

LONDON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TOOLKIT

Preparing communities
for emergencies and
disasters



HOW TO READ THE LONDON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TOOLKIT

This guide will help you navigate and complete each part of the toolkit and in turn grow your community's preparedness and resilience.

PART 1 - Activities

Scene setting, to give you the context you need to start completing the toolkit's activities and templates.

PART 1 - Outcomes

An understanding of London's climate risks and community action, and an introduction to inclusion principles.

PART 2 - Activities

Developing your Community Emergency Plan, following a three phase process supported by key steps and templates.

PART 2 - Outcomes

The first draft of your community emergency plan, with all the actions, considerations and next steps clearly mapped out.

PART 3 - Activities

Suggestions for expanding your community resilience further, including exploring emergency volunteering and community resilience hubs.

PART 3 - Outcomes

An understanding of where you might want to focus or what you might want to do next, after completing the toolkit.

PART 4 - Activities

Reflecting on your toolkit journey, you will have time to reflect, capture learnings and actions to take forward with you in your community resilience journey.

PART 4 - Outcomes

A reflection on the toolkit process, that enables you to take further action and be clear about your next steps moving forward.

PART 1

**Setting the scene
for the community
resilience toolkit**



PART 1

This part of the toolkit will explore the context of community resilience, including how it is impacted by climate change and why it's important to incorporate principles of inclusion when thinking about community resilience.

This context will help later as we explore tangible actions we can take, to help build more resilient communities.



WELCOME TO THE LONDON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TOOLKIT!

Are you a community, faith or neighbourhood group?

Are you looking for ways you and your community to better prepare for emergencies?

Are you looking for practical knowledge and skills to build greater community resilience in your area?

If yes, then the London Community Resilience Toolkit is for you.

Welcome.

The toolkit offers practical information and guidance to help communities better prepare for and respond to future challenges and emergencies. It is designed for anyone thinking about building greater community resilience in their local area. It will help you to identify local resources and partners, develop and support volunteers, and think about how you can use your community space – all to support your community.

The toolkit recognises that London has experienced many emergencies and crises in its history and will continue to face growing and complex challenges and emergencies in the future. These emergencies include the recent COVID-19 pandemic, cost of living crisis, violent disorder and racist protests, fire and the growing impact of climate change and many others.



Sometimes we face immediate crises, such as a wide scale incident that causes disruption, while also facing longer term, ongoing stresses such as climate change, which in turn makes crises more likely and more severe. Additionally challenges like income and health inequalities mean that not everyone is affected equally.

We know London is facing growing challenges, particularly from climate change. It is important that communities right across London are better able to prepare for, respond to and recover from these future challenges. There are steps that we can all take to keep ourselves and others safe, helping our communities to be more resilient.

HOW CAN YOU RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE?

As our climate warms, we are already seeing increases in severe weather in the UK and across the world. Incidents of flooding, heatwaves, wildfires, and droughts are becoming more likely, more frequent, and more severe. And these incidents can have devastating impacts on our health, our local environments, and the buildings and infrastructure we rely on.

Here in London, we are already seeing these impacts. In the summer of 2021, many parts of our city experienced flash flooding that closed tube stations, damaged schools and other critical infrastructure, and caused people to have to evacuate their homes. The following summer, London baked in 40-degree heat and experienced devastating wildfires, with the London Fire Brigade having its busiest day since World War Two.

There are actions we can take in our communities to help us better prepare for extreme weather today and for future climate-related challenges. During the COVID-19 pandemic we saw how community resilience took shape, through the actions of thousands of volunteers and community groups helping our city respond to a major health crisis.

In response to the climate emergency there is already widespread community action happening across the world. Communities are coming together to respond and adapt. We know that when people work together, great things can happen.

Here are some examples of the actions Londoners are taking at home and in their communities:

- De-paving front gardens and hard surfaces in their local areas to create green spaces that absorb and clean rainwater and provide cooling.
- Urban gardening, helping to encourage wildlife and reduce the effects of extreme heat by providing shade and cooler areas.
- Setting up community action groups to prepare for and plan for flooding and heatwaves to keep people safe.
- Volunteering can play an important role in helping us better prepare for and adapt to climate change. There are many existing networks of opportunities, initiatives and ways to get involved.

Where can I find additional resources?

There are so many ways you can take climate action in your community. Here are some great resources to find out more:

- <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/home-learning-activities/climate-action/>
- <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/stories/climate-action/>
- <https://community.rspb.org.uk/ourwork/b/climatechange/posts/fight-climate-change-from-your-home>

HOW TO TAKE COMMUNITY ACTION

FLOODING

Becoming a local Flood Warden or helping to set up a Flood Action Group can help you play an important role in building community resilience.

Flood Wardens and Flood Action Groups bring together local communities and emergency response agencies to help in warning, prevention and response to flooding within communities.

Flood Wardens and Flood Action Groups can make their areas more resilient to flooding by:

- Monitoring local rivers, streams and drains.
- Ensuring residents are aware of any flood alerts and warnings and encouraging them to sign up to receive these from the Environment Agency.
- Identifying members of the community who may need extra support in the event of a flood.
- Reporting flood impacts and local observations to the local council.
- Helping to prepare a community flood plan with the local council and other partners.
- For further information and resources, please visit: <https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk>

HEATWAVES

There are many things that communities can do to help prepare for hot weather and heatwaves. Local businesses or community centres could offer cold water and refuge from the sun during hot weather. People can also learn essential skills like heat first aid that will be helpful to communities when they do face emergencies.

Cool Spaces offer vital support and awareness raising to Londoners experiencing hot weather, giving them a safe and welcoming environment to shelter, rest and recover, with no obligation or commitment required beyond that. While they are not designed to replace wider support services or provide medical attention, Cool Spaces can also act as a signposting service and engage community members in wider community resilience activities.

Cool Spaces can take many shapes and sizes;

- Southwark Cathedral offers free drinking water and natural cooling/ventilation
- Leyton Library also has free water and aircon, and is open into the evening
- To explore further cool spaces in your community or explore setting up your own, check out: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/environment-andclimate-change/climate-change/climate-adaptation/cool-spaces>

LONDON'S CLIMATE RISKS

Three of the most likely climate risks you might face in your community are heatwaves, flooding and cold weather. It is good to understand these risks and the impacts associated with them, so that you can start to take actions that support your community to prepare for, respond to and recover from such events.

FLOODING



The frequency of flooding and the impact it has on communities.



Find it on pages 10-11

HEATWAVES



The frequency of heatwaves and the impact they have on communities.



Find it on pages 13-14

COLD WEATHER



The frequency of cold weather events and the impact they have on communities.



Find it on pages 16-17



FLOODING

1

DID YOU KNOW?



It takes 60cm of standing water or 30cm of flowing water to lift a car. Approximately 1.9 million people in the UK currently live in areas at risk of flooding, which could double by the 2050s.

2

WHO AND WHAT CAN BE AFFECTED?



Anyone, with impacts worsening depending on their location and the type of flood it is (river, surface water, coastal, sewer, groundwater, reservoir). Serious damage to property, infrastructure, green spaces. Sanitation concerns from flood water or if you live in a basement.

3

OTHER ASSOCIATED RISKS

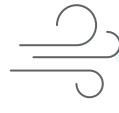


Storms
Power outage
Travel Disruption
Telecomms disruption
Damage to hospitals and schools
Strain on emergency services

- Identify and understand local flood risks through the Environment Agency.
- Monitor the weather forecast and your local surroundings and report any issues such as blocked drains.
- Raise community awareness by setting up a Flood Action Group or become a local Flood Warden.
- Connect with your local emergency planning teams to understand and get involved with wider initiatives and activities taking place.
- Ensure you have the relevant activities and actions mapped out in your Community Emergency Plan, so you know what to do when flooding occurs.
- Identify at risk people and properties, e.g. basements, and be aware of people who may need additional support and have a plan to support them.
- Encourage preparation activities such as checking insurance details, ensuring you have important documents to hand, valuables are protected and moved to higher levels when possible.

4

HOW DO YOU PREPARE?



5



HOW TO RESPOND

- ▶ Activate your community emergency plan and your flood wardens. Communicate flood updates with your community.
- ▶ Support wider activities where appropriate and safe, such as door knocking to check in on neighbours.
- ▶ Activate a community space or venue to support community flood response (dependant on community capabilities).

6



THINGS TO CONSIDER

- ▶ You must always keep yourselves safe.
- ▶ If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.
- ▶ Never enter flood water (walking or driving), no matter how deep it is or what the need might be.
- ▶ Floods are not just about what you can see, there is a risk of debris or other hazards within the flood water (e.g. open manhole covers), and contamination risks.

7



SIGN-POSTING

- ▶ Environment Agency Flood Warnings: <https://www.gov.uk/check-flooding>
- ▶ Met Office Flood Warning Guide: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/guides/flood-warnings>
- ▶ Government Flooding Map: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

HEATWAVES

1



DID YOU KNOW?

▶ 40°C could become the average summer temperature in the UK by 2035. UK heat related deaths could triple by the 2050s.

2



WHO AND WHAT CAN BE AFFECTED?

▶ Anyone, with impacts worsening depending on your health, location, work and lifestyle. Especially young children and babies and those over 75, people with pre-existing health conditions, people with mental health problems, people rough sleeping and people experiencing homelessness. Consider urban living: flats in high rise apartment blocks, those with no outdoor space, those living in areas with no tree cover. Additionally, infrastructure can be seriously impacted with loss of power and damage.

3



OTHER ASSOCIATED RISKS

▶ Drought
Wildfires
Floods
Storms
Travel Disruptions (rail and roads melting)
Power Outages

4



HOW DO YOU PREPARE?

▶

- Sign up to and monitor weather alerts.
- Plan a seasonal awareness campaign to prepare your community for hot weather.
- Think about what resource you might need, e.g. extra water, sunscreen.
- Share advice and information with your communities.
- Consider adding shade and water features to your communities.
- Ensure you have the relevant activities and actions mapped out in your Community Emergency Plan, so you know what to do when the heatwave arrives (see part two for more detail on Community Emergency Plans).
- Be aware of people who may need additional support and have a plan to support them,

5



HOW TO RESPOND

Keep cool, stay hydrated, limit time outside, limit physical activity, use water safely. Activate a community space or venue as a 'cool space' and communicate it to your community.

Provide water and shade at any community events or activities.

Decide whether it is safe to go ahead with any activities based on the heat.

Lower blinds and limit sunlight exposure into the house during the day.

6



THINGS TO CONSIDER

Not everyone has equal access to heatwave preparations, e.g. can afford a fan or air conditioning or can work from home or easily move to a cooler space on their own. Not all the impacts of heat are visible or obvious, make sure you take care of yourself and check in on others.

7



SIGN-POSTING

GLA Cool Spaces Map: <https://apps.london.gov.uk/cool-spaces/>

Met Office Heat Alerts: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/seasonal-advice/heat-health-alert-service>

British Red Cross Heat Advice: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/heatwaves-uk>

UKHSA Beat the Heat Resources: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beat-the-heat-hot-weather-advice>

COLD WEATHER

1



DID YOU KNOW?

The average recommended temperature for homes in winter is between 18-21°C. Pipes are at risk of freezing when temperatures drop below 0°C but the risk increases significantly at -5°C or below.

2



WHO AND WHAT CAN BE AFFECTED?

Anyone, with impacts worsening due to age, health or circumstances. Those over 75, people with pre-existing medical conditions, people rough sleeping and experiencing homelessness. Economic impacts with cost of heating and infrastructure challenges with limited insulation.

3



OTHER ASSOCIATED RISKS

Floods
Storms
Travel Disruptions

4



HOW DO YOU PREPARE?

- Monitor weather forecasts, to be aware of where and when the cold weather or snow is likely to arrive.
- Consider having a designated warm space in the community to help people stay warm and connect with others (but be aware of weather conditions and safe travel precautions for those using the space).
- Follow official advice on driving safely in snow or ice.
- Ensure you have enough medication and food, to prevent you needing to go out in the cold weather.
- Ensure you have the relevant activities and actions mapped out in your community emergency plan, so you know what to do when the cold weather arrives.
- Be aware of people who may need additional support and have a plan to support them.
- Check your insurance details and ensure you have important documents to hand.

5



HOW TO RESPOND

- ▶ Wear protective and warm clothing, with multiple layers better than 1 thick layer.
- ▶ Stay inside and keep your indoor temperatures at a safe level.
- ▶ Support with snow clearing initiatives where appropriate and safe, such as shovelling.
- ▶ Check in with vulnerable family, friends and neighbours.

6



THINGS TO CONSIDER

- ▶ Not everyone has equal access to heating and cold weather preparations.
- ▶ It is important to understand how to drive safely in cold weather such as snow and ice, and when not to drive.

7



SIGN-POSTING

- ▶ AA Driving Advice in Winter: <https://www.theaa.com/drivingadvice/seasonal/winter>
- ▶ Met Office Cold Weather Alerts: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/seasonaladvice/cold-weather-alerts>
- ▶ British Gas Preparations for your home in winter: <https://www.britishgas.co.uk/thesource/beat-the-weather/winterproof-your-home.html>

INCLUSION PRINCIPLES

Inequalities in our society mean that not everyone is affected equally by the challenges and emergencies we face. Different communities can face structural barriers and discrimination that make people more exposed to crises.

London is an incredibly diverse place, it's part of what makes it such a great city. Data from the 2021 Office for National Statistics Census shows that more than 40% of Londoners were born outside the UK, bringing with them a range of languages, cultural customs and experiences.

As we better prepare and adapt for challenges and emergencies, we should ensure we do this in a way that supports everyone, especially those who could be affected most. In London there are communities that could be disproportionately affected by emergencies and challenges.

Some of these groups include:

- People living in poverty, including digital poverty.
- People with pre-existing health or mental health conditions or experiences.
- Deaf and Disabled people.
- Older and younger Londoners.
- Socially isolated people.
- People who cannot or have limited ability to speak, read or write English.
- Rough sleepers and homeless people.
- People living in poor quality housing or temporary accommodation.

Throughout the London Community Resilience Toolkit, we will provide guidance for how to think about inclusion.

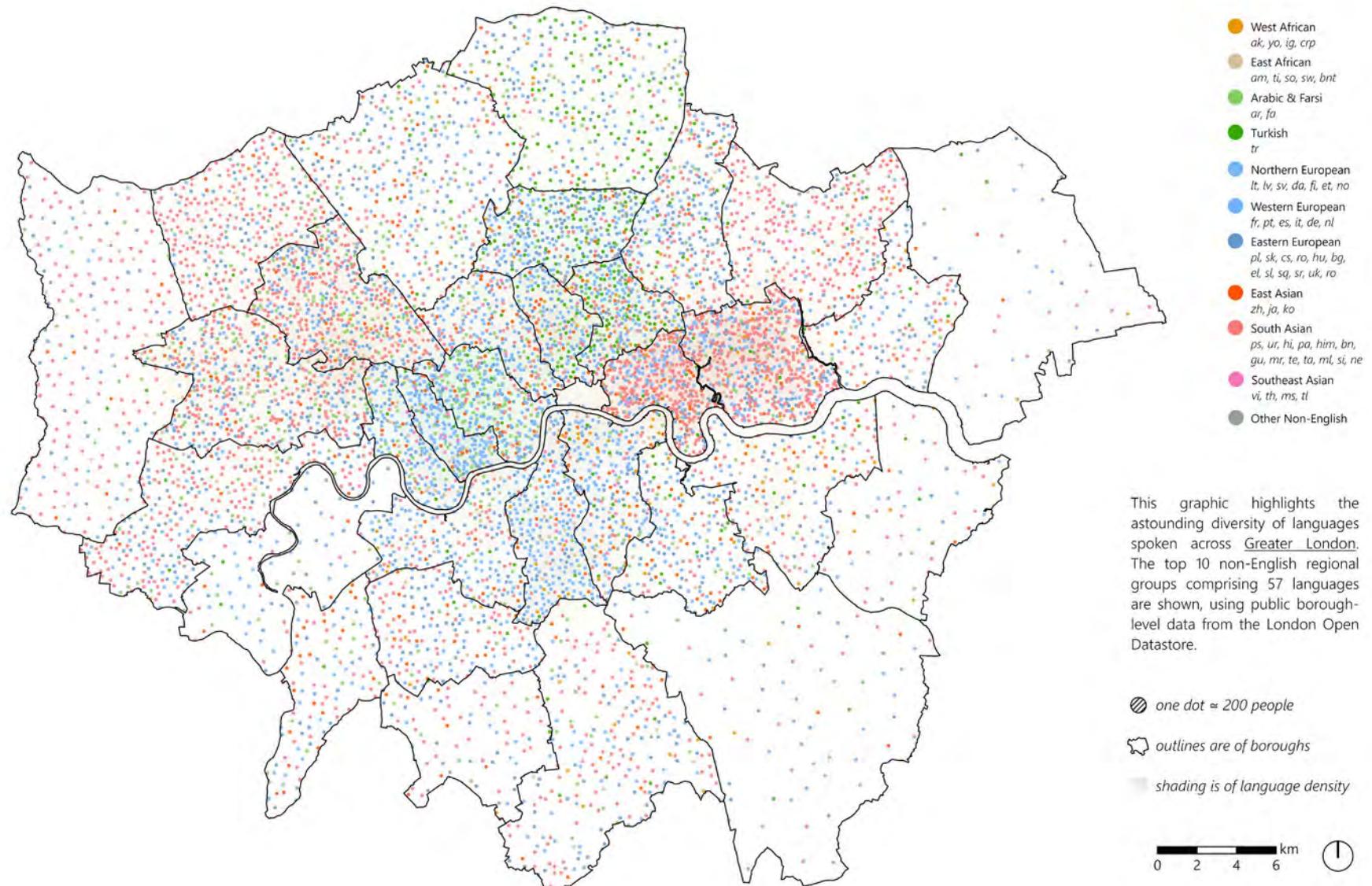
What questions should we be asking on inclusion?

- Does your group represent the local community's diversity?
- Have you considered how accessible your communications are, considering different languages and abilities?
- Are there local faith or community groups you could partner with to support your local area?
- Have you considered time commitments needed, travel required, building accessibility and any other factors that may make it harder for people to engage?

Celebrating London's Diversity

Languages spoken across Greater London

To explore further, check out the online version of the map [here](#)



PART 2

**Mapping your
community and
developing your
community emergency
plan**



PART 2

Mapping your community and developing your Community Emergency Plan.

Part two of the toolkit takes you through a three phase journey that will result in your fully drafted and tested Community Emergency Plan, that will enable you and your community to be prepared and ready to respond to an emergency or incident.

Phase One focuses on mapping your community, helping you to explore what makes your community unique and strong and identify areas for development.

Phase Two is all about drafting your Community Emergency Plan and pulling together the different elements that will have your community prepared and ready to respond.

Phase Three is about putting your Community Emergency Plan into action, helping you to test, learn, activate and learn from the plan, as and when you need to.





PHASE ONE: MAPPING YOUR COMMUNITY





PHASE ONE: MAPPING YOUR COMMUNITY

London's communities are incredibly diverse and no two are the same.

With this diversity comes a vast amount of wisdom, skills and capability that can help grow community resilience. Mapping your community and championing what makes it unique is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate its diversity.

Mapping your community is also the first part of creating your Community Emergency Plan.



What is a community emergency plan?



It is designed to help you and your community feel prepared for an emergency or challenge. It will help give you a clear, concise plan of action if or when you need to act. To explore this further check out the Government Prepare campaign: <https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/get-involved-in-your-community/information-for-communities-and-community-groups/>

CHECKLIST FOR GETTING STARTED

- Decide if you are approaching this collectively or individually.

Collectively is ideal so you can tap into knowledge and wisdom outside of your group or organisation.
- Seek to understand what mapping already exists.

Often others have completed a mapping exercise before, which you could use and potentially build on to save a lot of time.
- How are you coming together?

Are you using an existing meeting or event? Or a specific time and location, or are you meeting virtually?
- Allocate enough time for collaboration and discussion.

This isn't about getting to the solution quickly, it's about developing and creating a clear map of your community, in a way that works for you, that also helps to build new relationships.
- Decide how you want to develop your community map.

You know your community best – how do they like to engage? Make sure you have the necessary tools and resources.

 - Creative activities e.g. drawing diagrams and using post-it notes.
 - Practical action e.g. taking a walk around the local area.
 - Desk-based research and speaking with others.
 - Facilitated conversations or workshops with your group.
 - If meeting virtually, research and trial the best software before you meet.
- Think about how you kick start the session to grab people's attention.

You might want to set the scene with a local example of an emergency or a scenario (use a real example if you can).

What would happen;

 - If there was a flood on the high street or along a main road?
 - If there was a fire in the park or in an important building?
 - If there was a power outage or water outage?

STEP ONE

Define your community

This depends on your organisation, your aims, history, interests and ambitions.

It is a great opportunity to also discuss and plan how you want to be inclusive, who are the most at risk and how you celebrate your community's diversity.

For example:

- *For Nowheresville Flood Action Group, it's everyone at risk of flooding in Nowheresville.*
- *For Nowheresville Interfaith Group, it's all the faith groups, as well as the broader faith and belief community.*
- *For Nowheresville Allotment, it's all the users of the allotment.*

During Step One you should identify who is the lead designated person for this process, and for your Community Emergency Plan. This will help manage the process and keep track of the progress you have made. You'll want to keep track of when you created or updated your plan, as well.

FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF STEP ONE, FILL OUT THESE DETAILS BELOW

Name of your community:

Key factors to consider in your community:

Start and completion dates of your plan:

Lead designated person and their contact details:

Identify positives and strengths

It's important to remember that all communities have different strengths and skills. Starting by thinking about vulnerabilities means you might miss something valuable. Taking a 'strengths-based approach' means that you celebrate and harness the local community's strengths, and we encourage you to do this.

For example, by looking at positives and strengths you could find out:

- *A local group for people with long-COVID in your community has an established network and list of support services.*
- *A mother's group at the local mosque has a teacher who supports families who struggle with understanding English written correspondence.*
- *A local LGBTQ+ group have great resources and information about access to emergency accommodation for young people.*

Identify potential challenges

It is still important to consider areas that might be at risk or in need of support. Once you have focused on your strengths, take a moment to reflect on possible challenges such as areas that are already known to be prone to flooding or vital infrastructure that has been cut off in the past such as key access roads. You can continue to consider and include this as you complete steps Three and Four.

STEP THREE

Find out what is out there already

Research and connect to what is already happening in your community. Think about what could be helpful in an emergency. Make sure you consider all aspects of your community, the different faiths, ethnicities, abilities, lived experiences. This is an opportunity to identify and celebrate them, bringing together what makes your community unique and ensuring that everyone is included.

Examples of resources your community may have:

Communication Network:

Maybe you have a large community Facebook page or WhatsApp group?

Volunteer Services:

Do you have an active Volunteer Centre that has a lot of volunteers who are engaged and might be keen to be involved?

Facilities and Spaces:

Do you have a popular location in the community that everyone knows, trusts and uses? It doesn't just have to be one!

Green and Outdoor Spaces:

Are there places where people can gather safely outside, whether for a wellbeing activity or as a rendezvous point?

Transportation:

Do you have multiple transport links and options which support your community's ability to travel? Do you have a local transport support group?





PHASE TWO: DEVELOPING YOUR COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN



**FOLLOWING
COMPLETING
STEP TWO AND
STEP THREE,
FILL OUT THIS
TABLE OF YOUR
COMMUNITY
PARTNERS.**

Be aware of what sensitive data you are capturing and consider how it will be stored and used. Ensure you have the correct permissions in place for this data. If unsure, explore General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in more detail <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>.

What role will they play or what resources do they have?

Organisation/Partner name	Description of what they do	Contact information	Role or resources in an emergency
<i>Example: Knowheresville Community Transport</i>	<i>Example: An organisation that support older people primarily with transport.</i>	<i>Example: Jayne Doe, 14 Knowhere Lane, Knowheresville, KN1 4TT. 0202 222 4444</i>	<i>Example: Can provide a minibus, also has contact with other community transport groups.</i>

4

STEP FOUR

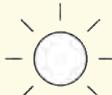
Identifying your risks.

The next step in developing your Community Emergency Plan is to think about the types of challenges and emergencies you might face. In doing this exercise your community should consider the types of emergencies that could happen and the impacts these could have on different people.

Remember to include the impacts that you might not necessarily experience yourself, considering how people from different backgrounds and with different abilities may be affected.



Some risks to consider:

		
Ice, Snow, Cold Weather	Heatwaves	Fires
		
Drought	Storms	Poor Air Quality and Pollution
		
Flooding	Infectious Disease Outbreaks	Overseas Emergencies
		
Power Supply Disruptions	Water Supply Disruptions	Terrorism

**AFTER
COMPLETING
STEP FOUR,
FILL OUT THIS
TABLE ON
THE RISKS,
IMPACTS AND
ACTIONS YOUR
COMMUNITY
WANTS TO
CONSIDER
AND INCLUDE
IN YOUR
COMMUNITY
EMERGENCY
PLAN**

Community Risks and Impacts

List below the risks and impacts that you want to consider and include as part of your Community Emergency Plan. Remember to include the impacts that you might not necessarily experience yourself, considering how people from different backgrounds and with different abilities may be affected.

Risks	Impacts	Actions
<i>Example: Heatwave</i>	<i>Example: Dehydration and fatigue</i>	<i>Example: Set up a cool space where water is available, and people can rest from the heat</i>

Mapping your skills and capabilities.

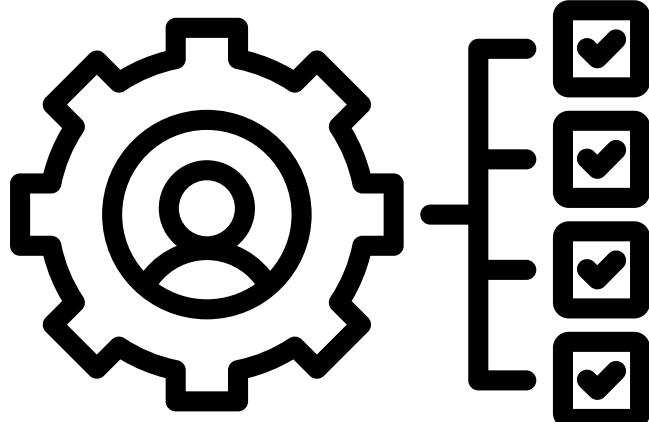
In this step it is important to think about what skills, resources, capabilities and assets you have in your community that can support your community resilience. Try reaching out to existing groups or your local Neighbourhood Watch group to see how they manage this.

What is a skills audit?

Consider surveying volunteers and staff in your community, faith or neighbourhood group to find out about key skills that could be useful in an emergency. This is often called a 'skills audit'. Reach Volunteering has more [guidance on that here](#).

The following are skills that you might want to consider having in your team:

- First aid and mental health first aid
- Existing volunteering experience and connections such as with the British Red Cross
- Communication and organisation
- Language skills which are relevant to your community
- IT skills
- People with Disclosure and Barring Service checks
- Hazard specific knowledge e.g. an interest in flooding and water management
- Hazard specific experience e.g. a fire warden
- People with a good understanding of GDPR and how best to manage, store, and use data.
- For further support with GDPR, see page 30.



**AFTER
COMPLETING
STEP FIVE, FILL
OUT THIS TABLE
ON THE KEY
SKILLS IN YOUR
TEAM. CONTINUE
TO CONSIDER
GDPR GUIDANCE
WHEN IT
COMES TO DATA
COLLECTION,
USAGE AND
STORAGE. SEE
STEP THREE FOR
MORE DETAILS.**

Key skills for an Emergency

List below the people and skills you have in your organisation or network to help respond to an emergency or major challenge in your community.

Key skill in an emergency	People who have this skill	Contact details	Availability
<i>Example: First aid</i>	<i>Example: Jayne Doe</i>	<i>Example: 0202 333 5555</i>	<i>Example: On weekdays</i>

6

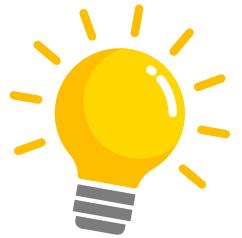
STEP SIX

Identifying gaps, training and skills.

1. What skills are missing in your team?
2. Which groups or partners are you not connected with yet?
3. What resources or assets don't you have that you need?

You could then look at how to build these skills through training and development. Look for training offers and sign up to networks such as:

1. London Communities Emergencies Partnership: <https://londonplus.org/lcep>
2. Communities Prepared: <https://www.communitiesprepared.org.uk/>
3. British Red Cross: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/>
4. St John Ambulance: <https://www.sja.org.uk/course-information/online-learning/>
5. Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership: <https://www.vcsep.org.uk/>
6. London Boroughs Faiths Networks: lbfn.uk
7. Reach Volunteering: reachvolunteering.org.uk
8. Additionally, check out your local council's Borough Resilience Forum and your local Volunteer Centre for opportunities.



**FOLLOWING
COMPLETING
STEP SIX, FILL
OUT THIS TABLE
ON YOUR SKILLS
AND RESOURCES
GAPS:**

Gaps identified:	Actions to address gaps:	Responsible Person:	Completed:
1)			
2)			
3)			
4)			
5)			
6)			
7)			
8)			
9)			
10)			
11)			
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15)			
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17)			



PHASE THREE: PUTTING YOUR COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN INTO ACTION

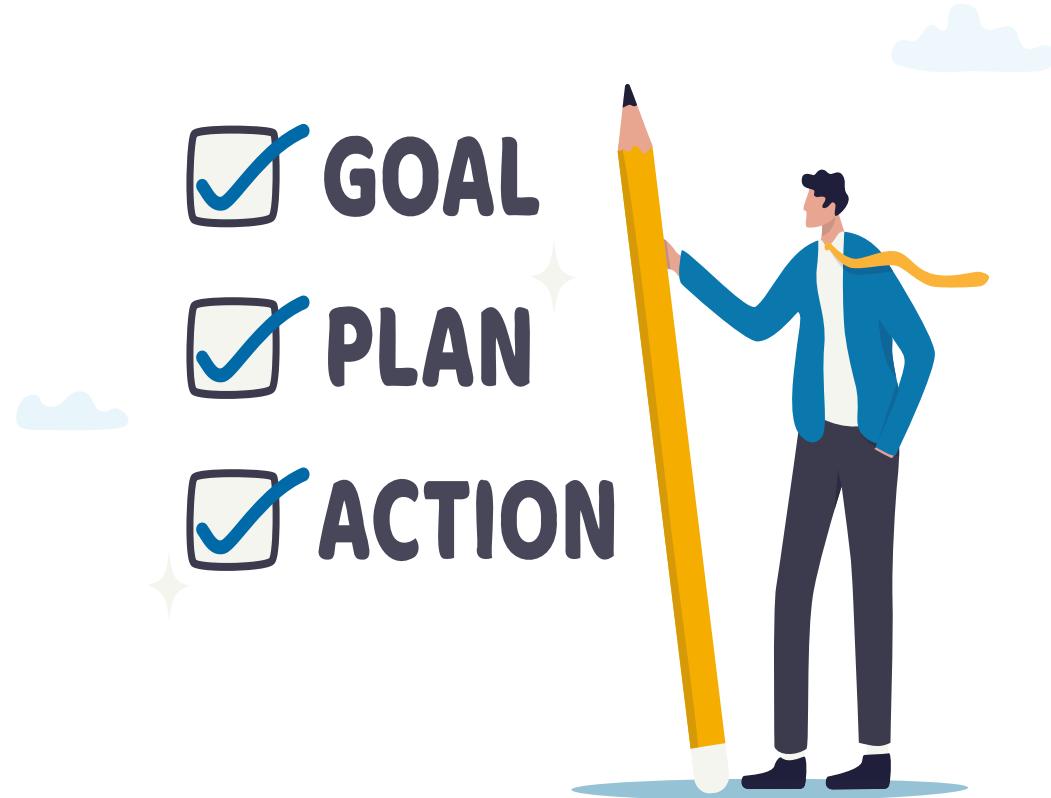




PHASE THREE: PUTTING YOUR COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN INTO ACTION

Turn your attention to putting your Community Emergency Plan into action

Now that you have the components that make up your Community Emergency Plan, you can bring all the elements together and turn your attention to putting the plan into action. This covers both activating, testing and learning from your plan. It is important to revisit and revise your emergency plan so that it stays relevant and up to date.



STEP SEVEN

Activating and triggering your plan.

It is important to have clear, agreed and understood triggers for your plan, so that you know when and when not to activate it, and how to activate when you do.

Possible triggers to consider are:

You have had a direct request from the emergency services or your local council to activate your plan.

There has been a flood or heatwave warning issued by a trusted source such as the Met Office or UK Health Security Agency.

You have identified an emergency happening in your community, such as a power or water outage.

Who should I share my plan with?

Think about sharing it with your community partners and groups and your local council's emergency planning team. Ensure you have considered GDPR before sharing, e.g. you may want to consider sharing a redacted version without any sensitive data included. You could link in with your local Volunteer Centre.

Please do share your plan with the London Resilience Unit at londonresilience@london.gov.uk.

You can also contact your LA (Local Authority) to find out who your EP (Emergency Planning) team is and how to get in touch with them to share your plan.

It is important to remember that in an emergency you shouldn't assume that emergency services already know about it, nor are you replacing the actions of the emergency services. If there is a major incident or threat to life, ensure you call 999.

This is a good time to record any key emergency partners and contacts, including for your local council. You may need to be able to reach these emergency contacts under time pressure so the more information you have the better.

**AFTER
COMPLETING
STEP SEVEN,
FILL OUT THIS
TABLE ON THE
EMERGENCY
CONTACTS IN
YOUR TEAM.
CONTINUE TO
CONSIDER
GDPR GUIDANCE
WHEN IT
COMES TO DATA
COLLECTION,
USAGE AND
STORAGE. REFER
BACK TO PAGE
30 TO SUPPORT
THIS.**

<h2>Emergency Contacts</h2> <p>Fill out the below table of key emergency contacts you need to activate your plan.</p>		
Organisation	Contact Details	Role and Responsibility
<i>Example: Knowheresville Local Council</i>	<i>Example: 0202 111 2222, www.knowhere.gov.uk/emergencies</i>	<i>Example: The local council will coordinate local response to an emergency, including supporting residents</i>

STEP EIGHT

To test your plan, you will want to think about each section you have created so far. You will want to make sure you have the following in place:

- The key factors in your community have been understood.
- There is a clear lead designated person decided for your plan.
- Community contacts and resources have been fully identified.
- You have a good understanding of the types of emergencies you might face and what you will do to prepare and respond,
- You know what skills you have in your team.
- The actions you identified to address any gaps have been addressed.

Testing your plan and learning from it.

You also need to make sure you practice your plan. This is an opportunity to learn what works and what could be improved. It is a good idea to run a scenario exercise to see what you will do and how you will use your plan.

Treat this as an opportunity to bring your community together and get to know each other better. Using scenario exercises can really help to bring your Community Emergency Plan to life. For example, imagine if there was a storm, power outage or flooding - what will you do?

What is a scenario 'exercise'?

An exercise is when you set out a possible emergency scenario (for example, a heatwave or a flood), and practice what you would do if that emergency happened in your community. As a group, you can work through all the steps so that you can learn and adapt the plan as needed.

You can decide on what type of scenario would be the most relevant for you and your community. Some ideas to consider are:

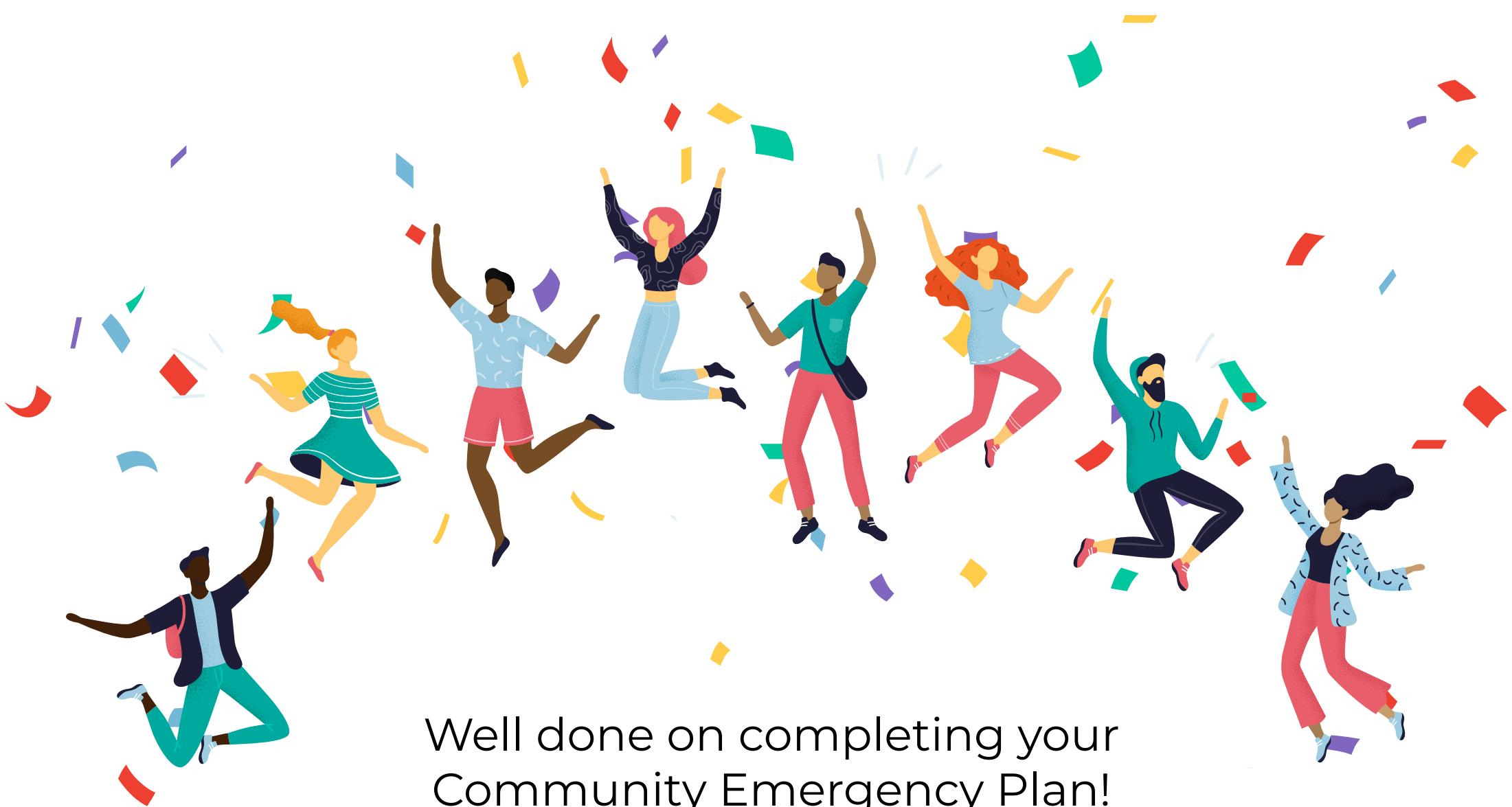
- Scenario 1: A heatwave warning is issued by the Met Office that temperatures in London will reach 40 by the end of the week. Consider how you might prepare in advance and how you would respond.
- Scenario 2: A flood warning had been issued for your community area, there is a need to communicate the risks to your community and engage in your designated response activities. Consider how you might prepare in advance and how you would respond.

**YOU CAN USE
AND UPDATE
THE FOLLOWING
TABLE TO KEEP
A LOG OF YOUR
PRACTICES:**

Practice and Exercise Log

Use the table below to capture the learnings from tests and practices of your Community Emergency Plan.

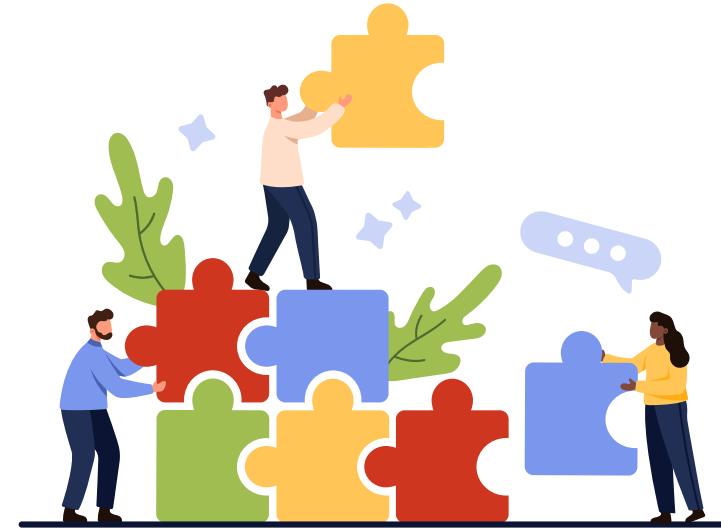
Practice or exercise date	What went well?	What needs improving?	Key actions from learning
<i>Example: 1st December 2024</i>	<i>Example: Communication to relevant people worked and happened quickly</i>	<i>Example: More understanding needed of what to do / not do in an emergency.</i>	<i>Example: Increase knowledge and awareness of hazards and the actions to take.</i>



Well done on completing your
Community Emergency Plan!

Revisit, revise, repeat.

Now that you have completed your community emergency plan you should treat it as a living, ever evolving document, not something that sits on the shelf. It is recommended that you review your plan every 6-12 months, and always after it has been activated.



You should feel comfortable to revisit any phase or step within this process that feels relevant or needs further review or consideration. To help with these considerations, [here is a practical checklist to think through and revisit](#).

- Storage:** Where is the digital soft copy of your plan stored, is it in a shared space such as a OneDrive or SharePoint? Have you ensured you have up to date hard copies available, in case you cannot access the soft copies? Have you considered GDPR and sensitive data protection?
- Other Storage:** Have you considered the logistics involved, such as a place for storing equipment or other important documents?
- Insurance:** Have you got the required insurance in place for the activities you plan to carry out? Try reaching out to existing groups or your local Neighbourhood Watch group to see how they manage this.
- Updating and maintaining:** Do you have a process in place for updating your plan? How will you monitor and maintain these developments, and how often?
- Making your plan inclusive:** What are the different cultural or religious considerations that you need to include in your plan? What accessibility requirements might you need to consider?
- Sharing:** Are the emergency services aware that you are developing your plan? How could they help? Have you shared your plan have you shared your plan with the local authority emergency planning team?
- Emergency Volunteering:** How can volunteers and their skills help you and your community? The next part of this toolkit will help you explore this further.

PART 3

**Expanding your
community resilience
further**



PART 3

Expanding your community resilience further.

Once you have your emergency plan you can consider what else you and your community want to explore and focus on in Part 3. Perhaps you want to expand into emergency volunteering, or maybe you want to explore how your community space or venue could be used to support more coordinated community action that supports resilience. Part 3 will cover all the elements and considerations you need to be able to move forward with confidence.



EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERING

This part of the London Community Resilience Toolkit will explore how volunteers can be utilised across the different stages of the emergency cycle. It will include guidance for supporting emergency volunteers. It will also explore the important roles that form your Emergency Volunteering Team including the Emergency Volunteer Coordinator, Incident Volunteer Leader and Safeguarding Lead.

The Importance of Volunteers and what is Emergency Volunteering?

Volunteers in London play a vital role in our city, from charity shop volunteers to mentors for young people, and we rely on people who choose to give their time. The longevity of a volunteer programme depends on volunteering roles that are meaningful, rewarding and supported. We know those who volunteer in their community are often best placed to understand their community's needs and what might impact their neighbours.

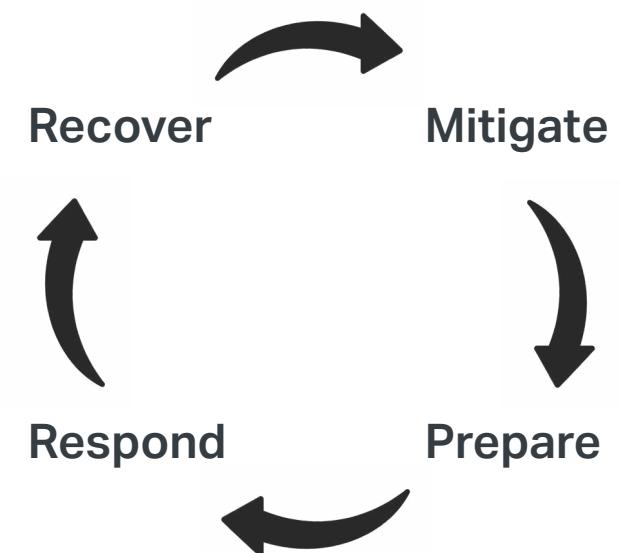
Volunteering is a way that individuals can contribute to their communities, to support their neighbours and help those who may need additional or different types of support. Volunteering also builds the skills and capabilities of people to help themselves and each other in the event of an emergency, which is essential for resilience, especially in the context of a large-scale event where emergency services are stretched.

Emergency volunteering is when individuals can support in responding to an emergency by giving their time, efforts and skills in a voluntary capacity. These emergency volunteers can play a role throughout the emergency cycle. The response from volunteers is inspiring and can make a massive difference to the outcome of an emergency.

This part of the London Community Resilience Toolkit will explore how volunteers can be utilised across the different stages of the emergency cycle. It will include guidance for supporting emergency volunteers. It will also explore the important roles that form your Emergency Volunteering Team including the Emergency Volunteer Coordinator, Incident Volunteer Leader and Safeguarding Lead.

What is the emergency cycle?

The emergency cycle is the stages you should follow in order to improve your emergency planning. An emergency may happen at any point in your planning timeframe, but if you follow the emergency stages you ensure your response is always followed by steps to recover and ultimately strengthen your community through preparation for the future.



EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Coordinating a team of emergency volunteers.

The person that leads an emergency volunteering team is called an Emergency Volunteer Coordinator. This person could be a paid member of staff in your community, faith or neighbourhood group, or a volunteer themselves.

It is an Emergency Volunteer Coordinator's job to help lead emergency volunteering efforts before or after an emergency. They are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the group of volunteers, outside of an emergency, and ensuring everything is in place and ready for when an emergency occurs.

It is important to remember that the Emergency Volunteer Coordinator should consider the wellbeing of volunteers. You can find additional resources on wellbeing here:

- British Red Cross Wellbeing Toolkit: <https://www.redcross.org.au/globalassets/cms/first-aid/21070-arc-wellbeing-toolkit--v2-hr.pdf>
- NHS Every Mind Matters: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>
- Contact the Samaritans: www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan
- Soothing/distracting activities from Mind+: <https://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/our-policy-work/sport-physical-activity-and-mental-health/resources/>
- Calm Zone: www.thecalmzone.net

Key things Coordinators Do	
	Developing and maintaining interest and awareness
Coordinating the actions of the group	Developing relationships and networks with wider groups and organisations
Organising training and skills development: buddy working, safeguarding, awareness, spontaneous volunteers	Looking for funding opportunities
The longevity of your volunteers programme relies on volunteers feeling supported. Ensure the safety and wellbeing of volunteers through clear communication and escalation processes.	Ensuring that relevant procedures are in place and regularly reviewed such as risk assessments, Community Emergency Plans, training and training logs, insurance, GDPR processes, equipment usage and storage, spontaneous volunteers

EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Emergency Volunteer Coordinator considerations at each stage of the Emergency Cycle:



Leading Emergency Volunteers during an emergency.

While the role of the Emergency Volunteering Coordinator is important to bring together the volunteers, they do not replace or take on wider incident leadership roles, unless specifically trained to do so. An **Incident Volunteer Leader** would be the person who is responsible for the volunteers during an emergency and applying the community volunteers' capabilities and skills in the situation, following dynamic risk assessments. This role is also best suited to take on the Safeguarding Lead role in your Emergency Volunteering Team.

It is important to understand the distinction between the coordinator and incident leader roles and have clearly agreed roles and responsibilities.

VOLUNTEERING - PREPARE

Preparing your volunteers for an emergency.

Whether you have existing volunteers in your community, faith or neighbourhood group or you are going to set-up a new volunteering scheme, it is important to best prepare your volunteers before an emergency happens.

Volunteers play a key role in the Prepare phase. For example:

- Taking part in the community mapping and community emergency plan exercises and supporting with the creation of those documents.
- Undertaking training in emergency response, first aid, mental health first aid, and other skills that you identify in your 'skills audit' (see guidance and templates in Community Emergency Planning, page 29-43).
- Encouraging and supporting others to create a personal and family emergency plan using the Government's Prepare information and advice online: <https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/> .

To prepare for the emergency, you will need to think about what roles you and your volunteers will play. The types of roles volunteers can play in an emergency include:

- Wayfinding and Signposting - well informed volunteers directing public to points of care, support and shelter
- Listen - Public may be distressed - listening can be the best way to connect them to support available
- Practical Assistance - organising donations, maintaining temporary community spaces
- Team Leaders - experienced volunteers helping to coordinate sub teams
- Administrative - supporting additional enquiries from concerned members of the public over the phone

Situation	Example Volunteer Role
In a flood, a local cafe which is on higher ground has been turned into an impromptu community resilience hub	Welcoming people as they come in and preparing refreshments for those who have nowhere to go.
There has been civil unrest, and a local library has been attacked.	Cleaning, repair works, redecorating.
During a severe heatwave, there are fires in a local green space.	Sharing messages about safety and fire prevention from trusted sources on social media, particularly in community languages.
A disaster in another country with significant loss of life.	Provide a listening service to those from the communities affected.
A community where there are high levels of deprivation must leave their homes due to an emergency.	Organising and supporting with activities to keep people occupied in a local community centre.
A large number of people need emergency food parcels.	Sorting donations, creating food parcels and delivering to those who are housebound.

VOLUNTEER PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST & RESOURCES

- Define what and how volunteers would be involved in an emergency – they should never take the place of the emergency services or put themselves in danger.
- Have safeguarding procedures in place, including a Safeguarding Policy and Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Have guidance in place on lone working, health and safety and inclusion.
- Make sure that your volunteers are well trained on your policies and procedures outlined above.
- Provide a brief on their role and a named point of contact for any questions.
- Understand the skills your volunteers have - you could conduct a 'skills audit' of your volunteers (see guidance and templates in Community Emergency Planning, 29-43).
- Support training your volunteers in skills that you will need but don't have yet.
- Make sure you have the right insurance in place to support your volunteering actions.
- Plan for how to safely identify volunteers responding to an emergency, e.g. brightly coloured lanyards, t-shirts, hi-vis jackets.
- Ensure you have evidence of any relevant training or qualifications that volunteers say they have, and they have declared any health issues you need to be aware of. Also ensure you have emergency contact details for volunteers.

You can also connect with your local Volunteer Centre for further advice and support. You can find a list of London's Volunteer Centres [here](#).

To find more information about policies and procedures for volunteering more generally, including safeguarding, see [here](#):

- If your organisation works mainly with children, use NSPCC's guide to writing a safeguarding policy for children.
- If your organisation works mainly with adults at risk, use Ann Craft Trust's guide to writing a safeguarding policy for adults.
- You can get advice on the process of Disclosure and Barring Service checks through the DBS outreach service: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-dbs-regional-outreach-service>
- You can see an example lone working policy from Volunteering Kingston here: <https://www.volunteeringkingston.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Volunteer-lone-working-policy-2.pdf>
- You can read more about volunteers and health & safety from the NCVO here: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers/volunteers-and-the-law/volunteering-and-health-and-safety/>

VOLUNTEERING - RESPOND

Supporting your emergency volunteer response.

When an emergency happens, you will want to activate your emergency volunteers who you have well prepared for this situation. In the prepare stage you should have identified some of the roles and guidance needed to do this.

If you are leading volunteers in an emergency, as a trained volunteer incident leader, there are some key things to remember.

Volunteer Response Checklist:

- Brief your volunteers on the situation and how they should be following your safeguarding, lone working, health and safety and other policies and procedures.
- Make sure your volunteers know and understand the roles they are fulfilling.
- Make it clear to volunteers that even during an emergency they should not volunteer if they do not feel safe.
- Encourage a 'speak up culture' where volunteers can ask questions and raise concerns.
- Be clear and confident in communications outlining the escalation process volunteers should follow to escalate issues and get specialist support.
- Ensure volunteers only take on tasks they feel able / competent to take on.

- Do not allow anyone to volunteer for more than 6 hours at a time and ensure that everyone, including yourself, takes regular breaks and looks after themselves during that time.
- Use the buddy system so volunteers work in pairs, for their safety and for others.
- Hold check-ins with your volunteers to see how they are doing.
- Remind volunteers that they must not act as enforcement or security.
- Thank volunteers and ensure the difference they are making is clear.

Always remember that if volunteers are not following guidance and instructions, you can ask them to step down from responding. It is important to ensure safety comes first.

You also need to be mindful that in an emergency there is often a surge of interest from other people who want to volunteer and help, sometimes referred to as 'spontaneous volunteers'. When working with spontaneous volunteers it is important for them to follow your existing procedures and policies. You can find guidance on this type of volunteering [here](#).

Feel confident to say 'no thank you' to offers from volunteers where you don't feel you or they could safely add value. You could signpost them to other opportunities or ask to take their details and get in touch later.

VOLUNTEERING - RECOVER

Supporting the recovery in your community.

Volunteers play a key role in the recovery efforts after an emergency happens. They can be the consistent support needed for the days, weeks, months even years that lie ahead after a crisis and emergency services have left.

Your emergency volunteers could play a crucial role in a recovery from an emergency by taking part in any of the following:

- Safely taking part in cleaning, maintenance and repair activities (providing they have the necessary skills, training, PPE and insurance to do so).
- Providing signposting information, for specialist services providing both emotional and practical support and guidance to people affected by the events.
- Running or supporting with wellbeing, remembrance and reflection activities, for example a creative workshop for children to help them process the events or a remembrance circle for a community.
- With specialist training, providing listening services for those who want someone to talk to.
- Take part in community consultations to capture learnings and prepare for future emergencies.
- Sorting and organising donations.
- Fundraising.

Volunteer Recover Checklist

- Reflect and review processes and roles set up during the Respond phase, checking that they are sustainable and fit for purpose.
- Review and update your Community Emergency Plan if needed, based on your learnings and reflections.
- Take the time to celebrate the contribution of volunteers during the Respond phase, and reflect on what has worked well.
- Acknowledge that some volunteers may want to move on after the Respond phase has come to an end, and explain why some volunteers are no longer needed in a positive way.
- Continue to support and engage with the community during their recovery

Throughout this stage of emergency volunteering, you should also refer back to the Volunteer Preparedness Checklist and Volunteer Response Checklist, particularly to ensure volunteers are properly trained and supported to take on these tasks.

VOLUNTEERING - MITIGATE

Learning for the future from your response.

It is important that once an emergency volunteering response is over, you undertake a review of your response to aid future learning and 'mitigate' the impact of future emergencies. Reflect on what could be improved and, equally importantly, reflect on what went well. In your review you should celebrate those community partnerships, strategies and processes that worked, and these can then be utilised as a standard to aspire to in the future.

As part of this review, it is critical to gather the perspectives of the volunteers who took part as the longevity of your emergency Volunteering Programme relies on Volunteers Returning and informing the programme with their experience.

Undertaking a review can help mitigate future emergencies and better respond if an emergency happens again.



You might want to bring together volunteers, staff and other key stakeholders and ask the following questions:

Looking at the Community Emergency Plan – what did you do according to the plan and where did the plan not fit the situation?

- What went well?
- What was challenging?
- What information would it have been useful to have earlier?
- What skills would it have been useful to have?
- What risks were not anticipated?
- In terms of numbers of volunteers – did you have enough/too many/too few?
- Did the volunteering group represent the community we were supporting?
- How can we improve the diversity of our volunteers going forward?
- Did volunteers feel supported?
- How can we improve support processes in future?

You can finish by asking everyone to reflect on one memory that they have from the response phase.

These reflection questions can also support your scenario exercise, when you practice your plan. See Page 40 for further information.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE HUBS

Community venues can play an important role in supporting and building community resilience.

There are some great examples of this from around the world and here in the UK, with the concept growing momentum all the time. When venues take on the role to coordinate and facilitate local community resilience activities, we refer to these as Community Resilience Hubs.



What is a Community Resilience Hub?

There isn't an exact science to a Community Resilience Hub as they are designed to meet the local needs of its community, which vary from place to place. Some of the key things that a functioning hub could do:

- Coordinate and host local resilience building activities, e.g. training and information sharing.
- Work collaboratively with local businesses, the local authority, charities, faith based and other community groups to determine what the local needs are.
- Trial and test things like this toolkit.
- House equipment and supplies that could be used in an emergency, e.g. food, water and sanitary products.
- Connect with other Community Resilience Hubs to learn and collaborate.
- Be a known and trusted place where community members feel valued, safe and respected or work towards achieving this.

HOW COULD YOUR COMMUNITY VENUE OR SPACE SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY RESILIENCE?

Reflecting on the topics, activities, actions that you have completed so far in the toolkit, think about how your community space or venue could support. Here are some considerations to get you started.

Responding to Climate Change

- Do you have an outdoor space as part of your community space or venue?
- How could you use this space to support climate initiatives? Perhaps you could use a community space as a cool space in hot weather, or warm hub in cold weather? Or have water management features to minimise flood risk?

Inclusion Principles

- Do you have trusted relationships and connections with a diverse range of community members through your venue or space?
- How could you ensure that these voices, opinions and experiences are included in your community resilience activities?

Community Emergency Mapping

- Have you captured all the community venues and spaces on your community map?
- How could you share, promote, celebrate these spaces to ensure they are part of your community resilience building activities?

Community Skills and Capabilities

- Do you have a large space such as a hall, a conference room or something similar?
- How could you use this space to support skill development and capability building, such as hosting training and workshop sessions? Or offering your space for community use?

Community Emergency Plan

- Have you considered how your venue or space is utilised within your community emergency plan?
- Have you ensured you have thought through the practicalities of your space when it comes to an emergency, how can it be used? Are people aware?

Community Volunteering

- Do you have community volunteers, and could your space or venue support their initiatives such as a meeting point? A storage location?
- What other activities and roles could your venue or space support?

Community Response

- Is your space integrated into the wider emergency response network? Do you have strong relationships with the local authority? The Borough resilience forum?
- Are there instances of spontaneous community activation and mobilisation that you could learn from?

PART 4

**Wrapping up and
reflecting on your toolkit
journey**



PART 4

Wrapping up and reflecting on your toolkit journey.

While this is the final part of this toolkit that does not mean that your community resilience journey ends here. Part four offers you a moment of reflection, to look back at the completed toolkit and capture your learnings and actions, to ensure you can continue to grow your community resilience moving forward.



TOOLKIT SUMMARY



- Increased your climate knowledge and explored hazards such as heatwaves, flooding and cold weather.
- Explored inclusion principles which you will be able to take forward as you continue to build your community resilience.
- Collaborated with your community group to collectively make decisions and plans.
- Expanded your networks and relationships and identified new ones to unlock.
- Completed your Community Emergency Plan and have clear actions for when and how to activate.
- Developed skills that will continue to grow as you progress with your community resilience.
- Considered the role of volunteering and the types of roles that you and your community could benefit from having.
- Thought about how your community spaces could be used within your community resilience activities.

FINAL WORDS

As you move forward with your new knowledge, relationships and actions, you are encouraged to treat your resilience as an active and evolving process, by returning to the toolkit and your Community Emergency Plan and practicing and expanding your skills and resources.

To support this, you are encouraged to reflect on your completed toolkit, and think back over the activities, conversations and decisions that informed the process. This is a way to acknowledge your achievements and capture learnings for next time. It also helps you make a commitment to keep the toolkit as an active, live, ongoing activity that you return to and continue to develop.

Get in touch if you would like support with any elements of the toolkit, if you have any questions or if you would like to share any comments or experiences from using the toolkit. We would love to hear from you.

Write to London Resilience Unit on londonresilience@london.gov.uk.

YOUR REFLECTION

How did you approach the toolkit and the tasks?

What was something that you learnt?

What was something that you enjoyed?

If you were going to start the process again, what would you do differently?

When are you next going to review the toolkit and update your Community Emergency Plan?

ACTIVITIES AND ACTIONS YOU ARE TAKING FORWARD

Action/Activity

Action/Activity

Action/Activity

Action/Activity

Action/Activity

Action/Activity

Action/Activity

YOUR REFLECTION

LONDON RESILIENCE

www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/fire-and-city-resilience/
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