ready for use.

Risk Matrix Score:	As described below.
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The Risk Matrix, shown below, will help you to identify the higher priority risks for your community. When you consider the score you should think about any mitigation currently in place.

Risk Matrix

↑ Increasing Impact	B High Impact Low Likelihood	A High Impact High Likelihood
	D Low Impact Low Likelihood	C Low Impact High Likelihood
	⇒ Increasing Likelihood	

By determining the likelihood of the hazard occurring (either **high** or **low**), then determining the impact that the hazard will have on your community, its possible to rate the risk as A, B, C, or D.

For example:

The likelihood of flooding in your community: **LOW (B or D)**
 The impact flooding would have on your community: **HIGH (A or B)**

The resultant score would be: **B**

When completed, the Risk Assessment shows which are the highest risk to your community. **A** being the highest priority risks and **D** being the lower priority risks.

7.8 Community Resources

- *What resources can be called on to support the local community?*
- *Consider how the resources would be activated, particularly out of hours and at weekends.*
- *The list does not need to include every facility or resource. Do not aim to audit and include everything in the Parish. Keep it relevant and concise including only the major resources that would be available to you. Some principal headings for your more obvious resources are shown but remember the more you have the more you will need to update. Keep it simple.*

The risk assessment process you undertake may indicate that specific resources may be required e.g. if your community is isolated and not easily reached then 4x4 vehicles and other vehicles of that nature may be priority. On the other hand if your parish is predominantly urban in nature this may not be such a priority or indeed may not need to be considered.

Therefore the resources contained in the plan will depend on:

- a) the type of risk anticipated such as flooding, road closures, utility failure etc which might benefit from certain resources being readily available.
- b) the nature of the town or parish, such as how close it is to larger urban areas which could provide support.
- c) the community profile, which may include a significant disabled or elderly population, large numbers of unoccupied homes, a special needs facility, etc.

7.9 Vulnerable Groups

There are a number of groups of people who, in a crisis, should be considered as potentially vulnerable and a priority for support and the deployment of resources:

- *The elderly who may not be very mobile.*
- *Those who may physically disabled.*
- *Those with learning difficulties.*
- *Parents and others looking after very young children.*
- *Those who are unable to see or have a severe sight impairment.*
- *Those who are unable to hear or have a severe hearing impairment.*

It may not be appropriate or practical to identify vulnerable individuals in advance as this will be constantly changing and there is a need to discrete in some cases. It should be possible to identify vulnerable groups in advance e.g. sheltered housing complexes, accommodation for those with learning difficulties etc.

It would be good practice to make an offer to help in a crisis to vulnerable groups and to identify individuals who may need help as a priority.

7.10 Communications

Identify in advance how you could maintain contact with the community and share information with them.

What methods for sharing information are available?

- *Notice Boards*
- *Meetings*
- *Telephone ring round or cascade*
- *Website information - Parish/Town/District*
- *E-mail distribution*

- *Volunteer groups*

These methods would be helpful to the responding agencies to communicate to a significant amount of the population as quickly as possible.

What can we do to maintain communications if we lose telephones?

- *This may not be significant enough to be an emergency situation unless it effects the vulnerable*
- *Maintain physical contact with vulnerable groups/individuals*
- *Consider volunteer groups such as Raynet (Radio Amateurs Emergency Network) activated via District Council.*
- *Listen to radio/television information.*
- *Consider how information can be shared e.g. via schools, shopping centres, libraries, faith groups*
- *Mobile telephones may not work.*

7.11 Your response to an emergency - things to do

The following are some of the actions that should be considered following an emergency. A checklist is included in the plan for you to follow.

Firstly, if you become aware of an emergency from a source other than the County/District Emergency Planners or the Police, do not assume that they know about it. Make sure that the police and your District Council Liaison officer are aware.

Other Points to consider;

- *Keep a record of your key decisions, actions and conversations on the log sheet at the back of plan.*
- *As a priority start to contact other members of the community that need to be alerted.*
- *Obtain what advice and information is being provide by the emergency services in respect of action to be taken.*

- *Formulate the crisis management team if required. The agenda for the first meeting should include:*

- a) Briefing of the current situation. If possible the briefing should be provided by a member of the emergency services or the District emergency Planning Officer.
- b) Immediate actions to support the response to the emergency.
- c) Future actions to aid the recovery.
- d) Time and date of next meeting

7.12 Key Contacts

This contact list should remain as the last part of the plan so it is both easy to update and easy to find in the event of an emergency. The contacts should be regularly updated i.e. 6 monthly.

7.13 Log Sheet

This is also at the back of the plan so that it can be easily found. It is essential to keep a record of actions and the time that they were taken.

This will serve as an aide memoir to help you keep track of things and act as a briefing note when updating others. It also serves as proof of what you have done.

7.14 Geographical map of your community

Include a small scale map of the community in the plan and ensure that larger Ordnance Survey or similar map is available in the event of an emergency .