

## A community resilience plan for the Parish

### Why do we need a Community emergency plan

“Local emergency responders will always have to prioritise those in greatest need during an emergency, especially where life is in danger. There will be times when you may be affected by an emergency, but your life is not in immediate danger. During this time, you need to know how to help yourself and those around you. By becoming more resilient, you and your community can complement the work of local emergency responders and reduce the impact of an emergency on your community both in the short and long term” (4)

The Parish Council will be considering whether we should create our own Climate and Emergency Plan. Climate change is now closely linked to emergency/resilience plans. Risks to consider include related factors such as

**Weather** - Rain, snow, storms, gale force winds, heatwaves, low temperatures, and dense fog.

**Health** - Pandemics such as Covid-19 and other infectious diseases as well as animal diseases e.g., foot and mouth and bird flu

**Environment** - Flooding, fires.

**Transport** – Disruption of fuel supplies.

All these factors impact our community as they affect the ability of residents to access health care, medicine, and food. To be able to travel or communicate (internet, phones, social media). (3)

### Background

The Civil Contingency act 2004 (a) and accompanying non-legislative measures, delivers a single framework for civil protection in the UK.

The Act is separated into 2 parts: local arrangements for civil protection (Part 1); and emergency powers (Part 2).

Part 1 of the Act and supporting Regulations and statutory guidance 'Emergency preparedness' establishes a clear set of roles and responsibilities for those involved in emergency preparation and response at the local level. The Act divides local responders into 2 categories, imposing a different set of duties on each.

Those in Category 1 are organisations at the core of the response to most emergencies (the emergency services, local authorities, NHS bodies).

Category 2 organisations (the Health and Safety Executive, transport, and utility companies) are 'co-operating bodies.

Category 1 and 2 organisations come together to form 'local resilience forums' (based on police areas) which will help co-ordination and co-operation between responders at the local level

Part 2 of the Act updates the 1920 Emergency Powers Act to reflect the developments in the intervening years and the current and future risk profile. It allows for the making of temporary special legislation (emergency regulations) to help deal with the most serious of emergencies. The use of emergency powers is a last resort option, and their use is subject to a robust set of safeguards.<sup>(1)</sup>

The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) is the principal mechanism for multi-agency cooperation under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The Dorset LRF is based on the Dorset Constabulary boundary which is the same as the political County boundary. Within Dorset a number of voluntary organisations offer support in times of need, this is in addition to the emergency services attending incidents for example Community Action Network(CAN) and St. Johns Ambulance <sup>(2)</sup>

## **What is an Emergency plan**

The type of plan that is developed in a given area is unique to those areas needs and geography.

An emergency is defined as an event that can:

- Result in loss of life
- Cause injury to people
- Damage property and the environment
- Disrupt daily living

For the purposes of the LRF, the type of large emergencies planned for and respond to are usually defined as:

"A severe event or situation, with a range of significant impacts, which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder organisations." (2)

There is a range of supporting information in the public domain. One of the most important is the **Dorset Public Risk Register**. Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the Dorset Local Resilience Forum is required to "ensure that events or situations which threaten serious damage to the people of Dorset, or our environment, are identified, and where possible, controlled or mitigated against." This is a living document as the Dorset Local Resilience Forum members review and update the risks in accordance with the National Risk Assessments (2)

The purpose of the Public List Register is to:

- "Ensure that local responders have an accurate understanding of the risks they face and to provide a sound foundation for planning;
- Provide a rational basis for prioritising objectives, work programmes and allocation of resources;
- Enable local responders to assess the adequacy of their plans and identify any gaps;
- Facilitate joined up planning, based on consistent planning assumptions;
- Provide an accessible overview of emergency planning for the public and officials;
- Inform and reflect on national and regional risk assessments that support emergency planning and capability development at those levels".(3)

Community involvement (or resilience) is about empowering individuals, businesses, and community groups to:

- take collective action to both increase their own resilience and that of others
- come together to identify and support vulnerable individuals

- take responsibility for the promotion of individual and business resilience

Templates are available to help local Town and Parish Councils compile a Community Resilience plan. See the Government Community Emergency Plan Template (5)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/552872/community\\_emergency\\_plan\\_template.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/552872/community_emergency_plan_template.pdf)

or the Dorset Community Emergency Plan Template (2) at

<https://dorsetprepared.org.uk/community-involvement/tools-and-templates/>

## **Planning for an emergency**

The PC would need to;

- Identify our community and recognises the needs, resources and risks that will affect them
- Identifying existing local relationships and get people involved (we probably have many groups/people that are already in place and have set up support groups)
- Community emergency groups and co-ordinators (Bring these groups together to form a coordinated response. They can champion the emergency preparedness efforts in our community and would also play a role in our community's recovery).
- Identifying the most vulnerable in an emergency (Local emergency responders will need to help those in most need first, and it would assist them if the Community Emergency Group had an understanding of those in their community who might be vulnerable in an emergency and know where they live)

## **Proposal should consider:**

- Data protection, as the plan may hold lists of residence on community risk registers etc, volunteers' address, phone, and email details etc...(Note - Data protection can be put to one side if in a life-or-death situation. i.e., can share with emergency services).

- Consider skills and resources available e.g. First Responders.
- Is there a central refuge centre e.g. village hall ?
- What voluntary groups are there that could be mobilise?
- Maps showing clear locations of equipment such as defibrillators.
- Resources to help in an emergency -
  - People who have skills or equipment e.g., first responders, farmers with tractors, people with 4x4, location of doctors in the villages, defibrillators.
  - Also need to consider food, medical and fuel supplies.
  - Is their suitable PPE

Money is available for communities to purchase equipment such as PPE and walkie talkies should communications go down.

The Parish Council could decide to;

- Draw up its own Community Resilience Plan.
- Come under the umbrella of Community Resilience plans already put in place by Dorset Council.
- Come under the umbrella of Community Resilience Plans already put in place by larger nearby Town Councils such as Beaminster.

If the Parish Council wishes to pursue the idea of a Community Resilience plan, then this issue will need to be further investigated and I would suggest that either the staff Working group, or a standalone subcommittee is set up to look into this further.

### Legislation

- a. *Civil Contingency Act 2004* <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/36/contents> accessed 14.3.22

### References

1. Guide to Preparation and planning for emergencies: responsibilities of responder agencies and others How the government prepares and plans for emergencies, working nationally, locally, and co-operatively to ensure civil protection in the UK – Cabinet office February 2013
2. Dorset Local Resilience forum <https://www.dorsetprepared.org.uk> accessed 14.3.22
3. Community resilience week 7-11<sup>th</sup> March 22
4. Community Emergency Plan Toolkit  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/552869/community\\_emergency\\_plan\\_toolkit.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/552869/community_emergency_plan_toolkit.pdf)
5. Community Emergency plan template

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/552872/community\\_emergency\\_plan\\_template.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/552872/community_emergency_plan_template.pdf)