

Dear Clerk and Councillors,

Community Emergency Planning

Helping local communities prepare, respond and recover

Nobody understands your community as well as you do. In the unfortunate event of an emergency, your local knowledge and early community action could make a significant difference.

That's why I am writing to encourage your town or parish council to consider developing a new, or reviewing an existing **Community Emergency Plan**.

As Suffolk has seen over the past few years, emergencies such as flooding, severe weather such as storms and drought, wildfires, power outages and many more do happen and can do so with little or no warning – resulting in wide reaching impacts on our communities. A changing climate is predicted to bring us more emergencies in the future, and there are well-founded warnings from authoritative organisations such as the World Meteorological Organisation and the UK Met office that the El Nino weather phenomenon could bring more extreme storms over this autumn and winter.

While emergency responders and local authorities have arrangements in place through the Suffolk Resilience Forum, an established Community Emergency Plan can make a significant difference in the first few hours of an incident, helping to reduce the impact of an emergency and greatly improving the resilience of a community by using local knowledge, skills and resources to support residents during and after any incident.

Community Emergency Planning is about understanding local risks, using the already well-established networks and relationships that parish and town councils have, to promote preparedness at an individual and household level and then identifying the people, places and resources that may be needed when an emergency does occur.

Having a plan does not remove the responsibility of the emergency services and local authorities to respond to emergencies, but complements their arrangements by helping communities to stay informed, support one another and recover more quickly.

A Community Emergency Plan does not need to be complex or lengthy. It is important that it suits the needs of your community and is flexible enough to respond to a range of different risks.

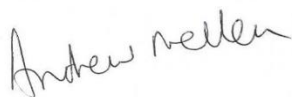
For further information on preparing for emergencies please visit [Prepare your community - Suffolk Resilience Forum](#)

One tool that may be helpful in alerting residents to risks is the **National Emergency Briefing**, a 50 minute film in which experts in various fields set out their analyses of the impact of climate change. Many communities in Suffolk have already organised viewings of this film, and we encourage you to do so for your community. Details of how to organise this can be found at nebriefing.org/the-film

If you are interested in developing a Community Emergency Plan or are interested in what your town or parish council can do to promote preparedness, please contact our Emergency Planning Officers at Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU) - Emergency.planning@suffolk.gov.uk who are happy to help, advise and support throughout the process.

Thank you for the important role your council plays in supporting local resilience. By taking time to plan ahead, communities can be better prepared, better connected and better able to respond when disruption occurs.

Kind regards,



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