



PRINCIPLES – APPROACH – GOOD PRACTICE

Building Resilient Communities

SCOTTISH GUIDANCE ON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

May 2019



Executive Summary

Community resilience is defined by the Scottish Government as:

“Communities and individuals harnessing resources and expertise to help themselves prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies, in a way that complements the work of the emergency responders.”

It is based on a culture of preparedness, in which individuals, communities and organisations take responsibility to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

Preparing Scotland, Scottish Guidance on Resilience (2016)¹ states that all responders should support the development of community resilience and should apply and encourage an innovative approach. Building community resilience should not be seen as an add-on, but should be carried out as part of responders’ day-to-day activities. The potential return on investment for responders in promoting community resilience is high, as they can unlock skills, knowledge and resources held by the entire community.

This guidance recommends that responders consider best practice, in order to maximise the effectiveness of their work with individuals, community groups, private sector businesses and voluntary sector organisations, to help make themselves more resilient. In line with other Preparing Scotland guidance, it is drawn from existing good practice in Scottish communities.

Supporting materials, including a number of good practice case studies, a range of useful resources and materials, and The Guide to Emergency Planning for Community Groups, 2019² are available at [ReadyScotland.org/my-community](https://www.readyscotland.org/my-community)

It is important that responders take a joined-up approach to building community resilience, and that it is recognised as not being the responsibility of one organisation alone, or of a single functional team within any organisation. It is recommended that responders consider the following roles:

Scottish Government (SG): Setting strategic direction, determining national policy, developing national resources and carrying out national-level analytical work.

Regional Resilience Partnerships (RRPs): Bringing together all the relevant organisations in an area to develop an effective approach to dealing with emergencies. They have robust plans in place to respond to all kinds of events. These plans are regularly tested in joint exercises and during real emergencies.

¹ Scottish Government, (2016), Preparing Scotland is underpinned the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (the Act) and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (the Regulations). Legislative requirements of responders are dealt with by other aspects of Preparing Scotland, notably the “hub” document which sets out the philosophy, principles, structures and regulatory duties behind the approach to emergency planning in Scotland. Available at <https://www.readyscotland.org/media/1457/preparing-scotland-hub-updated-published-version-august-2018.pdf>

² <https://www.readyscotland.org/my-community/creating-a-community-emergency-plan/>

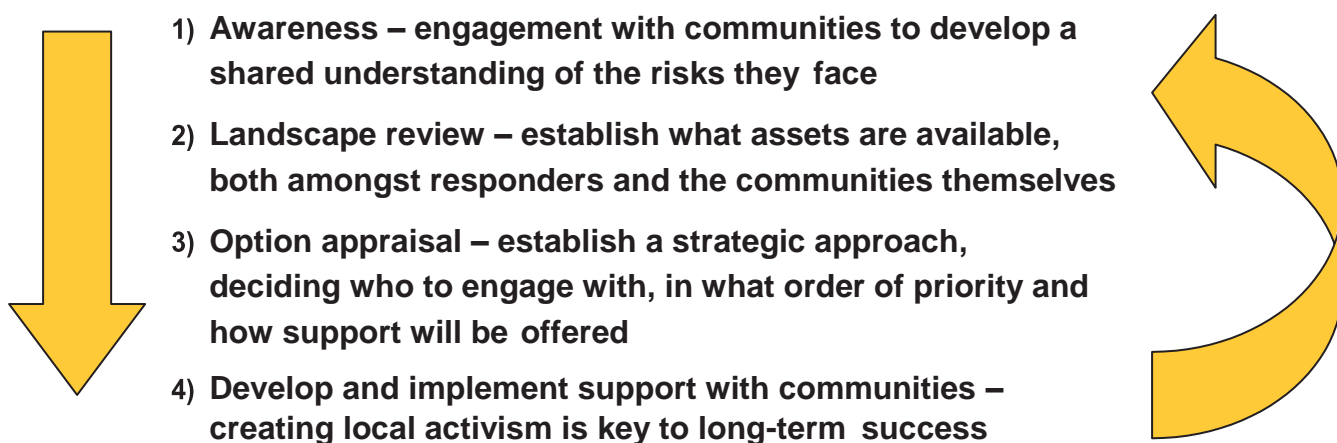
Local Authorities: Leading on engagement with communities, promoting and supporting community emergency planning, promoting resilience education through schools, supporting local training and exercising with community groups.

All responders (including voluntary sector): Contributing to public information campaigns, services aimed at household and individual resilience, initiatives such as first aid training and participating in education initiatives.

This guidance advocates taking an approach to building community resilience which is based on the concept of community development. This means providing individuals and groups of people with the knowledge and skills they need to effect change in their own communities, through a process of engagement, education, empowerment, enablement and evaluation.

Responders promoting community resilience on a local level should consider how their work can be integrated with valued local initiatives in related policy areas such as community safety, education, health promotion, and regeneration. These are usually coordinated through community planning partnerships, which have existing structures and processes for community engagement and which can support resilience development.

In line with the wider approach advocated by Preparing Scotland, work to build community resilience should be consistent with the principles and main activities of Integrated Emergency Management. A structured, four stage process is recommended:



It is good practice to carry out appropriate evaluation of all community resilience initiatives, and to share findings in order to promote learning. A tool kit to help with this is available at: <https://www.readyscotland.org/media/1424/cr-toolkit.pdf>

Examples of good practice in building community resilience are available at [ReadyScotland.org/my-community](https://www.readyscotland.org/my-community)

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Introduction

Introduction: Community Resilience in a Resilient Scotland

What is community resilience?

Preparing Scotland, Scottish Guidance on Resilience, (2016), defines resilience as:

“the capacity of an individual, community or system to adapt in order to sustain an acceptable level of function, structure and identity”.

For resilience professionals, this usually means thinking about how to sustain the range of interdependent infrastructure and systems which support the functioning of a community, and particularly, their ability to continue to deliver their priorities, and to “bounce back” after being hit by an emergency or disruptive challenge.

In this context, community resilience refers to the elements of resilience that are present in communities, organisations, households and individuals, their ability to cooperate with each other and the extent to which they are integrated with public policy and service provision. It is defined by the Scottish Government as:

“Communities and individuals harnessing resources and expertise to help themselves prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies, in a way that complements the work of the emergency responders”.³

Community resilience is based on a culture of preparedness, in which individuals, communities and organisations take responsibility to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. It has evolved as a way of thinking from a number of academic disciplines, notably ecology and systems engineering, and more recently has emerged as one of the most important concepts in the literature of resilience management.

It can be seen as being made up of three elements:

1. **Awareness** by individuals of the risks which may affect them or their community and what they can do to prepare for, respond to and recover from them if they happen
2. **Assets (including resources, skills and networks)** which exist at individual, community and intra-community levels
3. **Propensity to Act** – a motivation and confidence that translates awareness and assets into action to help build resilience

³ See Annex [1] for further information.

A number of voluntary sector organisations exist which have resilience and humanitarian aid as part of their core remit. Other voluntary sector groups, including social care and faith groups, adapt their roles to meet the needs of communities faced by challenging circumstances. In addition, community resilience often emerges spontaneously in response to emergencies of varying scale and type. It can be seen in rural communities which are frequently cut off by bad weather, in neighbourhoods where people join forces to clear ice and snow from paths and drives, in areas hit by floods, and in community solidarity in tragic circumstances such as Lockerbie in 1988 and Dunblane in 1996. All these types of resilience are important.

The recommended approach to building community resilience is focused on building capacity among individuals and communities before emergencies happen, in order to ensure that their resources can be brought into play as early and as effectively as possible. But it is also acknowledged that direct experience of an emergency situation such as flooding develops individual and collective desire to become more resilient in the period soon after. Authorities need to be aware of this desire and use the opportunity to encourage and support resilience development.

Most references to “communities” in this guidance mean geographical communities (i.e. a place – a village or neighbourhood). This makes sense in a resilience management context because the consequences of most emergencies tend to have a geographical focus. However it can also be useful to think of people being part of other types of communities, for example, workers in a particular business, members of a faith group, ethnicity or diaspora, or people with a shared social or leisure interest.

Communities are diverse and are made up of diverse individuals. This diversity affects the way emergencies impact at community, individual and household levels. The consequences of different emergencies have the potential to make different people vulnerable in different ways. The importance of understanding this diversity and recognising that vulnerability is dependent on context is discussed in *Preparing Scotland: Care for people affected by emergencies*⁴.

Resilience and emergency management staff, working in the statutory and voluntary sectors, are a particularly important example of a practitioner community focused on resilience. Experience has shown that an emergency can bring people together as a community in challenging circumstances, if they feel that they are “in it together”.

Approaches to building community resilience will be different in different places, and should reflect the characteristics of communities, their different risk environments, and local decisions about priorities. In practice, community resilience will reflect the diversity of Scottish communities and the risks which they face.

⁴ <http://www.readyscotland.org/ready-government/preparing-scotland>

Purpose of this Guidance

Preparing Scotland states that:

“All responders should support the development of community resilience and associated activity, applying and encouraging an innovative approach throughout.”

Building community resilience is an important element in the approach recommended to responders in Preparing Scotland. It is widely recognised as good practice, particularly as it has huge potential to support and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of other resilience activities and improve outcomes for communities and individuals.

The main readership of this document will be Scotland’s emergency managers and resilience professionals, working in Category 1 and 2 responder organisations as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). These include local authorities, the police, fire and rescue service, ambulance service, and health boards. It will also be of interest to Category 2 Responders and numerous voluntary sector organisations, amongst others, who continue to be the major source of Scotland’s resilience expertise and to be at the forefront in coping with the consequences of emergencies. It may well also be of use to others who have an interest in promoting more resilient communities in fields including, but not limited to, community engagement and community safety.

It suggests how they can work with individuals, community groups, private sector businesses, voluntary sector organisations and Category 1 and 2 responders, to help them make communities more resilient. In line with other Preparing Scotland guidance⁵ it is not intended to be an operations manual. It does not offer all the answers, and it is not prescriptive. It is drawn from existing good practice in Scottish communities and provides a basis for innovation, that builds on what we know works.

Supporting materials have been published online. These include The Guide to Emergency Planning for Community Groups which is published on ReadyScotland.org/MyCommunity, and is targeted at community activists. Additional materials and resources can be found on ReadyScotland.org for communities, and the ScoRDS.gov.uk for local authority partners and other interested stakeholders.

⁵ Preparing Scotland (PS) guidance is set out as a “hub & spokes”, in which the central hub, “Preparing Scotland: Scottish Guidance on Preparing for Emergencies” incorporates:

- the philosophy of resilience in Scotland
- the principles that underpin effective Integrated Emergency Management (IEM)
- governance structures
- regulatory guidance and recommended good practice
- clear signposting to the detailed “spokes”.

This document is the spoke that provides detailed guidance on community resilience.

Characteristics of resilient communities

In developing policies and approaches to build community resilience it is recommended that responders consider referring to the following characteristics, which are frequently associated with community resilience. Actions aimed at promoting risk awareness or any of the characteristics below are likely to be of value, although they are best delivered as part of a structure.

Individuals and households

- Are aware of the main risks which affect them and have plans in place to cope in an emergency
- Have access to clear relevant advice about how to prepare for emergencies, and what actions to take should they occur
- Take sensible precautions in case of emergency (such as preparing an emergency grab-bag, stocking up on basic essentials at home, or making preparations to protect their belongings from flooding)
- Young people learn about resilience in both formal and informal settings, to prepare them for the challenges of life in the 21st century
- Are capable and confident to safely offer help to others in need, free from the fear of unjustified issues of liability or concern about possible legal action

Voluntary and community groups

- Develop local community emergency plans which set out how communities will work together to prepare for, respond to and recover from key risks
- Know how they can act to help others in the event of an emergency, and are prepared to take action
- Are willing to make their capabilities known to public sector agencies, and are prepared to deploy if required
- Are willing and able, where appropriate, to work alongside responder organisations to prepare for emergencies
- Take part in joint training and exercising and in business continuity planning where necessary
- Have robust and relevant business continuity plans in place to enable continued operation in an emergency, and help others to do the same

Commercial enterprises and service providers

- Businesses and service providers, whether public or private sector, are organisations where people collaborate and have interests in common. Although they may differ significantly from informal, local communities, viewing them from a community perspective can be valuable

- Organisations that have business continuity management arrangements will be more resilient. (Detailed guidance on business continuity management is provided in Preparing Scotland: Having and Promoting Business Resilience⁶)
- Business continuity planning has tended to be activity focused, emphasising restoring processes that have been disrupted. Engaging with the different communities within an organisation will greatly extend this approach by promoting a culture of resilience
- Organisations that promote resilience in their workforce will enhance their own resilience, that of their staff and that of other communities of which their staff are part
- Organisations that have considered how they can contribute to the resilience of the communities in which they operate will strengthen local community resilience

⁶ <https://www.readyscotland.org/ready-government/preparing-scotland>

Principles and Approach

Principles and Approach

Building community resilience into policy and practice

Using joined-up methods

It is important that community resilience is recognised as not being the responsibility of one organisation alone, or of a single functional team within any organisation. All organisations which have a stake in building community resilience should be involved, and their responsibilities should be clearly defined. Within organisations, those services which have important roles are not limited to those with lead responsibility for emergency planning or resilience. For example, within a local authority, important contributions can be made by:

- Social care and policy teams with an awareness of demographics, location of vulnerable people in the community and other socio-economic analysis, and a direct link to members of communities
- Sustainable development teams which have a remit around climate change adaptation
- Community engagement teams which have existing links with communities and a capacity building agenda
- Geographical Information Services teams, often based in planning departments
- Roads departments, which will have knowledge of gritting routes

There are potential roles for all emergency responder organisations to play in building community resilience. It is important that the approach taken is strategic and coordinated at the appropriate levels in order to ensure that the benefit of shared experience is maximised, and duplication avoided. It is recommended that responders consider the following roles, which are based on practice that has proved effective:

Scottish Government: Setting strategic direction, determining national policy, developing national resources and carrying out national level analytical work.

RRPs: Bringing together all the relevant organisations in an area to develop an effective approach to dealing with emergencies. They have robust plans in place to respond to all kinds of events. These plans are regularly tested in joint exercises and during real emergencies.

Local Authorities: Leading on engagement with communities, promoting and supporting community emergency planning, promoting resilience education through schools, supporting local training and exercising with community groups.

All responders (including voluntary sector): Contributing to public information campaigns, services aimed at household and individual resilience, initiatives such as first aid training, participating in education initiatives through schools.

It is as important to consider the source of a message as it is to consider its content and recipients. Responders should consider that they may not be the best source of information or advice and should consider working with voluntary sector intermediaries to ensure that the organisations that engage with communities are those which can do so most effectively.

This guidance advocates taking an approach to building community resilience which is based on the idea of community development. This means providing individuals and groups of people with the knowledge and skills they need to effect change in their own communities, through a process of engagement, education, empowerment, enablement and evaluation. When planning initiatives designed to improve community resilience it is helpful to consider the extent to which these “5 E’s”⁷ are used.



⁷ <https://www.readyscotland.org/media/1411/resilient-communities-leaflet.pdf>

Empowerment

Responders should ensure that individuals and communities feel empowered to take action. This may require some cultural change both on behalf of responders and communities. Communities should be aware of the risks that face them, the actions that they can take individually and collectively to prepare, respond and recover.

Critically, through engagement, encouragement and education, responders should foster a culture in which individuals and communities feel they have an opportunity and responsibility to take action.

Engagement

Dialogue and engagement⁸ between responder organisations and communities is at the heart of this approach. Responders often play the role of experts, disseminating information to communities. Engagement means that they should develop an approach based on listening to individual and community concerns, and focus on helping to shape and influence their decisions.

Education

Building more resilient communities involves cultural change. While there are things that can be done in the short term, it is also a long term project, in which learning plays a key role. Ready for Emergencies⁹, Education Scotland's online resilience resource for schools, provides the resources, including 'Learning Journeys', images and video content which teachers should use to integrate resilience into the Curriculum for Excellence. Educating individuals and communities about resilience should be embedded into their everyday lives and should connect with them. Education about resilience is most effective when it is linked to real life experiences – either emergencies which have been experienced by pupils or current news stories.

Enabling

The involvement of the voluntary sector is crucial to ensuring the resilience of communities, and voluntary sector organisations will be supported to collaborate effectively and consistently with emergency responders. The Voluntary Sector Resilience Partnership brings together voluntary and public sector response organisations and encourages collaboration and improvement. The Resilient Communities Conference involves a broad

⁸ The National Standards for Community Engagement, which provide best practice guidance for engagement between communities and public agencies, are available at: <http://www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards/>
The principles of the Standards are:

- Inclusion: people and organisations that are affected by the engagement should be identified and involved.
- Support: barriers to participation will be identified and overcome
- Planning: the engagement has a clear purpose, based on a shared understanding of community needs and ambitions
- Working together: all stakeholders should work effectively together to achieve the aims of the engagement
- Methods: methods of engagement used should be fit for purpose
- Communications: the people, organisations and communities affected by the engagement should be communicated with clearly and regularly
- Accurate, timely information is crucial for effective engagement.

⁹ <https://www.readyscotland.org/ready-government/education/>

spectrum of resilience stakeholders, working together on finding innovative solutions to common problems.

Evaluating

Resilience initiatives should be evidence-based in design, and routinely evaluated in order to identify best practice and key learning points, and guide future work. Good practice in evaluation is promoted with all initiatives with which we engage. A tool kit to help with this is available at: <https://www.readyscotland.org/media/1424/cr-toolkit.pdf>

Integrated Emergency Management

Preparing Scotland doctrine on emergency planning and response is based on the principles of Integrated Emergency Management (IEM). The main principles and activities involved in IEM are described in detail in Preparing Scotland. These also apply to building community resilience. It is underpinned by five main activities:

- Assessment
- Prevention
- Preparation
- Response
- Recovery

Assessment

Resilience initiatives should be forward looking and based on a proportionate assessment of risk.

A sensible understanding of risks, which will encourage communities to take action, should be developed through a dialogue between local responders and community members.

Through engagement and education, individuals and communities should be encouraged to take ownership of the process by which they understand the risks which are relevant to them. This requires advice from responders, which can be a very valuable asset to individuals and communities, and an element of bottom-up analysis by communities which will be able to identify risks relevant to the community that may not be on a responder's radar. Whilst not always "major" risks, these may drivers for action within a community.

Responders currently work together to analyse risk on a regional basis. The results of this analysis are published in regional-level "Community Risk Registers". However these can be technical and consequently can seem remote from communities. They therefore have significant limitations as a tool for engaging or educating communities. To rely on these may run the risk of alienating the people responders are trying to influence. Community Risk Registers should be interpreted for communities by responders to clarify for them what risks have the potential to affect them, and what their impacts might be. Responders should use non-technical language, be clear about the geographical impact of risks in a way which communities will recognise.

Feedback from communities about how risks impact is essential in encouraging them to take action, and can be useful in identifying actions for responder organisations. For example, a recent community emergency planning process found that an electricity sub-station was located in a flood plain area. This intelligence from the community has fed into the repair and maintenance cycle of the electricity company who will in due course relocate the sub-station to a safer location. The Guide to Emergency Planning for Community Groups takes community groups through a community level risk assessment.

Prevention

In line with Preparing Scotland, this guidance mainly focuses on building capacity to respond to and recover from the consequences of emergencies rather than preventing them from happening. However, there is significant scope to consider how improved community engagement can inform measures to prevent certain emergencies. For example, through encouraging and empowering communities to report blocked culverts and poorly maintained river banks to their local authority, or through dialogue with providers of other services, such as roads and utilities which might inform their investment programmes.

Preparation

Preparation includes planning as well as training and exercising. Community resilience should engage as great a range as possible of individuals, community groups and private sector organisations in thinking about what action they can take to prepare for emergencies. Advice for members of the public on the measures which can be taken at individual, household and community level is available at Ready Scotland. Examples of good practice are also included in of this document.

Response and recovery

The success of response and recovery activities will be influenced by the preparations carried out in advance by responders, communities and individuals.

Response and recovery can include a range of diverse activities, often moving at different paces and frequently overlapping. Over time, the balance of activities is likely to shift from an initial focus on response to a longer term one of recovery, but it is important that recovery considerations are an integral part of the response from the beginning of an emergency.

Building a more resilient community is one of the outcomes which responders should seek to achieve from a recovery process by working with affected communities to ensure they understand and take what measures they can individually and collectively to help them cope better with future emergencies.

Principles of Integrated Emergency Management

Consequences not causes and adaptability

Should be the focus, with approaches to specific risks identified where appropriate

The motivation for communities to become involved in building community resilience is often a result of their having experienced a specific emergency, such as an extreme weather event

or flood. A desire to protect against similar events can lead to a tendency for communities to want to plan for a repeat of the incident that they have most recently experienced.

While such experiences can be used as an opportunity to engage with the community on their priority, responders should encourage communities to take an approach which focuses on the consequences of emergencies rather than their causes. Flexible and adaptable arrangements will enable an effective joint response to any crisis, whether foreseen or unforeseen.

Community members may have detailed dynamic knowledge of: the geography of an area; community assets; and potential vulnerabilities, which are important advantages in achieving a flexible, adaptable response in an emergency.

Direction

Taking a strategic, Resilience Partnership (RP)¹⁰ level approach, with lead roles for local government and community based organisations.

RPs play a strong role in coordinating emergency planning, response and recovery activities in Scotland. Responder activities intended to promote community resilience may be most effectively coordinated at an RP level. This approach can ensure that activity is well informed by the risks faced in the RP area and will make the most of established networks and structures among responders, allowing resources to be used effectively and minimising duplication. Co-ordination and integration of resilience activities of voluntary sector organisations should be carried out at RP level. It should be recognised that different approaches, and paces of progress, may be used within a single RP area, particularly where these cover more than one local authority area, and depending on local risks, the characteristics of local communities, and varying priorities and institutional arrangements.

Because of their existing community engagement role, local authorities are often best placed with RPs to lead engagement with local community groups on resilience issues, particularly by supporting them in developing community emergency plans where they wish to do so. A number of good practice examples are available on page 18.

Integration and subsidiarity

Supporting community resilience should be a joined up, multi-agency activity. Building resilience should be carried out with communities in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect.

Local responders' IEM arrangements are the foundation of dealing with emergencies with control of operations being exercised at the lowest practical level. The co-ordination and support of local activity should be at the highest level required and both principles should be mutually reinforcing. It is therefore important that responders consider how best to develop links with communities at a variety of levels. For example, by establishing clear lines of communication between local community groups and local authorities, and by considering how voluntary sector organisations can be integrated into RRP structures.

¹⁰ The principal structure which supports multi-agency co-ordination of emergency management activity is the Regional Resilience Partnership. Currently there are three such groups in Scotland, in the North, East and West. These groups serve to bring together all the relevant organisations in an area to develop an effective approach in dealing with emergencies.

The Scottish Government wants to ensure that statutory and voluntary sector responders can work together effectively. Research and practical experience both point to the importance of prior engagement between organisations if they are to rely on each other during an emergency or period of major disruption. Integration depends on mutual understanding between responders and voluntary sector organisations. Voluntary sector organisations need to know what is required of them and how their work can contribute to the “big picture” of emergency preparedness, response and recovery. Responders need to know what capabilities are available in the voluntary sector, and to have confidence that the sector can deliver during an incident. Relationships between responders and voluntary sector organisations can be formalised in a Memorandum of Understanding or Partnership Agreement.

Initiatives aimed at building community resilience will work most effectively where they are not seen as being imposed top-down by responders, but are based on a shared understanding of risks and assets with communities, and where communities have an understanding of the risks that face them and a desire to take action to improve their own resilience. Clear lines of communication between responders and the community are important. Communities may also require effective coordination by responders, and access to advice and specialist support. Responders should consider where there is scope for community and voluntary sector groups to be involved in joint training and exercising.

Continuity

Building community resilience should be embedded in day-to-day preparation, response and recovery work.

The potential return on investment for responders in promoting community resilience is high, as they can unlock skills, knowledge and resources held by the entire community. Similarly, it is not necessary to set up new community groups which focus solely on resilience. In most cases, the most effective approach will be to embed resilience in the day-to-day activities carried out by individuals, households and existing community groups. Groups that are already active and organised will ordinarily be able to sustain resilience activity over a longer term.

Achieving effective engagement may require a change in perspective for responder agencies and revised ways of working by some communities. This changes the objective of engagement from bringing communities into a plan or programme already defined by the emergency responders to one of providing support to help them build capabilities on their own terms, including through existing community engagement activities such as regeneration projects or new projects dealing with specific identified risks.

Evaluation and sharing experience

It is good practice to carry out appropriate evaluation of all community resilience initiatives.

This should include gathering and assessing feedback as the initiative develops in order to identify what’s working well, and what should be done differently. This type of evaluation should focus on process rather than outcome. This is similar to the “lessons identified and learnt” process used in resilience development.

Responders should also look retrospectively at the extent to which the initiative has achieved the outcomes that were intended, identifying lessons for subsequent initiatives. Where possible evaluation findings should be published and disseminated to relevant stakeholders.

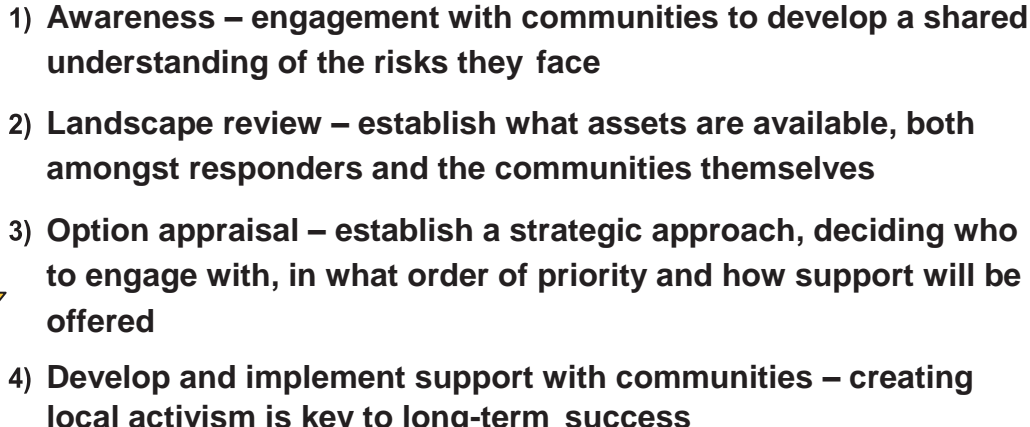
A [Community Resilience Toolkit](#)¹¹ has been designed for community resilience groups, or anyone thinking about setting one up, to guide them through the simple steps to help them explain and prove the difference their group makes and why it is important. It can help groups communicate with their wider communities, attract new members, obtain funding and support, and share good practice.

¹¹ <https://www.readyscotland.org/my-community/creating-a-community-emergency-plan/>

Good Practice

Recommended good practice

This section makes recommendations, based on existing good practice, for developing community resilience. It is structured around a four-step process:

- 
- 1) **Awareness – engagement with communities to develop a shared understanding of the risks they face**
 - 2) **Landscape review – establish what assets are available, both amongst responders and the communities themselves**
 - 3) **Option appraisal – establish a strategic approach, deciding who to engage with, in what order of priority and how support will be offered**
 - 4) **Develop and implement support with communities – creating local activism is key to long-term success**

Awareness – understanding and communicating risks

RPs and responder agencies are generally aware of the risks likely to have a significant impact in their area. Historical events are the best indicator of risks they face. Scotland is a relatively safe country, and if communities can prepare for events like flooding, disruption due to weather, or extended loss of power, this will help them to cope with other incidents they are likely to experience. Community Risk Registers are now mature documents – but are not widely known about or understood by the public. If individuals and local community groups are not aware of the risks they face then there will be little motivation for them to act.

RPs and responder organisations developing programmes to build community resilience should consider:

How they generate interest in this issue without causing undue alarm, bearing in mind that Scotland is a relatively safe country. Experience has shown that successful public communication on this issue can be structured around three key messages:

1. Emergencies happen, and will impact on everyone
2. There are straightforward steps that individuals and groups can take to help themselves and their communities and
3. Signposting to further [local] help and advice

It's important to be clear when promoting community resilience that communities and individuals are being asked to take steps that complement the work of emergency response organisations in partnership with them, not replace it.

It may be that interest stems directly from communities when they have experienced the consequences of an incident, such as flooding or a significant utilities failure. In this case the challenge will be to encourage them to use their energies to prepare for a broad range of consequences as opposed to focusing solely on the last incident

Once responders are ready to launch an initiative they should consider the following communication channels – both to raise risk awareness and to announce any proposed activity:

- Existing credible channels of communication such as council newsletters and websites
- Community facing-processes such as community planning and community safety processes and area networks
- Existing sources of information and advice, such as the Scottish Government's Ready Scotland website
- Working in partnership with other organisations, including schools, community councils, housing associations and other partnerships and voluntary sector groups, who have networks in communities

Sharing examples of good practice can be helpful in promoting involvement. Where communities can see the benefit of a community emergency plan or other initiative in a neighboring community they may be motivated to develop something which is appropriate to their area. There is also evidence that engaging in community resilience planning can in itself foster a sense of community by promoting:

- Shared identity among community members around awareness of hazards, assets and planning to pull together in a crisis
- Greater mutual understanding between community members
- Enhanced networks and social capital, within communities and with the responder community

Encouraging households to complete a household emergency plan, can improve household level resilience and encourage people to take the next step towards building resilience in their neighborhood. Working with young people, particularly through schools, can be a useful way to build awareness and a desire to take further action amongst individuals and families.

Landscape review – establishing what assets are available

In seeking to build community resilience it is important to establish what organisations are active in an area and try to identify both organisations and individuals that could “anchor” community resilience work in different communities. Responders should consider the contributions which could be made by:

- Voluntary sector organisations which have emergency response as part of their core remit. These can be national organisations such as British Red Cross or RVS, which have a footprint in communities locally, or local groups such as community flood groups
- Wider voluntary sector organisations which make an existing contribution to resilience, but for whom emergency response is not an existing core activity, such as residents’ associations
- Community safety organisations and groups such as the Scottish Community Safety Network, the local Community Safety Partnerships across Scotland and organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch Scotland
- Representative groups such as community councils and residents associations
- Voluntary sector organisations which work with vulnerable people such as lunch clubs for older people
- Organisations that may be able to provide particular assistance (e.g. social clubs or rugby clubs who could provide extra resources during severe conditions etc.)

It is also important to consider the role that existing community activists and elected members can play. Community activists, even if they are not currently engaged in community resilience activity, can provide a link between communities and responders. Elected members, both at local authority and community council levels, as elected representatives of their communities, can promote awareness of the concept of community resilience and act as a conduit for information between local authorities and communities. They should ensure that they are aware of the responsibilities of their Council under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) and have a good understanding of their role in terms of emergency planning. Guidance on the role of elected council members in resilience is available through Council Emergency Planning Units or through the [Briefing Note](#)¹² provided by the Improvement Service for Elected Members.

Once interested and willing groups have been identified, they should be encouraged to consider the assets which they have available to assist. The Guide to Emergency Planning for Community Groups takes interested groups through this process.

¹² http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/em_briefing_notes/em-briefing-civil-contingencies-2017.pdf

Option appraisal – establish a strategic approach to engagement

Responders should take a strategic view of how to prioritise their engagement with communities. It will not usually be appropriate to target all communities at once, as this would be difficult to resource and sustain. In practice, the best approach is likely to be a pragmatic one which focuses both on identifying opportunities to support local activism, and on working with those communities which have the most significant risk profiles and levels of vulnerability. In many areas it will make sense to take an approach which involves focusing **both** on:

Communities which may be more likely to self-start with involvement in community resilience activities, such as:

- Communities which have recently experienced the effects of relatively frequently occurring emergencies such as severe weather or flooding, which have raised awareness of the need for resilience
- Communities which have particularly strong social capital assets, such as active community councils, neighbourhood watch groups or residents associations

And communities which may be particularly vulnerable to the consequences of emergencies:

- Communities which are subject to particular risks, such as isolated areas, or places close to specific hazards (e.g. COMAH sites)
- Vulnerability can be exacerbated by individual or community level deprivation, or other social or demographic factors that mean that community members could be disproportionately impacted by the consequences of emergencies

The profile of resilience is often raised when individuals and communities face adversity, and adversity often brings communities together and provides a focus for collective action. Places which have been hit by relatively frequently occurring emergencies such as severe weather or flooding are likely to be easy to involve in community resilience work, although clearly sensitivity is required when working in these areas.

There is some evidence to suggest that rural communities, and relatively affluent communities may start from a higher level of resilience, and have higher levels of social capital more generally. In the case of rural communities they may also be more likely to be subject to more routine emergencies such as isolation and utilities failure caused by severe weather.

Working with a pilot community to develop approaches can also serve to raise the profile of community resilience in other areas. For example, Scottish Borders Council initiated its 'Resilient Communities' Initiative by helping certain communities develop Community Emergency Plans. When the plans were launched to an audience of community council members from across the local authority area over 50% of the council's 66 community councils requested that they be helped to produce a similar plan, and the council has put in place a strategic programme of activity to provide this support.

Developing and implementing support for communities

Responders should think about how to support communities in ways which meet local priorities, and build on existing local arrangements for engaging with communities, where these exist.

The Scottish Government does not want to prescribe ideal forms of engagement or working methods – individual RPs and responders are far better placed to design and implement programmes appropriately. How these develop will depend on the approach taken by the agencies and the make-up of the communities themselves. A suggested model to help consider how best to engage and some good practice examples are provided below in order to assist. As more community resilience programmes are developed, this guidance will be updated to ensure that good practice is shared widely.

Awareness – Develop a collaborative approach

Experience from those areas that have already launched community resilience initiatives suggests that communities are more likely to become involved if one or more of the responder agencies will “meet them half way” in the challenge – this allows the community to realise that it is not alone in its efforts to build resilience. Successful examples of good support being provided to community groups include:

- Helping to produce an outline of a Community Emergency Plan for the community, populating with demographic information, flood maps, key contact points, etc
- Offering modest levels of equipment, training or support in response to development of plans and working groups
- Offering local recognition or reward to communities that take action – both to keep their motivation levels high and to generate interest from other communities

Assets – Review good practice and help communities make use of the assets they have

There is a wide range of central and local initiatives planned or under way to help encourage, build and recognise community resilience. A summary of the main areas is provided below with links to more information.

Support Action – Guide to Emergency Planning for Community Groups

The Scottish Government has published a [Guide to Emergency Planning for Community Groups](#), which takes communities through a process of identifying risks and measures which community members can take to make their communities safer.

The guide contains advice, a step-by-step guide to producing a community emergency plan, and templates which communities can use or adapt to their needs. The templates are not branded, and communities are free to change the appearance in order to promote a sense of community ownership of the plan. The approach which the guide sets out is designed to be flexible, and communities and responders can take from it what suits them, and adapt it for their needs.

To be most effective, this process requires support. It will work best where community groups are supported by responders who have an understanding of emergency planning, the local risk environment, and community development skills. Key aspects of support which communities will require to successfully complete a community emergency plan are:

1. General background information, which may include local maps of main roads and rail lines, rivers and lakes, community facilities like, schools, village halls and demographic and other statistical background information
2. Advice about risk assessment, which is appropriate for their area
3. Information about what they can expect from local responders if an emergency occurs
4. Advice about overcoming barriers to participation, such as worries about insurance and public liability, which may arise

However, for the process to be sustainable, it must be community-led, and community emergency plans must be owned by the community. An important part of this approach is to ensure that channels of communication between responders and communities are established. This is usually done by nominating one or more coordinator within the community who can become known to local authority emergency planning officers (EPOs), and who are contactable by and can contact the EPO in the event of an emergency. Local services such as shops and pubs can also act as a communication hub within communities, and in recent emergencies, people who run these businesses have acted as the point of contact between communities and responders.

Examples of community emergency plans which have been produced by Scottish communities are available on the [Ready Scotland website](#).

Contributing to this guidance

Any user of the guidance who wishes to propose a change/s for consideration is encouraged to make contact via the following e-mail address: ReadyScotland@gov.scot

Annex 1

Annex 1: Summary of the statutory roles and responsibilities of Emergency Responders

(Source: *Preparing Scotland, 2016*)

Preparing Scotland is underpinned by the principal legislation involved, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (“the Act”) and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (“the Regulations”).

This legislation outlines the key organisations responsible for ensuring the effective management of emergencies in Scotland. These are referred to in the legislation as follows:

Category 1 Responders

- Local Authorities
- Police
- Fire
- Ambulance
- Health Boards
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Category 2 Responders

- Electricity Operators
- Gas Suppliers
- Scottish Water
- Communications Providers
- Railway Operators
- Airport Operators
- Harbour Authorities
- NHS National Services Scotland
- Health and Safety Executive

In addition to these above, other agencies can have an important role in the context of resilience. These include but are not confined to:

- the military
- the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS)
- Transport Scotland
- commercial organisations
- the voluntary sector

(In performing their duties under the Act, Category 1 responders must have regard to the activities of voluntary organisations of a certain type (Regulation 17)

Regional Resilience Partnerships

Under the terms of the principal legislation, the structure which supports multi-agency Coordination is the Regional Resilience Partnership. Currently there are three partnerships in Scotland, based in the North, East and West.

These groups serve to bring together all the relevant organisations in an area to develop an effective approach in dealing with emergencies.

Legislative Duties

The Act and the Regulations place a number of legal duties upon Category 1 responders.

These are, in brief:

1. Duty to assess risk
2. Duty to maintain emergency plans
3. Duty to maintain business continuity plans
4. Duty to promote business continuity
5. Duty to communicate with the public
6. Duty to share information
7. Duty to co-operate

For Category 2 responders the basic legislative principle is that they must co-operate with Category 1 responders in connection with the performance of their duties, including proper sharing of information.

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