

Appendix 2 – Examples of Emergency Planning Team good practice

Flooding 2013/14

During winter 2014, about 600 residents and businesses in Wiltshire suffered the worst flooding of a generation.

Wiltshire Council successfully led the coordination of council departments and other agencies during this difficult period. The Council has taken further responsibility for promoting and administering various government grants to help residents and businesses recover after the flooding.

Following the flooding events, a comprehensive review of all the learning has been carried out. The resulting improvements are being implemented to create a more resilient organisational and partnership response to flooding, and any other major incidents that may face the county in the future.

Key improvements include the drafting of an integrated emergency management plan; improved ability to handle customer enquiries; greater staff resilience at strategic, tactical and operational levels; and improvements to technology to support the Council during incidents.

Water Outage

In April 2015, over 10,000 households in the north of Wiltshire suffered a water outage. Water companies are obliged to provide on average 10 Litres of water for each 24 hour period of outage.

The Emergency Planning Team kept continuous contact with the Water company, to ensure that local residents were kept up to date with arrangements.

When the water company struggled to supply bottled water to residents, the local Highways Teams were brought in to assist. This resulted in more members of the public able to access water supplies. Furthermore, by providing storage at a local Highways Depot, the water company was able to distribute water more efficiently to those that needed it.

As a result of the learning from this incident, we have improved collaborative working with the water company, and tested how to identify and protect the most vulnerable. Critical to this has been the excellent relationships that have been forged between Public Health, adult social care and the wider health services.

Pipeline breach

In April 2014, at a location near Marlborough, Emergency Planning received reports that a major fuel pipeline had leaked. Emergency Planning worked with the Fire Service and the Environment Agency to safeguard the environment.

Public Health, Environmental Protection and Highways all worked together to assist in the incident. The county has a network of high volume fuel pipelines, and we now have an established way of dealing with breaches.

Human Trafficking

A suspected case of human trafficking became apparent in the county in April 2015. The Emergency Planning Team worked with the Police to establish a reception centre to provide refuge and assessment of a group of people that were rescued from what was purported to be modern day slavery.

The Reception Centre that was set up was hailed by the UK Human Trafficking Centre as the best ever created, and a debrief report will be produced that will be shared as national best practice.

Ebola

Countries in West Africa were devastated by the killer Ebola virus in 2014/15. The UK Government was at the vanguard of the international response, setting up field hospitals and sending personnel to assist. Particular risks existed in Wiltshire, because the county has both a large military contingent and is a renowned centre for research and testing of Ebola.

The Emergency Planning Team worked with health colleagues to put in place plans for Wiltshire. The plans were tested and exercised with all partners, so the county was prepared in case returning health care workers showed symptoms of the disease.

This work not only kept the county prepared from Ebola, but will also be useful for any future communicable disease outbreak.

Waste Recycling Site Fires

Waste Recycling Sites are licensed by the Environment Agency and are governed by guidance on how to store waste materials to prevent fires.

Following a series of waste recycling site fires nationally, and three in the Wiltshire and Swindon area, many improvements have been put in place.

Smoke plumes from fires are a clear danger for local residents. It was apparent from the waste fire in Devizes (January 2014) that there was a need to have quickly deployable air quality monitoring equipment. During the Devizes waste fire, monitors were commissioned, and clear communications were sent to local residents.

Public Health and Environmental Protection now have the ability to deploy air quality monitoring equipment at short notice. This capability was successfully tested during the Averages site fire in Swindon.

The Environment Agency and Police have carried out risk assessments of all waste recycling sites in Wiltshire, and have carried out joint visits. Enforcement action is being taken on a site that has not complied with safety regulations.

Events

Large sporting and cultural events bring social, community and economic benefits to an area. They help with community cohesion, can increase civic pride, and will also bring increased spend and profile to an area.

Large events also create a range of risks. The crowds need to be managed, contingencies are required for heavy rain or heatwave, and plans need to be in place for evacuation. The Tour of Britain and Summer Solstice are two events which required careful planning and management, so that tens of thousands of visitors were able to enjoy the events safely.

We have a role in scrutinising plans and also in putting in necessary support to keep the public safe. At The Tour of Britain over 150 marshalls were recruited and trained and used to both engage spectators as well as keep them safe. At the Summer Solstice, over 35,000 people came to Stonehenge, we were required to put in place detailed traffic management and welfare provision for young people.

Counter Terrorism Training

Working alongside counter terrorism security advisors from Wiltshire Police, we have delivered a series of training sessions for colleagues working in customer-facing roles, at City Hall and in our libraries, leisure centres, registry offices and in electoral services. Project Griffin sessions provide practical help for frontline staff to identify suspicious packages and activity, while Project Argus workshops explored how managers would react in the event of an incident