



xfordshire
Take Action...



COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANS

A guide to producing emergency
plans in the community



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

What are Community Emergency Plans?

Simple plans that are maintained by the community to assist them to coordinate local resources to respond to a disruptive event.

Community Emergency Plans form part of a coordinated response with emergency services and the local authority.

Who should have a plan?

In Oxfordshire, many Parish and Town Councils already maintain Community Emergency Plans and have used them effectively during emergencies such as fires, floods or snow events.

However, where no Parish or Town Council structure is in place, or where a specific risk affects an area, a group may opt to produce a plan to cover a specific location or risk.

Why do we need a plan?

Emergencies happen. Local emergency responders will always have to prioritise those in greatest need during an emergency, focusing their efforts where life is in danger.



There will be times when individuals and communities are affected by an emergency but are not in immediate danger and will have to look after themselves and each other for a period until any necessary external assistance can be provided.

Having a plan allows the community to create an efficient way to identify people who might be willing to help, equipment that could be used and safe locations where local people can gather if they cannot stay in their homes.

Isn't producing a plan complicated?

No. Community Emergency Plans don't have to be complicated or complex. In fact, some of the best plans are very short, simple, flexible, can be maintained easily and activated quickly.

Where do we start?

Oxfordshire County Council, the City and District Councils have produced a useful toolkit and easy-to-complete template to help communities produce plans.

Can we get help to write a plan?

The template and toolkit are available from the Emergency Planning Team of Oxfordshire County Council.

The team is available to visit Parish, Town Council and organisation meetings to explain the process of developing a Community Emergency Plan and to assist in their development.

What goes into a plan?

The steps to writing a plan are simple:

- 1. Consider the risks that might affect your community** – some places may be particularly prone to flooding or power failure, for others, it may be snow.
- 2. Consider your local resources** – make a list of the resources and skills within the community.
- 3. Safe locations** – consider the places where people may gather if they cannot stay at home.
- 4. Emergency contact list** – gather the contact details of the people who will play a part in the local response.
- 5. How to help vulnerable people** – a list of people who might be able to identify residents needing particular help during an emergency.
- 6. Activation triggers and first actions** – an agreement of what will trigger use of the plan and what actions to take first.



Where do Community Emergency Plans fit in during an emergency?

Many communities activate their plan when a weather event or emergency occurs as part of their self-help measures.

However, Community Emergency Plans are also valued by emergency responders as a way of liaising with local people to support a local response. This may be in the form of a request to open a local building to act as a reception centre for people evacuated from a local fire or providing information about the impact of rising river levels.

The County Council's Emergency Planning Team takes a lead on gathering information on Community Emergency Plans in place. Each year, they ask plan holders to provide the following information:

- Emergency contact numbers.
- Designated safe locations.
- 24-hour key holders for safe locations.



Reviewing and testing plans

The annual review of contact information and locations is a useful prompt for plan holders to review the document's content.

Plans require regular maintenance and testing to ensure they remain useful. The annual survey of information from the Emergency Planning Team is a good prompt to review plans. The team is also available to provide assistance on testing plans.



Need more information?

Oxfordshire County Council

Emergency Planning Team

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**This leaflet has been produced by Oxfordshire County Council's
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