**Emergency**
Planning
Team

Neath Port Talbot
Castell-nedd Port Talbot
County Borough Council Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Enable communities to be prepared before, during
and after an emergency

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PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

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FOREWORD

In the UK, there have been several incidents over recent years which have had an impact or had the potential to impact upon communities. These can include flooding, pandemics, pollution incidents, severe weather and animal disease. Such emergencies and incidents can place extreme demands on the communities affected by them. Examples of such emergencies which have affect communities across the UK can be seen in the table below:

Table 1: Examples of UK emergencies which have had an impact on community life

H1N1 influenza outbreak (swine flu)	2009
North Sea storm surge	December 2013
Flooding on the Somerset Levels	Winter 2013 - 2014
St Jude's Day storm	28 October 2013
Heavy snow and cold temperatures	Winter 2010 - 2011
Heatwave	Summer 2003
Foot and Mouth disease	2001
Avian flu (bird flu)	2007
Sea Empress disaster	February 1996

Locally, we have had numerous emergency incidents which have had the potential to affect our communities, or have directly affected our communities. A selection of the most recent incidents can be seen in figure 1.

During the emergencies noted above, a number of community members helped each other by sharing skills and resources to aid the community's response and recovery as a whole. We wish to increase such actions carried out by communities.

This 'Community Resilience and Engagement Strategy' aims to increase community resilience to emergencies within the Neath Port Talbot area. The intention is to enhance the ability of our local communities to respond to and recover from emergencies, through informing communities about local risks and the actions to take to reduce the impact of them.

The aim of this strategy is to increase community resilience to emergencies within the Neath Port Talbot area.

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Measles Outbreak, 2012 – 2013

Ystalyfera Landslide, February 2017

Ystalyfera Landslide, December 2012

Storm Angus, November 2016

Gleision Mine, September 2011

Egan's Fire, July 2016

Severe Weather, 2010 – 2011

Severe Weather, February 2014

H1N1 Influenza Pandemic, 2009

Severe Weather, 2013

Figure 1: Examples of some of the most recent emergency incidents to have occurred within Neath Port Talbot.

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WHAT IS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE?

There are numerous definitions for community resilience across the UK. The UK Cabinet Office (2014) defines community resilience as "communities using local resources and knowledge to help themselves during an emergency in a way that complements the local emergency services."

Community resilience involves:
- identifying risks and being aware of those risks e.g. flooding
- planning for risks at a community level
- using local skills, knowledge and resources
- understanding who is vulnerable and who may need more help e.g. the disabled, young children etc.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY RESILIENCE?

The presence of resilient communities within the local authority can help local people deal with emergencies which may impact upon them. An effective way of increasing initial resilience is increasing public awareness of local risks, and what actions they can take before, during and after an emergency. As a result, this would reduce the publics exposure to risks from local threats and hazards as they would better understand the risks, and understand how to reduce the impact upon themselves.

Communities which are more prepared for emergencies often find the recovery process is quicker after an emergency (Cabinet Office, 2014), as they have increased confidence to take appropriate action to reduce the impact of the emergency e.g. valuables moved upstairs during a flood (Cabinet Office, 2016).

Resilient communities have a tendency to be more adaptable to emergencies, often through a strengthened sense of community spirit, which encourages a greater capacity for community action, as well as increased motivation. Communities are often able to share their existing skills and local knowledge, as well as local resources e.g. sharing first aid skills. Resilience building also has the benefits of assisting to create a greater sense of community, as it can bring people together to talk about issues of local concern.

Many resilient communities also rely on partnership formations with local authorities and the emergency services before, during and after an emergency (see figure 2). Having a relationship between communities and local

organisations can help the public understand how to respond to an emergency situation, and ensure the work done by the community complements the actions of the emergency services. Working with local communities can help the public understand the role of such organisations, resulting in mutual trust and influence (Cabinet Office 2016) and reduces panic in the event of an
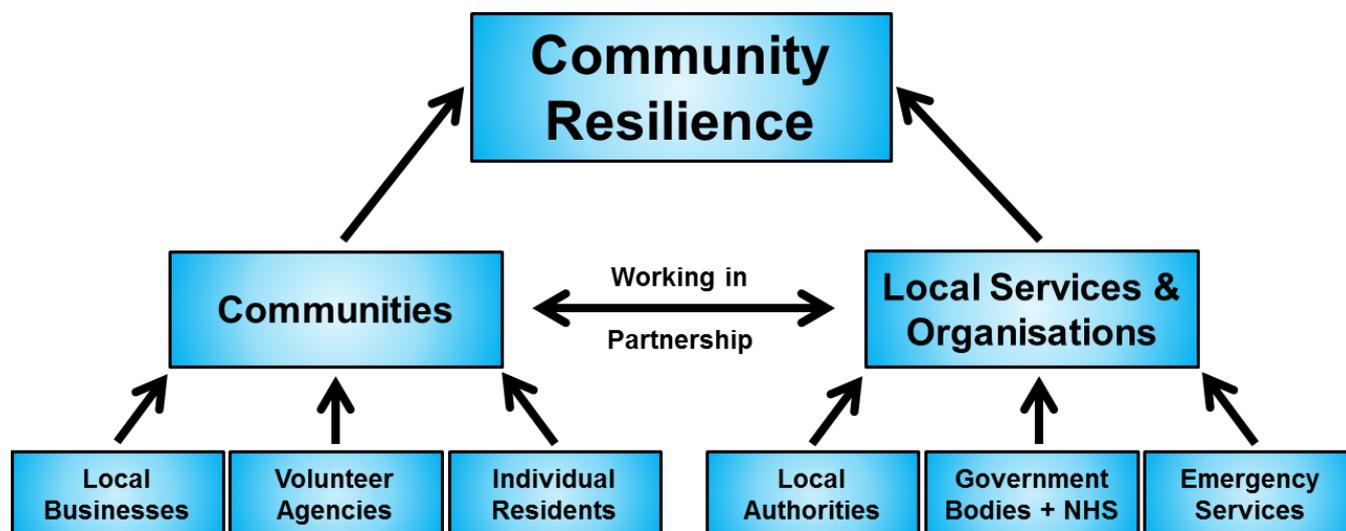
Figure 2: Partnerships between communities and local organisations / services

WHAT MAKES A COMMUNITY RESILIENT?

Resilient communities have numerous positive attributes that are often embedded into them, thus increasing their resilience to emergencies. Such attributes can also be developed over time, and include:

- Communities that work together and have a sense of community spirit
- Communities who are aware of vulnerable residents
- Communities who have an interest in protecting their facilities and assets
- Individuals and communities feel empowered and engaged in local activities
- Communities who are able to reduce the impacts of emergencies via their own local skills, resources and knowledge e.g. first aiders, ability to plan
- Communities made up of resilient individuals who have taken measures to make their homes and families more resilient
- Communities who have good relationships and communication links with local responders, such as local authorities

- Communities who have realistic expectations of the level of support that is available to them during an emergency from local responders
- Communities that have strong partnerships throughout the local authority area
- All sectors throughout the community (including private, public and voluntary sectors) are able to respond to an emergency which can affect them, and are able to return to 'business as usual' quickly

(Wellington Region Emergency Management

Figure 3: Building blocks for a resilient community (Chandra et al, Rand Corporation, 2014)

WHY SHOULD THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ASSIST WITH BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE?

There are a number of legislative documents that put a responsibility on local authorities to engage with communities to warn and inform them of local risks.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, local authorities are classified as a category 1 responder. Category 1 responders have numerous duties under the Civil Contingencies Act, with several of those duties directed towards awareness raising, and warning and informing the public. With regard to warning and informing the public, under the Civil Contingencies Act local authorities have a legal duty to:

- arrange for the publication of all or part of the risk assessments and plans maintained
- maintain arrangements to warn and inform the public
- provide information and advice to the public before, during and after an emergency
- provide advice and assistance in the event of an emergency to the public in order to make arrangements for the continuance of commercial activities, or other bodies such as local authorities, who's activities are not carried out for a profit

(Civil Contingencies Act, 2004)

Others acts place a responsibility on local authorities to communicate with the public regarding risks, such as:

- The Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 2015 (COMAH)
- Radiation (Emergency Preparedness & Public Information) Regulations 2001 (REPPIR)
- The Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The 'Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' places a requirement on local authorities, as well as 43 other public organisations, to work towards several well-being goals which aim to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales (Welsh Government, 2015). These well-being goals can be seen in figure 4, which shows the seven goals public bodies must work towards, and aim to do so in partnership with other bodies and the public.

The act ensures that decisions made by public bodies take into account the impact they could have on the people living in Wales, now and in the future. Many emergency management activities can be integrated into each of the goals of the 'Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act', an example of how the activities are relatable can be seen in table 2.
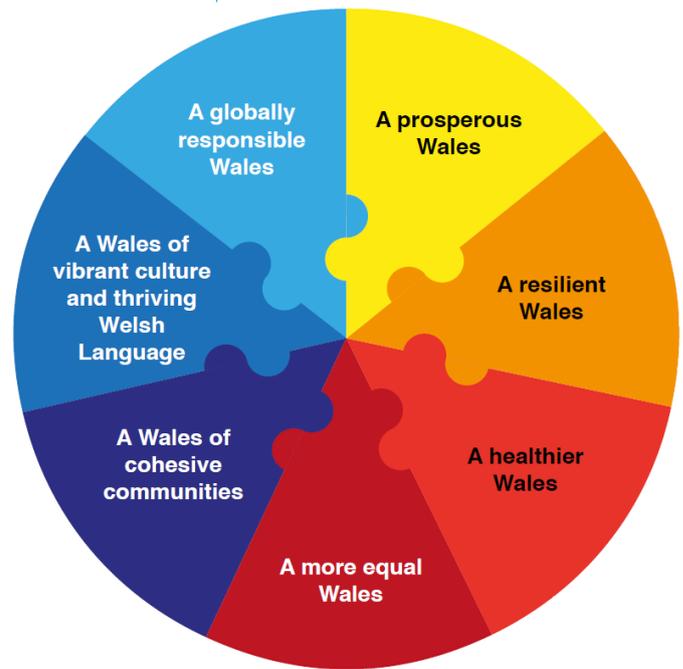
Figure 4: Well-being goals set out in the 'Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015' (Welsh Government, 2015)

Table 2: Descriptions of the seven goals in the 'Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' and how emergency planning activities relate to them.

Goal:	Description of the goal:	Emergency planning links:
A prosperous Wales	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.	• Encourages communities to use their resources to support themselves during an emergency • Communities are educated with regard to local risks, and how to take action • Communities gain skills in action writing, arranging meetings, communication etc.

A resilient Wales	A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).	• Communities have the social, economic and ecological capacity and ability to cope with an emergency, resulting in a quicker recovery phase.
A healthier Wales	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.	• Communities provided with health advice and advice given on emergency arrangements that should be put in place • In the event of an emergency, mental health should face less impacts due to the communities have an improved understanding of the emergency
A more equal Wales	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).	• Enable all members of communities to engage with emergency planning activities, by providing opportunities for participation and learning
A Wales of cohesive communities	Attractive, viable, safe and well connected communities.	• Emergency planning activities encourage a 'sense of community', and encourage communities to care for their local areas
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.	• Resources and materials are to be provided in both Welsh and English • The arts will be incorporated into work done with children and young people • Communities encouraged to improve health e.g. through sport
A globally responsible Wales	A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.	• Communities are made more aware of global issues e.g. flooding in Europe, and as a result will be more sympathetic to the needs of others, and may help with aid contributes – which also encourages the community to work together (social improvements)

HOW DOES COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BENEFIT CATEGORY 1 RESPONDERS?

As well as assisting local communities to become more resilient, local authorities and category 1 responders also gain many benefits from resilience building within communities in their local areas. These can include:

- the ability to prioritise resources to those within a community in greatest need of assistance
- improved understanding of local communities, their needs, vulnerabilities and capacities
- stronger relationships with communities resulting in mutual trust and influence
- better partnering and co-ordination with the full range of local volunteers e.g. spontaneous volunteers, town and parish council members
- reduced demand on local services and increased community well-being, as a result of the economic and social benefits for the community

(Cabinet Office, 2016)

CURRENT COMMUNITY RESILIENCE ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE EMERGENCY PLANNING TEAM

Currently, the Emergency Planning Team meets it warning and informing duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 through the use of:

- twitter
- a public website
- a Local Risk Register

Twitter

The twitter page is used by the team as a tool to raise awareness of emergency planning, to inform local residents about current weather, issues and emergencies. The team also use it to highlight the work done by colleagues in relation to emergency planning.

NPTCBC Emergency Planning Twitter account available at:
www.twitter.com/NPTCBCEPT

Public Website

The Emergency Planning Team's website is another community engagement tool used by the team. The website provides more detailed information than that found on the twitter page, providing information on; the role of the Emergency Planning Team, the legislation the team abides by, the South Wales Local Resilience Forum, how the public can prepare for emergencies and what to do during and after an incident, as well as providing information on business continuity, relevant publications, a page of child friendly emergency planning related materials, and the latest news published by the team. Through the website, the public are able to access useful information and can contact the team to make enquiries.

NPTCBC Emergency Planning website available at:
www.jointresilience.co.uk

Local Risk Register

The Local Risk Register for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council is available on the teams website. The Local Risk Register collates the main risks within the county and provides a description of what the risks are, what the local authority has in place to reduce the impacts, and what the public can do to reduce the impacts of those risks on their households.
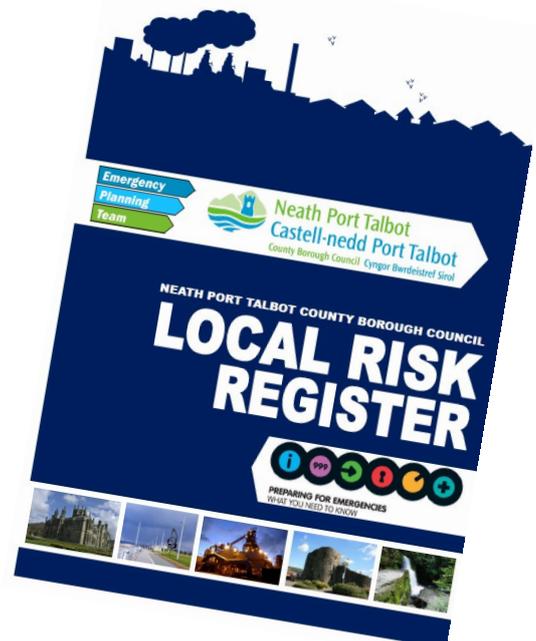
HOW THE EMERGENCY PLANNING TEAM INTEND TO INCREASE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FURTHER

To enable local communities to respond to emergencies and recover more effectively, the Emergency Planning Team will aim to follow examples of best practise from other areas around the UK. Future community and stakeholder engagement will aim to:

1. Teach local children about emergency planning, and involve them in the emergency planning process
2. Work with education staff to improve their understanding of emergency planning and business continuity
3. Work with vulnerable groups to inform them about emergency planning, and give them valuable experiences
4. Identify communities through community mapping, and understand local issues / concerns, demographics, vulnerabilities and capacities
5. Work with communities to create Community Emergency Plans
6. Engage more with local businesses with regard to business continuity, so businesses can recover quicker after an emergency
7. Have a greater online presence by providing more information on social media accounts and adding more information onto the team website
8. Make more educational resources available to the public, such as booklets and leaflets
9. Work more closely with other organisations who are involved in emergencies and community resilience
10. Work more closely with internal departments within the local authority who have existing links with local communities

Natural Resources Wales' 1000th flood plan

In Wales, one in six people either live or work in an area at risk of flooding, so Natural Resources Wales (NRW) work with communities, individuals and businesses to help them take practical actions before, during and after a flood. The most effective way to develop flood preparedness is to encourage the public to create a flood plans, whether its for your own home, business or for your community. Flood plans aim to organise the response to flooding either by individuals, communities or businesses.

NRW recently hit a fantastic milestone with its work assisting the public to develop flood plans. A local business, Neath Port Talbot Community Transport, completed its business flood plan which brings the total number of flood plans across Wales up to 1000. The business flood plan will help the organisation get back to normal should it be affected by flooding, and also addresses its business continuity arrangements.

Community Resilience in Somerset Project

The 'Community Resilience in Somerset Project' (CRISP) supports and encourages Parish and Town Councils and Community Groups across Somerset to develop community emergency plans, to help them before, during and after an emergency.

Communities in areas such as Butleigh, Dunster, Long Sutton, Martock, Muchelney and Roadwater have all put time into completing community emergency plans in order to be better prepared for emergencies. Such plans can include a list of useful contact numbers and addresses, local risks and hazards, actions for residents to take, and provides local information which can assist both residents and the Emergency Services.

Martock's emergency plan was used during the 2013 / 2014 floods on the Somerset Levels, and has been successful due to the goodwill amongst the local volunteers involved with the plan and through working with other community groups (Somerset Prepared, 2017).

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