



South Wales Local Resilience Forum

Fforwm Gwydnwch Lleol De Cymru

Community Risks: What YOU can do



**Produced by the
South Wales Local Resilience Forum**

www.SWLRF.co.uk

This booklet outlines what the potential local risks are and what you can do to prepare yourself, your homes, your communities and your businesses.

BACKGROUND

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, we have a legal duty to identify potential risks to local communities in the South Wales Police area. The risks identified fall broadly into the categories of natural events, human diseases, animal diseases, major accidents and malicious attacks such as metal or cable theft. This is called a Community Risk Register.

The Community Risk Register helps emergency planners from different organisations to work together to prioritise, plan and respond to these risks should they occur.

If a risk is included in the Community Risk Register, it does not mean it will happen.

It means we know it is a possibility, and we have made arrangements to reduce its impact on the community and environment.

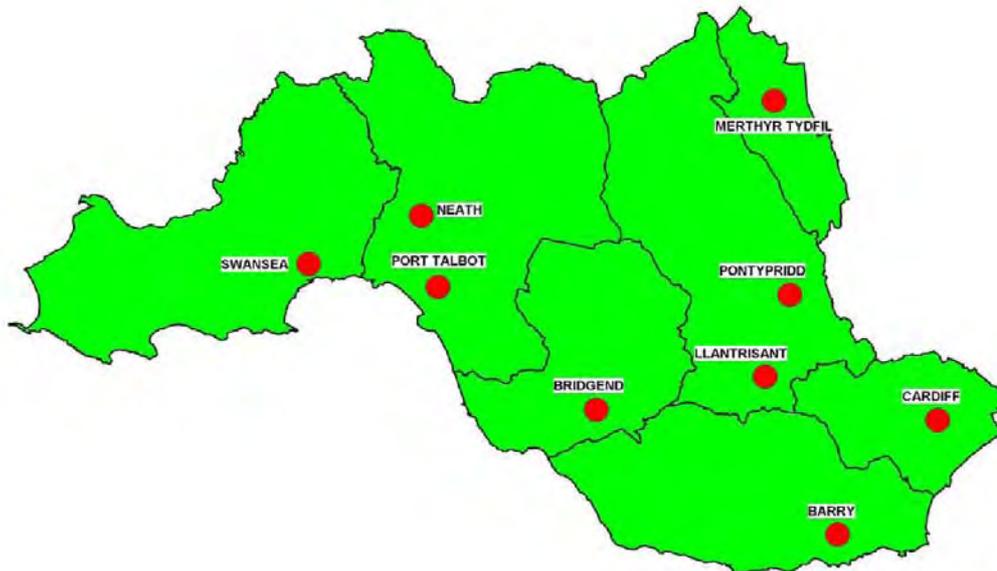
The Community Risk Register only covers generic non-malicious events such as natural, health-related or industrial hazards, rather than threats such as terrorist incidents.

To see the full Community Risk Register visit www.swlrf.co.uk

It is important that emergency planners from different organisations are prepared for emergencies, but it is also important that YOU are prepared.



THE SOUTH WALES LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM



The South Wales Resilience Forum is a group made up of all the organisations required to prepare for and respond to a major emergency within the South Wales Police area.

We put together the Community Risk Register and we are made up of representatives from:

- All of the Councils in the area
- Welsh Government
- Emergency Services
- Environment Agency Wales
- Animal Health Veterinary Laboratory Agency
- Health Organisations
- Armed Forces
- Met Office
- Coastguard
- Utility Companies

We work together to ensure that the best possible preparations and plans are in place to respond to emergencies. These are regularly tested and updated so that we can respond immediately and effectively to any eventuality.



MANAGING RISK

Risks are an inevitable part of daily life. But some risks are more obvious than others.

When putting together the Community Risk Register, we look at the likelihood and the impact of risks.

The likelihood is the probability of an incident related to a hazard or threat, happening over the next five years.

Impact is a measure of the severity of the potential harm caused by the hazard or threat, looking at the impacts on health, the economy, the environment and society.

Depending on the potential likelihood and impact of the risk, it is placed in a priority order. This helps us to look at how we can reduce risks with the ultimate aim of reducing them to an acceptable level.

All risks in the Community Risk Register are reviewed every year and changes made as needed.



RISKS

We have identified the following risks as a priority for the South Wales Police area. This does not mean they will happen; only that we know it is a possibility and we have made arrangements to reduce its impact on the community and environment.



PANDEMIC FLU

Pandemic flu is not the same as seasonal flu. Every year in the UK we have a 'flu season' which usually runs from October to May.

A flu pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges and spreads around the world. As it is a new type of flu, most people do not have immunity meaning it can spread more easily.

Pandemic flu may be associated with mild to moderate illness (which may or may not be widespread), or significant severe illness and mortality in certain ages or patient groups.

A flu pandemic can occur at any time and in extreme cases it may disrupt the normal functioning of society.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Keep as healthy as possible and follow these basic hygiene practices:

- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, and use a tissue when possible.
- Dispose of dirty tissues promptly and carefully.
- Maintain good basic hygiene. For example, wash hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus from your hands to your face or to other people.
- Clean hard surfaces (e.g. door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product.
- Help children to follow this advice.

Keep personal stocks of "over the counter" cold and flu medication to help relieve your symptoms.

Know the sickness and closure arrangements for your child's school.

Know the sickness reporting arrangement of your employer.

Identify a 'flu friend' who could collect your medication, food and other supplies if you become ill.

Look out for elderly relatives or neighbours who may need extra help. Contact your local council for more advice and assistance.

Look out for and observe advice and guidance from the NHS. For more information visit www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk



FLOODING

There are three main sources of flooding: coastal, river and surface water. Of these, coastal flooding has the potential to have the greatest impact. Excessive tidal levels may cause coastal and estuary defences to be overtopped or breached.

River and surface water flooding may be caused by excessive rainfall. There has been a lot of investment in flood alleviation schemes (commonly known as flood defences) to reduce the consequences for all types of flooding in Wales but as was seen most recently in Cockermonth, some floods can overwhelm a flood defence so we need to ensure we are prepared.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE A FLOOD

Environment Agency Wales provides a free flood warning service called Floodline Warnings Direct which offers advance warnings to many communities at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea.

Find out whether your property is in the flood risk area and if you are eligible to sign up to receive flood warnings by logging on to Environment Agency Wales's website (www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodwales) or calling Floodline on **0845 988 1188**.

Know what to do to protect your property during a flood and try to ensure you have adequate contents and property insurance.

If you are able to go to family or friends if you are evacuated from your home, make arrangements now. This will form a key part of your personal flood plan.

Prepare a flood plan for your home or business. Download your personal plan from www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodwales.

Work with your neighbours to complete a Community Flood Plan – this will help community members and groups work together when flooding occurs.

If you are interested in developing a Community Flood Plan for your area or want to find out if one has already been developed visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodwales.



WHAT YOU NEED TO DO DURING A FLOOD

In the event of a flood it is important to focus on the safety of you and your family. If you are about to flood, DO THESE THINGS IMMEDIATELY:

- Tune into your local radio station on a battery or wind-up radio.
- Switch off your electricity / gas supplies.
- If you have a [flood plan](#), put it into action.
- Move important or irreplaceable items to safety
- Don't forget to bring your pets and pet supplies if you leave your home

If there's time, fit any [flood protection products](#) you might have such as:

- Flood boards
- Airbrick covers
- Sandbags or alternative barriers
- Toilet bungs (only needed for downstairs toilets)
- Any other flood product

You should be prepared to act quickly and get yourself to safety. Put the safety of people first and listen to advice from the Police and the Emergency Services. Remember that their concern is for your safety.

- Further advice is available from Environment Agency Wales here www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodwales
- or call Floodline on 0845 9881188.



COASTAL POLLUTION AND SEABORNE INCIDENTS

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has well practised plans, including all the relevant emergency services, for both major and minor pollution incidents. There are also procedures for handling vessels that are involved in accidents.

Contingency plans have been developed and regular hands-on training takes place to respond to a pollution incident.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Avoid polluted areas and listen for advice and information on local radio stations.

Co-operate with organisations during any clean-up operation.

Do not scavenge any cargo that may be washed ashore as it could be dangerous and is a criminal offence.



INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

Certain industrial activities involving dangerous substances have the potential to cause accidents. Some of these accidents may cause serious injuries to people or damage to the environment. Much has been done to help prevent industrial accidents and to minimise their effects.

The South Wales Police area is not considered more at risk than any other part of the country.

Work is being carried out in the area to identify hazardous sites which have the potential to cause an incident affecting the local community. Protocols have been put in place for some sites and other critical locations that may have a great impact on the community if an emergency incident were to occur.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Be aware if you have received specific emergency instructions from a neighbouring industrial site and endeavour to follow those instructions and wait for further advice.

If you hear a warning of an emergency incident, go indoors, close all windows and doors and tune into local radio for further advice.

Co-operate with the emergency services fully. They are there to help. Stay calm and listen to their instructions if you are evacuated from your home for any reason.



ANIMAL DISEASES

Animal diseases can have a large economic and social effect on the United Kingdom. Diseases can be classed as endemic (prevalent in the UK) or exotic (not currently present in the UK), they can also be notifiable. Notifiable animal diseases are required by law to be reported to the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency to investigate further.

Exotic notifiable animal diseases can affect a wide range of species including horses, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and chickens and other domestic animals such as birds, cats and dogs. Some diseases can also affect human health as well.

For further information on notifiable animal disease, please view the following website <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animal-diseases/>.

The South Wales Police area is not considered more at risk of animal diseases than any other part of the country.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Inform your local Vet Practice if you are concerned about the disease status of your farm livestock animals or domestic pets. If a notifiable disease is suspected they will inform Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency who will investigate further.

Whether you keep one farm animal as a pet or a commercial flock/herd, they need to be registered. Please contact your local Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency office for further information.

Do not feed kitchen waste to farm livestock animals as it is illegal. This is one of the ways that exotic diseases like Foot and Mouth can be introduced to the country.

Abide by the animal movement regulations.

Before purchasing animals including domestic pets, check their health status.

Protect your livestock and domestic pets against disease with good biosecurity and vaccinate if there is a licensed vaccine available.

In the event of an outbreak of disease, follow advice from the Welsh Government and Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency to help protect your farm livestock animals and limit possible spread of disease.

For more information on all above please contact your Animal Health department at your Local Authority or the local Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency office.



SEVERE WEATHER

Severe weather can take many different forms such as heavy rain, snow, strong winds and extreme temperatures, both heat waves and cold snaps. It can cause significant disruption to normal life.

For weather forecast information and warnings visit the Met Office website at http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/uk_forecast_warnings.html

For advice regarding what you can do both before and during severe weather to keep safe please see the following information <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/advice/>

You can also sign up for weather warning email alerts at <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/guide-to-emails>

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Listen to weather forecasts and heed any warnings of extreme weather.

Check on the well-being of elderly neighbours.

Contact local schools websites to check on opening hours.

If you have to travel in severe weather make sure you have adequate clothing and emergency supplies in your vehicle.

Check your employer's business continuity arrangements.



LOSS OF UTILIITIES

Utilities includes all of the different essential services that we rely on as part of day to day life and the economy - electricity, water, gas, oil fuel, transport, telecommunications, food, health and financial services.

Many utilities are dependent on one another, eg. electricity is required at water pumping stations, telecoms and electricity are required to allow cash machines and cash registers to function.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO?

Ensure you are aware of where the cut off points/ stop cocks are for your utilities

Have contact numbers for your utility suppliers to hand

Keep an emergency kit in your home containing items such as a wind-up torch, radio, bottled water, etc.

Outages may come without warning, so be prepared.

For further information see **PREPARING FOR AN EMERGENCY Section (page 14)**



PREPARING FOR AN EMERGENCY

Preparedness



Knowing what do to during an emergency is an important part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count.

What can you do to be better prepared in your home?

Some emergencies require evacuation, some require staying put – are you ready?

In the case of most major emergencies, the simple advice is to go inside, stay inside, and tune into local radio.

We use local radio to broadcast emergency warnings and information as it is one of the most accessible means of communication. It can also be received in homes, businesses and cars.

Radio is also very reliable as it can still broadcast and be received during a power cut.

With most incidents the safest place to be is indoors, and with correct preparation you should be able to stay there safely for some time (remember in the case of a fire in a building you are in – get out and stay out).

The LRF organisations work together with BBC Local Radio (and other media outlets) to make sure that they can give out accurate and up-to-date information to keep people fully informed on what to do during any emergency.



HOW CAN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY BE PREPARED?



COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Wide-scale emergencies can and do happen. In the last 5 years the UK has seen events such as heavy snow, flooding, terrorist attacks, utilities failures and fuel shortages.

The lessons learned from the 2007 floods showed that those communities which were prepared for emergency events were better equipped to deal with the impacts. This means that the individuals within those communities were able to cope without fear or panic.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN?

A community emergency plan provides advice and guidance to a local community (this may be the parish council, neighbourhood watch area or even a single street) both in advance of and during any significant emergency.

WHY HAVE A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN?

The purpose of community resilience is to encourage people to plan and be prepared to put in place a self-help response within a community which is affected by an emergency. Experience has shown that sometimes due to the scale and/or nature of the emergency, the normal response provided by the emergency services and the local authorities can be delayed. On these occasions anything which the local community can do to support each other will help them to deal with the emergency more effectively.

Community resilience measures can be as little as just having a designated point of contact within the parish who can receive warnings and messages from emergency services and local authorities.

The plan can grow over time to include areas such as:

- Community buildings which can be used as emergency evacuation facilities
- Knowledge of skills and expertise within the community
- Knowledge of special equipment or vehicles within the community
- Identification of vulnerable premises and people within the local area
- Specific actions based on specific risks.



How can your business be prepared?

If you own or are responsible for a business or organisation, have you considered the impacts from external emergencies?

How would your organisation cope with

- A sudden and significant reduction in staff?
- Denial of access to a site or geographical area?
- Unexpected loss of mains electricity?
- A temporary disruption to gas supplies?
- A disruption to the supply of mains water and sewerage?
- Significant disruption to transport?
- Disruption to the availability of oil and fuel?
- A loss of telecommunications?
- A loss of, or disruption to your computer systems?
- A disruption which affects your key suppliers or partners?

Does your organisation have adequate business continuity measures in place?

5 STEPS TO EFFECTIVE BUSINESS CONTINUITY

1. Understand your business

- What parts of the business are critical and what priority would you allocate to restoring functions if they fail?

2. Risk assessment

- What risks does your business face (internal and external)?
- Consider these risks within your business risk assessment. What can you put in place to reduce the likelihood of the risks and/or the impact of them?

3. Consider the resource needs of each of your business functions

- People
- Premises
- Equipment
- Information
- Communications
- External suppliers / contractors

BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT

Business Continuity Management is the process through which organisations aim to continue the delivery of their key products and services during and following a disruption to normal activity, and to recover afterwards. Effective business continuity is the first line of defence for any organisation to ensure they are able to maintain the delivery of their core services and, in the long-run, to assure their survival.

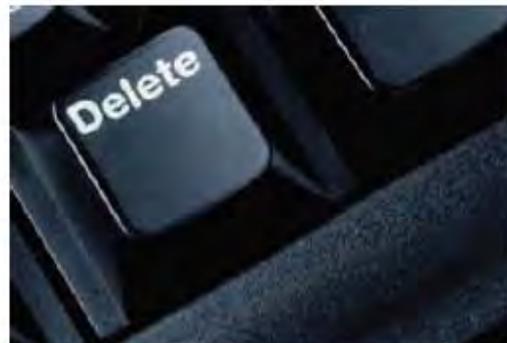
Organisations should consider a wide range of potentially disruptive challenges, both internal, for example disruption to computer systems, and external, for example severe weather.

The Community Risk Register provides businesses with information on the likelihood and potential impact of a range of different risks, in order to assist their own risk management and business continuity management arrangements.

4. Document information in a user-friendly format about your businesses' critical functions and the resources required including alternatives / backups for each.

- This will assist you during and after an emergency

5. Train and test your staff in activating the continuity plan and the roles and procedures within it.



FURTHER INFORMATION AND HELP

Animal diseases

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
www.defra.gov.uk

Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency
www.defra.gov.uk/ahvla

Local Council issues

Bridgend Council
01656 643643
www.bridgend.gov.uk

Cardiff Council
029 2087 2087
www.cardiff.gov.uk

Merthyr Council
01685 725000
www.merthyr.gov.uk

Neath Port Talbot
01639 686868
www.npt.gov.uk

Rhondda –Cynon-Taf
www.rctcbc.gov.uk

Swansea Council
01792 872 255
www.swansea.gov.uk

Vale of Glamorgan
01446 7000111
www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Environmental Events

Environment Agency Wales Flood Awareness:
Flood Line 0845 988 1188
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodwales



Emergencies

999

South Wales Police

101

www.southwalespolice.gov.uk

Human diseases

NHS Direct Wales

0845 4647

www.nhsdirect@wales.nhs.uk

Public Health Wales

www.publichealthwales.org

Severe Weather

For weather forecast information and warnings

http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/uk_forecast_warnings.html

For advice regarding what you can do both before and during severe weather to keep safe please see the following information

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/advice/>

To sign up for weather warning email alerts at

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