



Department for
Communities and
Local Government



Get ready for winter – planning ahead: a checklist for parish and town councils

Have you linked your parish or town council / community web pages to the Get ready for winter website <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/barometer/get-ready-for-winter>. This provides information and advice on how to prepare for winter weather including health and wellbeing advice.

1. Be aware of the risks this winter for your community:

Are you are aware of the emergency risks in your area?

- Your local resilience forum has a community risk register outlining the risks in your local police force area. Contact details for your local resilience forum:
 - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-resilience-forums-contact-details>
- Check your local flood risks including coastal, river and rainfall /surface water:
 - <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk>
- Sign up for flood warnings and weather alerts:
 - <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>
 - <https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKMETOFFICE/subscriber/new>
- The British Red Cross has developed an emergency app that provides local alerts for severe weather and other emergencies near you, and provides practical advice on how to prepare, respond and recovery from a range of emergencies including severe weather.
 - <http://www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/Emergency-response/Emergency-app-landing>

2. Produce a community emergency plan:

Have you looked at the Preparing for emergencies website for advice?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-emergencies/preparing-for-emergencies>

Developing a community emergency plan will help your parish work together to be prepared for the emergencies and risks you might face. It's also a great way to raise local emergency issues with the emergency services and agree how you can work better together before an emergency happens.

A community emergency plan:

- sets out what to do during an emergency with clear roles and responsibilities, including for flood or area wardens;
- lists the actions that allow key activities to continue in difficult circumstances;
- includes a list of the local assets/equipment that can be accessed during an emergency i.e. 4x4 vehicles;
- is clear on how you will identify vulnerable residents that might needs extra help in a winter emergency; and
- identifies facilities available for rest / welfare centres for residents that have to evacuate their homes due to flooding, power failure or another winter emergency.

- The Humber Emergency Planning Service website and the Cornwall Council website have a range of useful examples that can also be used to produce your own community and neighbourhood emergency plans:

<http://www.heps.gov.uk/lets-get-ready-community/town-and-parish-council/>

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/community-and-living/cornwall-fire-and-rescue-service-homepage/keeping-safe/community-safety/cornwall-community-resilience-network/community-emergency-plan-toolkit/>

3. Produce a high street / town centre emergency plan:

Local small businesses should also be planning together for emergencies that would affect their business continuity this winter. Town and parish councils can promote business resilience by promoting the use of the following resources to local businesses:

- Download the Business Emergency Resilience Group's 10 minute plan designed to help businesses to prepare, respond and recover from a range of incidents or look at the Business Continuity for Dummies cheat sheet:
 - <http://www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/business-emergency-resilience-group-berg/prepare>
 - <http://www.dummies.com/business/start-a-business/business-plans/business-continuity-for-dummies-cheat-sheet-uk-edition/>
- These sites might have useful information about action taken by small businesses working together to improve their resilience in some areas:
 - <http://thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk>
 - <http://www.coastalcommunities.co.uk>

4. Warning and informing your community:

Communicate with your residents and business about your community winter emergency plan and have an agreed plan for how you will inform residents in the event of an emergency affecting your community, especially more vulnerable residents that might need extra help:

- An example is Chedworth Parish Council's leaflet:
 - http://chedworthpc.org.uk/download/emergency/Winter_Emergency_Leaflet.pdf
- Encourage residents and businesses to develop a Household Emergency Life-Saving Plan (H.E.L.P.). Gloucestershire Local Resilience Forum have produced a template for a household emergency plan:
 - <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=3626&p=0>