**Community Resilience Plans – Guidance Notes**

**Ashford Borough Council**

**SECTION 1 - OVERVIEW TO COMPLETING RESILIENCE PLANS**

Whether you are using the full template or simplified template, the guidance below gives further details on each section and the reason why it is included within the plans.

Both templates have sections marked as **blue** where details are required:



Where relevant, some sections will have general guidance shown in ***red italics*** to help you identify what to include. These lines can be removed once you have inserted information relevant for your community:



This may also be used to guide you to the correct source to find information to be included, such as:



Which template should I use?

Deciding on which plan template to use should depend on the size of your parish area and risks to you. If you live in a high-risk flood area or are aware of areas prone to flood in the past, please use the full template as this contains a specific flood plan section.

If your parish is smaller and has no flooding, we recommend using the simplified template where there is still room within the appendices to add a basic flood map.

If you live in a small parish and work closely with other surrounding communities, you can consider working together to form one plan for your ‘cluster’, which benefits from pulling together your resources during an emergency.

**SECTION 2 - BUILDING YOUR PLAN**

Community Resilience

How resilient is your community, ward, parish, village or street? How resilience is your sports club or other community group? What can you do to help build this resilience?

By building on existing local relationships and networks, using local knowledge and preparing for risks, your community will be better able to cope during and after a major incident or emergency.

Some existing local community groups will have information on how to get involved or how they can fit resilience into their agenda. These could include Parish Councils, faith organisations, Neighbourhood Watch groups, Scout Groups, Resident’s Associations and youth clubs.

Community Skills and Resources

**The Community Resilience Response Team** will encourage residents to provide information, voluntary help and resources to assist with any perceived incident.

Theyare people who have recognised the need to consider what their community might need during an emergency and have set about helping themselves to be prepared.

You do not have to establish a new group. You may instead wish to build on and use existing community groups and consider how they might include building community resilience into their activities.

This group will also represent their local community by providing a link between the community, Ashford Borough Council and the emergency responders. They will also coordinate the work of the group in preparing the Community Resilience Plan.

**Volunteers** may come from local organisations or individuals within the community who would be prepared to volunteer during an incident. These could include following skills:

* Trained Flood Wardens.
* Ex-members of emergency services.
* Youth groups, Scouts, Guides, Residents’ Associations, Neighbourhood Watch, Women’s Institute
* Medical / First Aid experience.
* Comfortable handling heavy objects e.g., sandbags, furniture.
* Experience with caring for the elderly or vulnerable.
* Trained Dementia Friend.
* Foreign language skills, including Sign Language.

**Equipment** includes tools and machinery that may be needed during an incident and people qualified, capable and willing to operate them.

**Supplies** includesfood, water, or medical supplies that local businesses would be willing to provide to the community during an emergency.

**Transport** includes vehicles used by the community in an emergency and drivers willing and able to help with the distribution of supplies such as 4x4 vehicles for access issues or tractors for snow clearance.

Contact details of community members who have relevant skills and resources available during an emergency and are willing to help, should be recorded in **Appendix B** of your plan.

Community Organisations

Engaging with your community organisations in the planning phase can help make connections for when you are responding to an emergency.

Contact voluntary and community organisations within your area to see who would be able to offer support when required.

Contact details of community organisations that have agreed to help in an emergency, should be recorded in **Appendix B** of your plan.

Community Response Centre (CRC)

***See Section 3.2 Full Plan / Section 8 Simplified Plan.***

A Community Response Centre (CRC) is a temporary community shelter.

Community Response Centres are used to help your community before the Local Authority can get to you to set up an official Rest Centre. Once arrived, Ashford Borough Council may continue to use your CRC where appropriate or move evacuees to a more suitable Rest Centre location which has been specifically identified to meet the needs of those evacuated.

It might be necessary for some members of the community to be evacuated from their homes to a place of safety and a CRC provides a quick hub for this whilst a Rest Centre is set up.

An ideal choice would be somewhere central and well-known to your community, such as the town/parish hall or local church or public house.

Ensure that the managers of these buildings are aware of their inclusion in this plan and that they are briefed as to what might be expected of them in an emergency (for example to open the building out of hours), provide temporary shelter (including heating if appropriate) and refreshments to evacuees.

Local Authority Rest Centre (Welfare Centres)

***See Section 3.3 Full Plan / Section 9 Simplified Plan.***

A Rest Centre is an established and authorised location, such as a Parish/Village Hall, Sports Centre, Day Centres or Community Hall.

A REST CENTRE REMAINS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL. THE OPERATING OF A REST CENTRE WILL NOT INVOLVE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS ONCE ESTABLISHED.

Evacuation considerations

For both CRC’s and Rest Centres, the following should be considered:

* not be at risk from flooding or other significant risks
* an appropriate size for the amount of potential evacuees
* has facilities including toilets
* be suitable for all demographics of evacuees (such as children, disability access)

When people are initially evacuated, please consider:

* **Who needs to go first?** Refer to your vulnerable persons list, but also consider the risk and how it may affect people (Some people may become vulnerable because of the incident that would not normally be considered vulnerable)
* **What routes will they take?** Ensure location is accessible and not affected by the incident.
* **Who will tell people they need to evacuate?** Use your Community Resilience Volunteers to knock on doors if the emergency services have instructed for evacuation to take place.

Once arrived at a Local Authority Rest Centre, appropriate responding agencies will assess their needs and assistance needed. Immediate personal needs will be met and overnight accommodation arranged if necessary.

## Central Information Points

When using a CRC, this can also be used as a Central Information Point for the community. This can double up in use in the immediate response to an emergency but can also remain open to the community after the evacuees have moved to a Local Authority Rest Centre to provide information to local residents. This will remain as operated solely by the Community Resilience Response Team.

The main functions are to:

* To provide a recognised point from which all matters relating to the community’s response can be managed and the team can work effectively during an incident.
* Liaise with Ashford Borough Council and request any support required.
* It will act as the focus for the coordination of the community’s activity.
* Receive, collate, display and distribute information.
* Assess the initial situation and, as the incident develops, determine priorities for your community. This information can be passed on to Ashford Borough Council and help determine support required in recovery.
* Maintain efficient communication links with all responding agencies and the community.
* Record financial transactions arising from the emergency.
* Maintain a record of your decisions and actions taken using incident and decision log in **Appendix C.**

Considerations for location:

* Ensure location is accessible, such as a public building (Parish Council office)
* Make sure it is not at risk of flooding.
* Ensure adequate access to phones and internet
* What is the reception for mobile phones like in this location?
* Make sure you have the contact details of any key holders.
* Make sure you have permission to use any public buildings.

Location details - what3words

[**https://what3words.com/**](https://what3words.com/)

When including key location details within your plan, use of ‘what3words’ is ideal to provide accurate locations and can be used by all responding agencies.

This gives an exact location down to a 3m square and then each square is given a unique combination of three words.

The Emergency Services use this especially if an exact address location is not available, for example in a field, park, or to identify a specific entrance to a building.

**SECTION 3 – PLAN ROLES AND STRUCTURE**

# Where does the community fit in?

This flow chart shows where your community fits into the overall multi-agency response during an incident.

Throughout an incident, you may receive information from a number of sources, which may require formal activation of this plan. If this occurs, it is imperative that you notify Ashford Borough Council Emergency Planning on **01233 330271** (office hours) or **01233 331111** (out of hours) Full details of contacts for all agencies is in **Appendix B**.

Ashford Borough Council Emergency Planning is in place to look after people involved in emergencies and as a Local Authority has a statutory duty as a Category 1 responder to provide assistance. They are not however an emergency service and can take time to get staff to an incident and set up a Rest Centre.

Your preparation of this plan will help in the immediate response to look after your community before formal Local Authority help is established. By preparing this plan, you know your community and where those that might need help will be. Some of your community will look after themselves but some may need that extra bit of help or support in a crisis.

For any support or guidance before, during or after an emergency, you should contact Ashford Borough Council Emergency Planning.

**Where there is an immediate risk to life, you should call 999.**



Community Resilience Response Team

Further to Section 2 guidance, the Community Resilience Response Team is a voluntary group supported by Ashford Borough Council who work in partnership with the emergency services. This voluntary group and Community Resilience Plan will enable communities to respond to and support multi-agencies during emergencies.

Every community and/or incident is different therefore; you may find what roles are required and how many people are needed varies. As a minimum, we would recommend that you appoint a Community Resilience Lead (with a deputy for support) and a Community Resilience Volunteer Coordinator (with a deputy or second post for support).

For role checklists, ***see Section 3.4 Full Plan / Section 10 Simplified Plan.***

Plan triggers and activation

This shows an example of when it might be necessary to activate your Community Resilience Plan.

Incident occurs

Call 999

 *(unless already alerted)*

**Community Resilience Plan activated**

Alerted by the Emergency Services, Ashford Borough Council or Environment Agency

Receipt of

Severe Weather or EA Flood Warnings

Use your Community Resilience Plan to begin community actions.

# Activate your Community Resilience Plan when an incident has occurred that requires your community to come together and to look after itself until the emergency services and Local Authority can arrive to help. The Emergency Services and/or Ashford Borough Council may ask for your assistance during an incident.

# **Any actions you take should not put your team or your community at risk in any way.**

**SECTION 4 – PLAN ADMINISTRATION**

Who should have a copy of your plan?

A copy of your plan MUST be provided to Ashford Borough Council Emergency Planning at emergency.planning@ashford.gov.uk

This will ensure communications are kept with communities and information during an emergency can be maintained both ways.

You may wish to also ensure key leads within your Community Resilience Response Team have access to a plan ready to use when activation is required.

To inform the public you have a plan in place, a redacted version can be placed on your community or parish council website. Please ensure all personal details are redacted and refer to the appendices without adding these on.

Ensure your plan is only uploaded as a PDF version so unauthorised changes cannot be made.

Why is it important to include who has a copy of the plan?

It is important to list here who has a copy of your plan, either electronically or a hard copy, so that you can make sure everyone gets any updates/changes that you make to the plan and so you are able to take back any copies should that person not be available to help you anymore.

Appendices and Data Protection

**Contact Details -** It is essential that this section is kept separate from the rest of the plan due to the type of information that is being held.

If you plan to hold any personal data, you must adhere to [General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)](https://www.gov.uk/data-protection). Permission must be sort from the person whose details you are holding, consider asking them to sign to agree to this. Also consider how this data is stored securely.

Alternatively, you could record here organisations that would help you identify vulnerable people during a response to an incident (e.g., local WI group) or locations where there are known to be vulnerable people (e.g., sheltered housing) if you prefer not to hold personal information.

**Incident and Decision Log** - This log is a useful tool to use to record any actions or decisions taken during a response to an incident, and more importantly the reason why you took that action or made that decision.

It is easy to look back in hindsight and wonder why that decision was made or an action was taken, however, at the time of the incident sometimes information and knowledge is not always as complete as you would like it to be and so including a reason why a decision or action was taken can help clarify this.

Some good practice to follow that emergency responder’s use, when filling in an incident log is:

* Write in CAPITAL letters.
* Write clearly
* Use the 24 hour clock
* Write in black biro where possible.
* Cross through mistakes, initial and date them.
* Start a new line when re-entering any information
* If possible (especially during a large scale or protracted incident), have a different log for each person.
* Enter the person’s name who is making the decisions and agreeing actions.

Editing your plan

Ensure you keep your plan up to date and republish / redistribute new versions.

It is recommended to update plan when key information changes but a full review should take place annually to check content and make any amendments needed.

**SECTION 5 – FLOOD PLAN**

**This section of the plan is for the full template only.**

Ashford Borough Council holds a Local Multi Agency Flood Plan, which contains details for the whole borough of Ashford. This contains specific sections for those areas considered the highest risk from flooding.

it is advisable to contact Ashford Borough Council Emergency Planning to see how your Community Resilience Plan will link in and to check whether there are any existing plans in place for your area.

Both Ashford Borough Council and Environment Agency can support you in providing flood information for your community.

Floodline service

To find out if your community is covered by the Flood Warning service or to register, please call **Floodline** on **0345 988 1188** or visit [www.gov.uk/flood](http://www.gov.uk/flood). It is advisable for members of the community to review the contact details periodically to ensure the details held by the Environment Agency are correct.

Using the latest available technology, they monitor rainfall and river levels 24 hours a day and use this information to forecast the possibility of flooding. If flooding is forecast, alerts are issued using a set of three easily recognisable codes indicating the level of danger associated with the warning. (Flood Alert, Flood Warning and Severe Flood Warning) Details of this are held within the flood plan template (Section 4.5)

Please note the codes are not always used in sequence, for example, in the case of a flash flood, a Severe Flood Warning may be issued immediately, with no other warning code preceding it.

Flood Maps

You can view flood maps for rivers, the sea, surface water and reservoirs at [www.gov.uk/flooding/floodmaps](https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map)

However, for accurate and up to date maps for your plans, we would recommend contacting:

Environment Agency Flood Resilience Team at floodresilienceKSLES@environment-agency.gov.uk for fluvial (river) flooding source.

Ashford Borough Council Emergency Planning at emergency.planning@ashford.gov.uk for surface water flooding.

Useful links:

* Flooding and extreme weather [www.gov.uk/flooding and extreme weather](https://www.gov.uk/browse/environment-countryside/flooding-extreme-weather)
* Check postcode for flood risk areas [www.gov.uk/check the long term flood risk for an area in England](https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk)
* Environment Agency Flooding pages [Environment Agency - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency)
* Ashford Borough Council Flooding pages [www.ashford.gov.uk/flooding](https://www.ashford.gov.uk/your-community/emergency-planning/flooding/)
* Kent Prepared Flooding pages [Flooding | Kent Prepared](https://www.kentprepared.org.uk/flooding)

Flood Wardens

Flood Wardens should only be deployed when they have completed the Flood Warden training course delivered by the Environment Agency.

Once trained, Flood Wardens are provided with a comprehensive handbook, high-visibility vest and essential items backpack.

 In the event that Flood Wardens are trained but not used, the EA provide online refresher courses and additional bite-size learning events throughout the year.

Please note that trained Flood Wardens would never be expected to go into floodwater and rescue operations should be left to the Emergency Services. A Flood Wardens role is to assist in an area during flooding.

Further information and training dates can be found at [www.kentprepared.org.uk/flood wardens](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.kentprepared.org.uk%2Fflood-wardens&data=05%7C01%7CVicky.Bond%40kent.fire-uk.org%7Ca78556d872b249fef95908dac65c77e7%7C2bd1b71251b14e0ea3b481bfa47b30c3%7C0%7C0%7C638040397700104353%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=cbM8kiU2ExjBva5luzWeEfcndJjHBuLAwol64x7fxGE%3D&reserved=0)

If you are unsure if you currently have any training Flood Wardens within your community, please contact Ashford Borough Council Emergency Planning for more information.

Allocation of Flood Warden patches

Pre-allocate areas (patches) for your Flood Wardens to cover and make them aware whilst preparing your plan. This will allow them to pre-visit their patch and familiarise themselves with it. Their main role during local flooding will be to deliver warning and informing messages to local residents.

When allocating areas for Flood Wardens, consider the following:

Number of properties allocated to each warden.

Distance between properties - a street with houses close together will be quicker than a street with long front gardens.

Whether there are big farms where it takes a long time to find them and may need to be driven to.

Access to the properties – whether there are locked gates, flats with limited access.

It is recommended that you visit the patches you are considering allocating and go out and look at the properties before you assign them. They may look very different from how they look on the map.

Sandbags

The Environment Agency does not provide sandbags to members of the public to protect individual properties. Instead, they use sandbags to build temporary defences or to strengthen existing defences to reduce the risk of flooding to as many properties and key infrastructure as possible.

Ashford Borough Council does not have a duty to provide sandbags, however, they will always try to provide help and will prioritise their supply of sandbags to protect key sites and infrastructure and to deploy to vulnerable residents unable to protect themselves. For more information, see [www.ashford.gov.uk/flood support](https://www.ashford.gov.uk/your-community/emergency-planning/flooding/flood-support/)

Homeowners are advised to keep a stock of their own supply of sandbags and tarpaulin to protect their property in the event of a flood which will be much quicker than waiting for authorities to deliver them.

Some communities may have a sandbag store in their area. Members of your community will be able to deploy sandbags quickly, using materials from a pre-identified location. You may also want to think about storing additional items in the store such as gloves, torches, emergency kits etc.

The following places have information relating to PFR (Property Flood Resilience) measures:

* [www/thefloodhub.co.uk/property flood resilience](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fthefloodhub.co.uk%2Fpfr%2F&data=05%7C01%7CVicky.Bond%40kent.fire-uk.org%7C0758fc314abe415b8f0308dab83872e2%7C2bd1b71251b14e0ea3b481bfa47b30c3%7C0%7C0%7C638024849834672083%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=27hoFgQ9EXTPj0U3UY5hzxVySSDLaQ9VYBwfXNwRUzo%3D&reserved=0)
* [BeFloodReady – Property Flood Resilience (PFR) | Helping Reduce Flood Risk](https://www.befloodready.uk/)

Other Flood Defences

Individual properties can invest in Property level flood installation or have a flood survey done to identify which is the best protection for their property.

If a Community Flood Resilience project is being considered, please contact the Environment Agency and Ashford Borough Council before doing this as permissions may be required.

The National Flood Forum have more information on Community Flood Resilience measures at [www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk/reduce your risk](https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk/about-flooding/reducing-your-risk/)

Known flood areas / Historic flooding

It is important to record any locations or areas that have suffered from flooding in the past as this helps to plan for response. Understanding why these areas flooded is key as some historic flooding may be less likely to occur again if reason for flooding has been dealt with or flood defences have been developed

Equally, it is important to note that flooding could happen in areas not identified previously and these will then form flood intelligence for the future.

Any historic flooding can be included on your flood map.

When these areas flood, and specifically for Surface Water Flooding, it is helpful to consider identifying areas where the water can be pumped to. This will help the emergency services when they arrive so that it does not cause further flooding elsewhere.

If you are unsure of any flood history for your area, please contact Ashford Borough Council Emergency Planning as they hold a Property History Flood Database. Please note however, this only contains information on flooding they have been made aware of and any localised flooding not reported to the council will not be included.