PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES
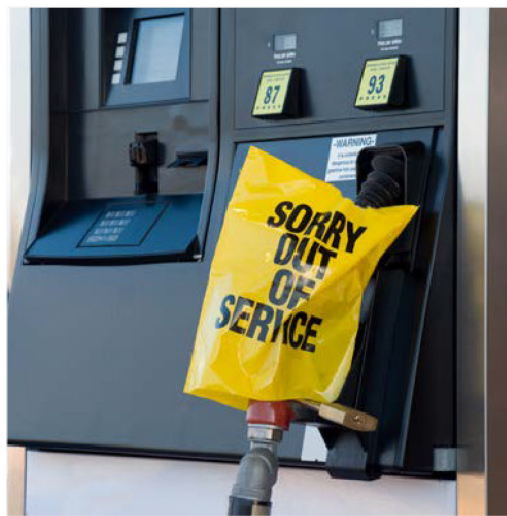
IN COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON

County Durham & Darlington Local Resilience Forum Community Risk Register 2021/22 – 2023/24

Contents

Introduction

About our area

The LRF area covers the two Unitary Authorities of County Durham and Darlington and a geographic area of 939 miles2 with a population of approximately 623,000 people. Within the Service area there are approximately 290,000 households and around 18,500 business premises. The area contains a cathedral City, a range of large and medium industrial towns, along with large rural areas and is categorised by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) as being predominantly rural. Although there is approximately 91% of the population that live within urban areas, 9% live in the widespread rural villages and hamlets.

The county has a mixture of mining, farming and heavy railway heritage, with the latter especially noteworthy in the southeast of the county, in Darlington and Shildon. In the centre of the city of Durham, Durham Castle and Cathedral are UNESCO designated World Heritage Sites and throughout the service area there are many Grade 1 and 2 listed buildings reflecting the areas rich cultural heritage where buildings have special architectural and historical interest.

The area has a good range of transport links, with the A1(M) and A19 motorways providing effective road transport and the East Coast Main Line enabling rail travel through the county. Teesside International Airport provides air travel to domestic and overseas destinations and the coastline to the east of the service area includes a harbour which receives a significant gross annual cargo.

Our rural communities cover a significant geographical proportion of the Service area, with some individuals being hard to reach by living in isolated areas which increases their risk of being vulnerable.

There are widespread and persistent health inequalities throughout the communities within the Service area, with levels of deprivation being significantly higher, and life expectancy lower, than national averages. Loneliness and isolation may also have a significant impact on both physical and mental health, and both the County Durham

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Darlington Borough Profile describe that hoarding and excessive alcohol/substance misuse increase can have a negative impact on the wellbeing of individuals.

Purpose of the Community Risk Register

The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) places a legal duty on the wide range of responders to carry out risk assessments and maintain them in a Community Risk Register. The assessment of the risks in this Community Risk Register is the first step in the emergency planning process and it ensures that resilience planning is carried out proportionately to the level of risk.

The purpose of the Community Risk Register is to:
- reassure local residents of the measures and plans which have been put in place to respond to potential hazards;
- ensure that local responders have an accurate understanding of the risks that they face to provide a sound foundation for planning;
- provide a work programme and to ensure efficient allocation of resources;
- enable local responders to assess the adequacy of their plans and identify any gaps that there may be;
- facilitate and encourage multi-agency working which ensures a more comprehensive planning process;
- provide an accessible overview of the emergency planning context for the public and other interested parties;
- inform on national and regional risk assessments that support emergency planning and capability development at those levels.

Who has been involved in the creation of this document?

This Community Risk Register has been produced by the County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum Risk Assessment Working Group. This group is comprised of the category one and two responders defined within the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), which serve County Durham and Darlington.

The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles

The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP)- _Joint Doctrine: the interoperability framework_ sets out a standard approach to multi-agency working, along with training and awareness products.

Whilst the initial focus was on improving the response to major incidents, JESIP is scalable, so much so the five joint working principles and models can be applied to any type of multi-agency incident.

Applying simple principles for joint working are particularly important in the early stages of an incident, when clear, robust decisions and actions need to be taken with minimum delay, in an often rapidly changing environment.

Those principles are illustrated in the diagram shown here:

Since 2003 the Emergency Services have adopted the Joint Decision Model (JDM) to enable an understanding of each other's needs. It is used to improve communications and decision making. The JDM is a way of the emergency services working together to save lives in major incidents.
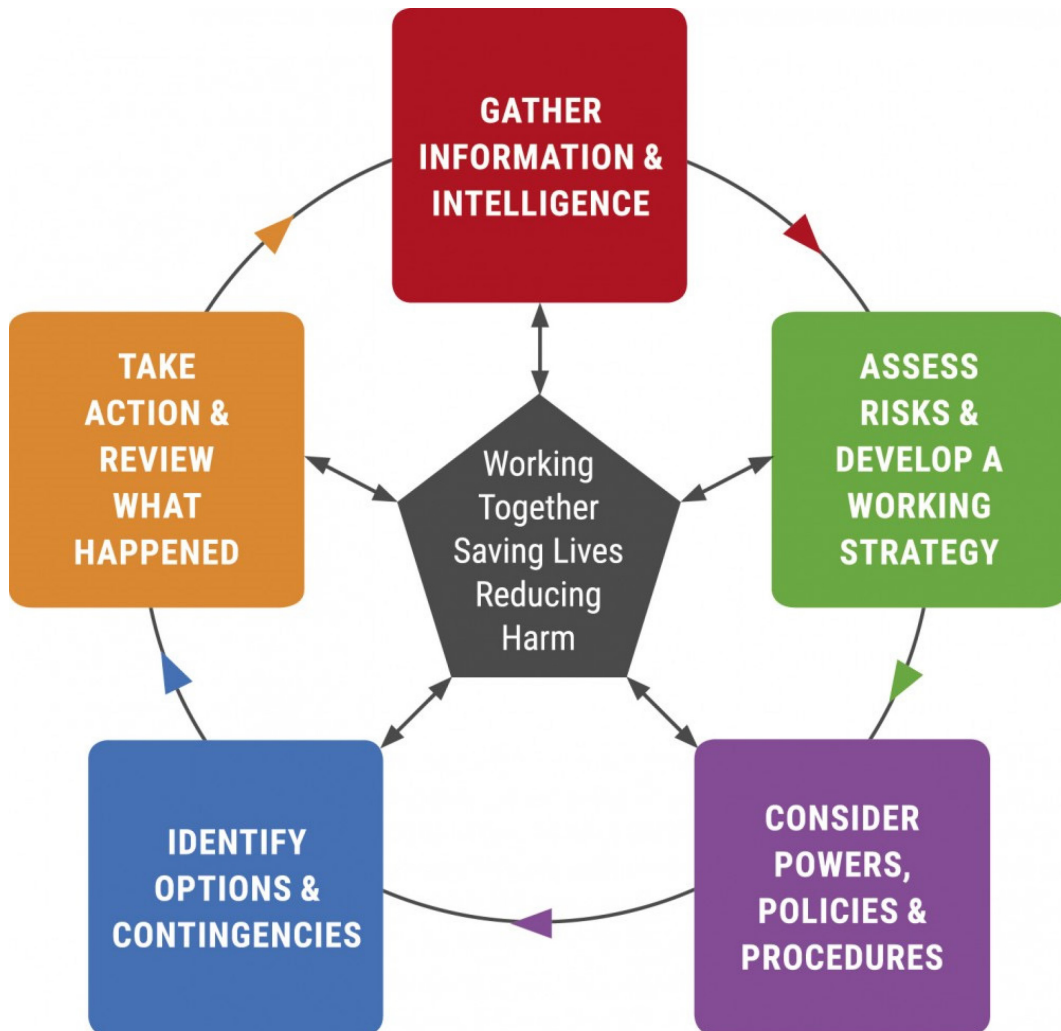
How are agencies across County Durham and Darlington working to ensure the effects of an emergency can be reduced?

- Understanding the risks, how they are caused and what impact they would have locally.
- Producing emergency plans to mitigate the impact of any risk on their local communities.

Preparedness – Being ready to respond to an incident.

- Understanding the impact and consequence of each risk
- Developing emergency plans and procedures for responding to the risks
- Training staff and testing procedures
- Matching our capabilities to the needs of each emergency
- Developing long-term recovery plans
- Raising awareness of each organisation's role and responsibilities
- Learning lessons from previous incidents

Response – Reacting in the event an incident

- Initial emergency activities (i.e. public safety, evacuation and shelter, limiting the spread of the incident, search and rescue)
- Initial damage assessment
- Multi – agency coordination
- Warning and informing the public

Recovery – Reacting in the event of an incident

- Initial and long-term recovery efforts
- Re–housing of displaced people
- Humanitarian assistance
- Regeneration

What's the risk?

Flooding can have a devastating and long-term impact on people's lives and there are many areas of County Durham and Darlington that are at risk from at least one of the three forms of flooding:

- Coastal (where high tides and storm surges combine to cause the sea to flood inland).
- Rivers and streams, known as 'fluvial flooding' (where waterways overflow their banks into surrounding areas).
- Surface water (where rainfall overwhelms drainage systems).

Some flood risks are tied to specific geographic features such as the coastline or flood plains (low-lying land near a river), but surface water flooding can occur in a wide variety of towns or villages far from the coast or rivers, Surface water flooding is also particularly difficult to forecast with accuracy and can happen at very short notice.

When flooding occurs, infrastructure (such as bridges) and flood defences can sometimes be overwhelmed with little, if any, notice, leading to additional disruption. It is also possible for all three forms of flooding to occur in different locations at the same time.

Consequences of flooding may include:

- fatalities and casualties (physical and psychological);
- evacuation and shelter (sometimes long term) of residents, employees and livestock;
- widespread damage to property and infrastructure;
- disruption to essential services, particularly transport and energy;
- environmental damage or contamination (particularly by sewage).

Have such events happened before?

Flood Risk in County Durham
A history of the flood risk in County Durham is available at this link: [Flooding in County Durham](#).

Flood Risk in Darlington
The affected areas within Darlington are the areas in the immediate vicinity of rivers and becks. Affected areas across the LRF area include the following:

- Chester-le-Street
- Lanchester
- Seaham
- Stanhope
- Wolsingham
- Middleton-in-Teesdale
- Newton Aycliffe
- Great Burdon
- Haughton le Skerne
- Darlington town centre
- Durham City centre
- Neasham
- Hurworth Place

What is being done about the risk?

The actions by the County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum to reduce the risk of flooding include:

- identification of where the flood water could go, and who/what is at risk;
- providing guidance to the public about flooding, including flood warnings and how people can help themselves;
- production of multi-agency plans to assist with the evacuation of those communities who are at risk;
- development of ways and means of alerting the public as early as possible when there is a significant flood risk;
- developing flood rescue and assistance for those communities who become isolated by flooding.

Useful information and advice

- Find out if your property is within the flood risk area by logging on to the [Environment Agency](#) website or calling Floodline on **0345 988 1188** or **0345 602 6340** (type talk). (24 hours).

- Plan where you will go if you have to evacuate and how you will get there and prepare an emergency grab bag.
- Know what to do to protect your property during a flood and have adequate insurance.
- Identify neighbours who may need assistance or who may be able to provide assistance to you, in case of evacuation.
- Ensure you are signed up to [Flood Warning Direct](#) if you are in a flood risk area.
- Where possible, move valuable or irreplaceable items to upper floors during times of flood risk.
- Do not drive, cycle or walk through flooded water.
- Further information
    - [Environment Agency](#)
    - [Flood Information Service](#)

Flood advice

The Environment Agency Flood Warning Service has three types of warnings that will help you prepare for flooding and take appropriate action.

Flood Alert - Prepare

- Prepare a bag that includes medicines and insurance documents
- Check flood warning

Flood Warning – Act

- Turn off gas, water and electricity
- Put flood protection equipment into place
- Move things upstairs or to safety
- Move family, pets and car to safety

Severe Flood Warning - Survive

- Call 999 if in immediate danger
- Follow advice from emergency services
- Keep yourself and family safe

Additional online resources

- Environment Agency (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency)
- Flood Information Service (https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/warnings)
- The Flood and Water Management Act (2010) www.legislation.gov.uk
- Public Health England Flooding flooding-health-guidance-and-advice
- The Blue pages – Flood products www.bluepages.org.uk/
- County Durham flood map: Map of County Durham postcodes and their flood risks.

Adverse weather

The UK experiences some of the most dynamic weather patterns around. This is due to its maritime temperate climate and occasional continental and artic influences.

These can bring with them heavy rain or snow strong winds and extreme temperatures. Severe weather can take a variety of forms and at times can cause significant problems and disruption to normal life.

There are many types of severe weather that can have a serious impact in the UK. The main types that we need to plan for include storms and gales, low temperatures and heavy snow, heatwave and drought.

Consequences

Some of the impacts of severe weather are:

- danger to life from windswept objects including falling trees and structural failures;
- damage to property;
- travel disruption;
- risk or road traffic collisions;
- damage to pylons and above ground utility structures which could result in power and water failure and damage to electricity and telephone lines;
- risk of people particularly the vulnerable being affected by health threatening and low temperatures.
- An increased number of admissions to hospital and consultations with GPs due to sunburn, heat exhaustion, respiratory problems and other illnesses such as food poisoning.

Who can be affected?

Vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and low income groups (as they may not be able to afford adequate heating), high altitude communities, those travelling and businesses, which can suffer reduction in workforce production service and delivery.

What can you do?

- Ensure you have access to the latest weather forecasts. Depending on the level of warning follow instructions and advice given by authorities.
- Listen to weather forecasts and heed any warnings of extreme weather.
- Plan any journeys or activities with the weather in mind.
- Think before you leave the house. Is your journey essential? Remember that weather conditions can vary very quickly and make sure that you are not caught unawares, therefore please avoid all non- essential activity and travel.
- An obvious step is to ensure that you are prepared for winter both in terms of your own clothing but also some common sense equipment in the boot of your car such as shovels, non-slip mats and a good quality torch.
- Check that elderly or vulnerable people you know or live close to are supported.
- Encourage the vulnerable and elderly to register with the public utility companies who will attempt to prioritise them if their services are affected by the weather.

- If you are aware of property damage that may get worse in the event of strong winds get it fixed now.
- Likewise, it is important to recognise that during the summer any prolonged exposure to strong sunlight presents its own health hazards. Make sure that you and your family make sensible use of sunscreen at such times and keep hydrated for your own safety.

What are we doing in County Durham and Darlington?

Some key steps include:-

- working closely with the Met Office so that emergency responders can obtain early warning that severe weather is due. The Met Office provides advice for severe weather warnings which can be received in many ways (radio and internet);
- the local authorities leading on the preparation of detailed winter plans to ensure that roads are ploughed and gritted;
- the health service gearing-up every autumn for the additional pressure which will be placed on their resources over the winter, and particularly works with the local authorities to target elderly and vulnerable people;
- the NHS provides winter flu jabs and plans for expected surges in demand;
- the NHS provides heatwave advice;
- Utility companies providing a prioritised service for the elderly and vulnerable.

Recovery

Even after adverse weather, you still need to be vigilant. There may still be low lying roads where pools of water might catch you unawares. There may be damaged trees and shrubbery ready to fall into the road and potholes caused by cold weather can be dangerous for vehicles and cyclists.

Further information
- [Met Office](#)
- Durham County Council (Link to be added)
- Darlington Borough Council (Link to be added)
- [Public Health England](#)

Human Disease

An influenza pandemic occurs when a new strain of flu emerges meaning there is no natural immunity to the virus, and it spreads easily from person to person. It can cause mild to severe illness and at times can lead to death.

An influenza type pandemic remains the highest assessed natural hazard which could have a significant impact on our communities. The emergence of new infectious diseases – such as SARS and COVID 19 - is unpredictable as they can spread quickly and erratically between geographic areas. Each pandemic is different and the nature of the virus, where and the time of year it will emerge, and its impacts cannot be known in advance.

Consequences
- Half of the population could be affected to some extent.
- Health and local authority social care services would become overloaded.
- Normal life is likely to face widespread disruption, particularly due to staff shortages and social mixing restrictions which may affect the provision of essential services including production and transport of goods.
- Vulnerable people would be exposed to lower levels of care.
- Longer and more frequent disruptions to essential utilities.
- Reduced levels of emergency services cover.
- Disruptions to businesses and organisations through staff shortages and supply chain interruptions.
- Impacts on the national and local economy.
- Excess deaths may occur.

What are we doing in County Durham and Darlington?

- Public awareness and media
- Management of the demand on the NHS and social care
- Distribution of anti-viral medication to the public
- Vaccination with newly developed pandemic vaccines when they become available
- Management of an increased number of deaths
- Ensuring that individual LRF organisations have their own business continuity plans in place to cope in times of staff shortage

What can you do?

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle by washing your hands frequently with soapy water to reduce the spread of the virus and regularly clean surfaces with disinfectant
- Look out for and observe advice and guidance from the NHS about reducing the impact and spread of the virus
- Identity a 'flu friend', someone who could collect medicine, food and supplies allowing you to stay at home if you become ill
- Keep small personal stocks of over-the-counter cold and flu medication to help relieve your symptoms.
- Catch it, Bin it, Kill it: Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Dispose of your tissues as soon as possible. Clean your hands as soon as you can.
- Hands, face, space, fresh air: follow public health advice and guidance on how to avoid spreading the virus.

Recovery

It is predicted that an influenza pandemic would come in multiple waves and that the arrival of a subsequent wave could hamper recovery from the previous wave. We have seen this with Covid-19 in 2020-21.

Further Information

NHS – Pandemic Flu www.nhs.uk/conditions/pandemic-flu

Industrial Accident and Environmental Pollution

There are a number of sites processing and storing dangerous substances within the County Durham and Darlington area, that in the event of an incident could affect the public or environment.

Consequences

Issues that could arise from this include:

- risk to life;
- damage to property and infrastructure;
- evacuation of the affected area and longer term accommodation needs for residents and businesses;
- environmental contamination to the local environment and water courses;
- impact on oil and gas supplies;
- damage to the local economy.

Who can be affected?

Those at most risk are those who live or work within close proximity to industrial sites. Those with existing breathing problems may be at increased risk due to the potential smoke/chemicals that may be released in a major incident.

What are we doing in County Durham and Darlington?

- Sites having larger quantities of dangerous substances fall under The Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations (COMAH) 2015 which aim to prevent major accidents involving dangerous substances and limit the consequences of incidents to people and the environment. The regulations are overseen jointly by the Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency.

- These sites are required to demonstrate precautions and safe operation. Sites are subject to planned inspection regimes which sample on-site control measures and focus on the worst-case events.
- These sites have specific arrangements, and some sites have internal emergency plans in place. There are multi-agency plans (External Emergency Plans) for sites having the largest amount of dangerous substances. There is a legal requirement for such plans to be regularly tested and exercised.
- Sites are required to provide information on the substances held and what to do in an emergency to the local population.
- Industrial sites that do not fall within the COMAH regulations are visited by Fire and Rescue Service personnel who consider potential hazards and may develop a specific response plan for them.
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What can you do?

- Call the Environment Agency incident hotline to report environmental pollution on **0800 807060** 24-hour service.
- Know what major industrial sites are in your local area. Make sure you are familiar with any advice they or your local authority provide.
- Be aware of the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency.
- Seek shelter immediately. If you become aware of an incident at a local major industrial facility, go indoors, stay indoors and tune-in to local radio and news media. Close doors and windows and switch off air conditioning to protect yourself from potential fumes and contaminants.
- Tune-inn to local media for further information and follow the advice of the emergency services.

Further Information

Health and Safety Executive http://www.hse.gov.uk/comah/

Environment Agency https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-environmental-impact-of-industrial-accidents-comah-guidance

Durham County Council

Darlington Borough Council

Animal Disease

Some animal diseases may be passed to humans; others may only be passed from animal to animal.

The most serious disease in this category is foot and mouth disease. The 2001 outbreak resulted in over 10 million sheep and cattle being slaughtered across the country. It is also likely that the whole of Great Britain would be declared a control area restricting the movement of all susceptible livestock unless licensed.

Consequences

The impacts of a similar outbreak would include:

- risk to animal health (including pets);
- risk to human health;
- disruption to rural communities, local economies and the environment;
- damage to the economy;
- damage to tourism and recreational sectors.

Who can be affected?

Previous incidents have devastated rural economies and communities. However incidents can extend wider and impact upon tourism.

What are we doing in County Durham and Darlington?

Previous incidents have devastated rural economies and communities. However incidents can extend wider and impact upon tourism.

What are we doing in County Durham and Darlington?

- Local authority staff work on animal health activities in the LRF area (some directly funded by Defra under framework agreements). They provide education and advice, monitor compliance with legislation and work closely with Defra/Animal Health on disease response.

- Working closely with DEFRA to make sure that lessons identified from previous incidents are incorporated into emergency plans.
- Animal health legislation requiring notification of suspect disease and providing control powers, on animal movements so that the potential disease risks can be reduced.
- Maintaining quarantine procedures for animals coming into the UK from abroad.

What can you do?

If involved in farming:

- register livestock with DEFRA;
- ensure sick animals are checked and reported;
- vaccinate livestock where possible;
- if an outbreak is declared, follow Government advice to limit the spread of the disease and protect your livestock.

As a member of the public:

- abide by restrictions in place to limit the spread of the disease e.g. closed footpaths in rural areas etc.
- if you suspect a notifiable animal disease, you must report it immediately by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301. In Wales, contact 0300 303 8268. In Scotland, contact your local Field Services Office. Failure to do so is an offence.

Further Information

For further information about animal disease visit the DEFRA website at:

http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/notifiable-diseases-in-animals

Failure of the Essential Services

The UK's critical infrastructure is made up of electricity, water, gas, oil/fuel, transport telecommunications, food, health and financial services.

Electricity and gas

The failure of the electricity network and gas supply can affect a wide range of essential services either directly or indirectly with disruption to telecommunications, transport services, healthcare provision, water supplies, the internet and schools. A national blackout has never happened, but in recent years, severe weather and storms have caused significant damage to the electricity distribution overhead line network, resulting in the long duration loss of power to many communities in affected areas.

The electricity and gas companies would be responsible for the practical and operational management of the incident. They have well developed plans and procedures in place to respond to such incidents, whether the disruption is local or at a wider national level.

Telecommunications

A wide scale 'telecoms' disruption would have a direct or indirect impact on all other infrastructure sectors.

Individuals and businesses are increasingly dependent on the telecoms network either for mobile and fixed line telephony or provision of the internet.

Water

Water disruptions include burst water mains, supply disruption and minor or major contamination. Dependent on the severity of the incident, a multi-agency emergency may be declared to ensure that people's basic water needs are met.

There could also be a significant impact on health and food provision, as well as an impact on the capabilities of fire and rescue services.

Consequences
- People may lose power to their homes instantaneously and without warning. This would also cause cascading impacts on local water supplies, gas and telecommunications. People may therefore be exposed to poor sanitation and lack of drinking water.
- Homes could be without heating and have limited ability to heat food and water.
- No ability to get fuel from filling stations as fuel pumps won't be working.
- Disruption to business (via lost working hours).
- If blackouts are prolonged there may be disruption to health care and emergency services.
- Failure of street lighting and security systems.
- Congestion due to traffic light failures.

What are we doing in County Durham and Darlington?
- The electricity system is well managed, robust and resilient and is operated to minimise the effect of any failure.
- There are comprehensive plans in place for handling a complete national outage as well as outages in a number of local areas.
- Working with the local electricity company, emergency services, local authorities and other utility companies and agencies to minimise the impact.
- Identifying vulnerable people requiring special treatment in the event of a prolonged electricity network failure.

What can you do?
- Call your distribution network operator on '105' to report a power cut and get further information.
- Know where to turn off your utilities. During some gas and water emergencies it may be necessary to shut off the supply to every premise in the affected area.
- Consider putting together a grab bag with a wind-up torch and radio to keep at home or in the car. Keep supplies of tinned food and drinking water.
- Make a household emergency plan.
- Encourage the elderly and vulnerable to register with public utility companies who may attempt to prioritise them if their services are affected.
- Make sure that you have suitable insurance and think about where you would go, and stay, if an emergency meant that you couldn't stay at home.
- Be on alert for bogus callers posing as utilities company workers.

Recovery
- Small areas may have power restored to them in a few hours and gradually wider areas would be restored as the electricity transmission system recovers.
- Restoration of some essential services such as water supplies and telecommunications may exceed seven days.

Further information
- Power Cut Advice https://www.powercut105.com/
- Preparing for Emergencies Guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-emergencies/preparing-for-emergencies#prepare-yourself-for-emergencies
- National Emergency Plan for Electricity https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-emergency-plan-downstream-gas-and-electricity-2016

Cyber space has become central to our economy and our society. Increasing our reliance on cyber space brings new opportunities but also new threats. While cyber space fosters open markets and open societies, this very openness can also make us more vulnerable to criminals, hackers and foreign intelligence services who want to harm us by compromising or damaging our critical data and systems.

Worldwide interconnectivity and digitalisation are transforming how individuals, businesses and local authorities live and operate with a wide scale shift of services and capabilities online.

Consequences
- Impacts of cyber-attacks can cause fatalities and casualties should the NHS be specifically targeted.
- Financial loss is the most commonly seen impact resulting from cyber-attacks, both the direct theft of funds online, but also the recovery costs post attack.
- Loss/compromise of personal or corporate information.
- Damage to business, the economy and reputation.
- Loss of/interruption to supply of essential goods and services and communications network.

What are we doing in County Durham and Darlington?

- Assess the local consequences of malicious threats and attacks in line with UK Government guidance.
- Develop and exercise multi-agency plans to ensure an effective response to and manage the consequences of malicious attacks.
- Communicating advice to the public and businesses, and support government awareness campaigns.
- Encourage all LRF organisations to review and demonstrate that where possible they have responsible cyber resilience strategies.

What can you do?

- Install internet security on your laptop/tablet/PC - there's a wide range of paid for and free programmes available.
- Consider the websites you use; some are more likely to be targeted by criminals.
- Don't reuse the same password for your social media accounts, email addresses and other online accounts. Also consider using fake answers for memorable questions.
- Review your social media privacy settings to see what other internet users can see about you.

Recovery

The range of impacts caused by malicious cyber activity can be wide ranging and recovery can be a long and expensive process. The capability of attackers is uncertain, and the time taken to recover from a cyber-attack is entirely dependent on the scale and the effectiveness of any recovery plans.

Further information

- https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/information-for/individuals-families
- https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/top-tips-for-staying-secure-online

Malicious attacks

ACT | ACTION COUNTERS TERRORISM

The Government's counter terrorism strategy, CONTEST is an integrated approach based on four main work streams, each with a clear objective to try and stop terrorist attacks occurring or, when they do, to mitigate their impact. The CONTEST work streams are outlined below:

- Pursue: stopping terrorist attacks
- Protect: strengthening our protection against attack
- Prepare: mitigating the impact of attacks
- Prevent: stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism

Attacks are rare but the issue of terrorist attacks is regularly in the news and remind us all of the terrorist threat we face. The police and Security services have been working constantly to foil terrorist attacks for years.

Terrorism threat levels

The threat level indicates the likelihood of a terrorist attack in the UK. There are five levels of threat:

- LOW means an attack is highly unlikely
- MODERATE means an attack is possible, but not likely
- SUBSTANTIAL means an attack is likely
- SEVERE means an attack is highly likely
- CRITICAL means an attack is highly likely in the near future

The level is set by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre and the Security Service (MI5). Threat levels don't have an expiry date. They can change at any time as different information becomes available to security agents.

What are we doing in County Durham and Darlington?

The Government will issue a warning to the public if that's the best way to protect a community or a place facing a specific threat. Police and security agencies are working tirelessly to protect the public. As a group of local responders, the LRF is focussed on

preparing for the consequences of any emergency, regardless of cause, and our plans try and set out generic capabilities that can be used in any emergency situation.

What can you do?

We are not complacent about keeping you safe and people are understandably concerned about a firearms or weapons attack. These attacks are very rare but in the event of such an attack, it helps to be prepared.

Stay safe, and just remember the words: **RUN. HIDE. TELL.**

- Run. To a place of safety, this is a far better option than to surrender or negotiate, if there's nowhere else to go then: -
- Hide. It's better to hide than to confront. Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can. Then finally and only when it's safe to do so: -
- Tell. The police by calling 999.

Everyone is asked to remain vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour or activity to the confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321 or in an emergency, 999.

Become a CT Citizen - ACT Awareness eLearning is an online training package available to the public. The package will provide nationally-recognised counter terrorism guidance to help people better understand, and mitigate against, current terrorist methodology. ACT Awareness eLearning (https://www.gov.uk/government/news/act-awareness-elearning)

Recovery

The impact of a terrorist attack can be wide ranging and in some cases, recovery can be a long and expensive process. The capability of attackers is under continuous review and the police alongside partners and private organisations prepare strategies to mitigate, manage and recover from a terrorist attack.

Further information

- [National Counter Terrorism Security Office](#)
- [Report suspicious activity to MI5](#)
- To get more information about terrorism levels in the UK [MI5 Website.gov.uk/what-to-look-for](#)

How can your local community be prepared?

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. To see if a community emergency plan exists in your area, please visit your local authority web site.

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 nature of an 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 deal with the emergency more effectively.

How to get started

Community resilience measures can be as little as designating a point of contact within the community to receive warnings and messages from emergency services and local authorities. The plan can grow over time to include areas such as:

- a parish emergency team
- 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.

Further Information

A new page on GOV.UK - Preparing for emergencies, signposts users to key public facing content which is useful for individual, business and community resilience.

Individuals and communities

Preparedness advice for communities

Understand the risks

There are a number of actions the public can take to prepare for and respond to the risks included in this document. It is important for individuals to consider these in the context of their own specific circumstances and daily routines, as well as the risks they may face when living or working in certain locations.

Individuals and communities can be better prepared if they are aware of and informed about the risks that are most likely to affect them. Individuals and communities can:

- make themselves aware of the risks affecting their communities
- sign up for flood alerts or weather updates
- check online to see which areas are at immediate risk of flooding or are likely to flood in the future: flood risk in England
- check travel advice before travelling for long journeys
- read the latest updates to the UK's Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre and Security Service's (MI5) terrorism threat levels , more information on what the different levels mean can be found on the MI5 website
- check online for more information about any local or national COVID-19 measures

Take steps to prepare

There are a number of activities that members of the public could undertake to prepare for, prevent, and mitigate the impacts of risks. Many of these activities can be helpful across a range of different risks and aren't specific to one scenario.

Some examples of actions the public could take include:

- signing up for first aid training – courses can provide useful, potentially lifesaving skills that can be helpful in a variety of emergency situations
- teaching children about how and when to call the emergency services
- speaking to their child's school to find out their procedures in the event of different emergency scenarios
- storing important documents (e.g., insurance documents and key contact numbers) and important items (e.g., medication and identification) in an easily accessible location in case of emergency or an evacuation at short notice (and not attempting to retrieve these items if it becomes dangerous to do so)
- keeping some basic supplies at home such as bottled water, a torch and batteries (which is safer than candles), and a wind-up radio to get updates during a power cut
- knowing how to turn off gas, water and electricity in the home
- checking the right insurance is in place for home or business (e.g. flood insurance) or travel insurance when planning a trip
- finding out about evacuation procedures in the workplace
- joining a community group or social club that is active in emergency preparedness
- signing up to the local authority or local utilities provider's vulnerable customer schemes and priority services (if eligible)

Know how to respond

If members of the public know in advance what to do and what to expect from responding agencies during an incident, it could lead to a more effective response and reduce physical harm, stress and anxiety for those involved.

In the event of an emergency, the public can play a vital role by alerting the emergency services (dialling 999) and by providing first aid, comfort and support while waiting for the emergency services to arrive.

Depending on the nature of the incident, those affected may be asked to 'go in, stay in and tune in' to local radio stations or check official sources of information online. Unless there is an obvious risk to the building, going inside and seeking further information is often the safest thing to do. People should always be guided by what they can see going on around them – for example, it is never safe to return to a building that is on fire.

In some situations, the public may need to evacuate for their own safety. It is important for people not to delay evacuating their properties or general locality if asked to by the responding authorities. Delaying or refusing to evacuate may put individuals' own lives at risk, as well as putting emergency responders in danger if they later have to return to properties to deliver the evacuation request again.

Planning for an emergency

If you have to leave your home

- In certain circumstances the emergency services may ask you to leave your home. If this happens, leave as quickly and calmly as possible.
- If you have time, and it is relevant to do so,
    o Turn off electricity, gas and water supplies, unplug appliances and lock all doors and windows
    o Take your essential items in your emergency bag
    o Take your pets (with suitable carriers or leads) and pet food
    o Inform the emergency services where you have gone and how you can be contacted
    o Tune into local radio for emergency advice and instructions
    o Ensure that you take all health utilities including glasses, hearing aids and any prescribed medication.

What can you do to be better prepared in your home

Having a C.L.E.A.R. plan will mean you are prepared for when the unexpected happens, so you can respond safely and recovery quickly.

Check:

Always check the radio, television, social media or internet for weather warnings and news.

Local radio and television

- Reliable Sources of information
- Set the following radio stations for your area:

Radio Station	Frequency
BBC Newcastle	FM 95.4 MHz
BBC Tees	FM: 95.0, 95.8, MHz
Capital North East	FM 106.4 MHz
Durham FM	102.8 & 106.8 MHz

Look for verified social media accounts which are official sources of information as these are more reliable. Add the emergency services, local council, Met Office and the Environment Agency to your social media networks.

List:

Make a list of medication you take; important phone numbers and insurance policy no. & carry at all times.

- Keep important documents i.e. birth certificates and passports, above flood levels in a fireproof box if possible.
- Keep computer information on an external storage device.
- Keep all these in one place, to quickly take these with you in an emergency.
- Save useful numbers in your mobile phone and keep a list in your wallet / purse

Have you put ICE contacts in your mobile phone?

In Case of Emergency (ICE) allows the emergency services to contact someone if you are unable to. An appropriate ICE is important because they may need to give consent for medical treatment. You can download ICE apps for your mobile that functions like an ICE card. Alternatively, you can keep the same information on a card in your wallet/purse.

Emergency Bag:

An Emergency Bag is useful, especially if you have to leave your home quickly / stay indoors without power for a few days.

The bag should be small enough to carry. Check it regularly to ensure it has everything you need and items like torches work. Consider putting dried & tinned food as well as

candles and matches in a separate box. You will need this if you have to stay indoors for a few days.

- Household emergency plan
- Toiletries, sanitary supplies and any regular medication
- First aid kit
- Wind up radio / torch with spare batteries
- Cash and credit cards
- Essential keys
- Mobile phone and a charger

Don't forget to take:

- Baby food and care items where necessary
- Warm waterproof clothing and blankets
- Gather important documents in a waterproof wallet (such as personal ID, banking card and insurance documents)
- Items for pets

Act:
Should an emergency happen, act when you need to.

If the danger is outside – STAY IN:

- Stay there until you are told the emergency is over or you are advised to leave.
- Listen to your local radio or TV news for updates.

If the danger is inside (or you are told to evacuate) – STAY OUT:

If it is safe and you have time:

- Take the items you need (incl. your emergency bag).
- Switch off power and lock doors and windows.
- Go to a safe place.

Safe Places

- Know the quickest / safest routes out of your house.
- Arrange a safe place to meet if separated.
- Tell someone if you stay with friends.

Flooding

- Move valuable items and pets to safety; with plenty of food & water.
- Stay safe when travelling
- Listen to emergency services advice.
- Stay out of flood water.

Recover:

Taking the CLEAR steps in this guide will help you recover and get back to normal much quicker.

After major incidents like flooding, there may also be recovery surgeries and drop-in sessions which will provide you with further advice. Look out for information in the local media from your council.

What to do when returning home?

- Listen to advice of emergency services or Local Authorities.
- Be wary of anyone offering to carry out building work (check their credentials).
- Contact your Local Authority for support.

Help with recovery

Recovery is a complex process, beginning at the earliest opportunity and running in tandem with the emergency response. Recovery from a serious incident can last months, years or even decades.

If it is safe to do so, members of affected communities are encouraged to participate in the recovery process and should be involved in determining how recovery is best achieved in their community.

In the recovery phase of an incident, members of the public who wish to help should look out for calls for support from a local authority or national and local charities, to assist with the clean-up or to help others in their community get back on their feet Supporting communities and volunteering.

Supporting communities and volunteering

When emergencies happen, people often feel compelled to help. Professionals and volunteers train for emergencies, but other members of the community can also be involved through acts of good neighbourliness and spontaneous volunteering. Bringing people and organisations together to form effective networks is key to building community resilience, preparing for emergencies, and making the best use of all available resources.

If the worst happens, members of the public can often rally their skills and resources to help their community. No matter who wants to help, what abilities they have, or whether they have volunteered previously, there may be ways for them to help. There are numerous opportunities to volunteer throughout County Durham and Darlington. Individuals can also find out how to get involved with their community before, during and after an emergency by visiting a local volunteer centre or searching online.

Before an emergency, members of the public, community organisations and local businesses can help to build the resilience of:

- individuals, by raising awareness of risks and preparedness actions, e.g. through social media
- households, by advising on property refurbishment such as property flood defence measures
- communities, by identifying vulnerable people and helping them access support
- organisations, by supporting business continuity planning
- systems and networks, by building trusting relationships between different local and community organisations

During an emergency or crisis, the public can help – if it's safe to do so – by checking on neighbours and vulnerable people in the community to see if they need any help or assistance.

After the emergency, the public can also offer their help to clean up, help others to get back on their feet, or help their community to come to terms with the situation. Opportunities to volunteer might be available through one of the thousands of local organisations that already work at the heart of communities.

Business continuity management

Business continuity is based on a very simple idea which surprisingly many firms and businesses do not embrace. At its simplest, it means having a plan for when something goes wrong so that you maintain the essential parts of your business and recovery as quickly as possible.

What could be easier than that? The reality is that a huge number of people who experience a business disruption never recover from it. It might be a fire, a flood or you might just lose your staff for some reason. Business continuity means doing some thinking in advance about what you would do if a crisis like this occurred. A workable business continuity could be as simple as: -

- A simple impact analysis that lists the staff, equipment and premises that you need as a minimum to continue to operate even a basic service.
- A contact list both for your customers and suppliers but also for your staff – the average duration of ownership of a mobile phone in the UK is less than 12 months.
- An action card with the first 10 things that you need to do if the business is under threat. This will not be anything obscure but will get you through the first couple of hours of the emergency.
- Simple plans of any key buildings showing electricity and utility cut-offs.

The only thing left to do is make sure that your colleagues and partners know about the plan and that you take it out of the drawer and test it in some form once in a while.

It details some of the key emergencies that might happen in the County Durham and Darlington LRF. It is a requirement under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 that the emergency services make this information available to local communities. The idea is that if people know what might happen, they can take sensible precautions to protect themselves.

What is the CRR based on?

Every two years the government publishes a National Risk Register based on a mass of data including historic, scientific and specialist analysis to assess the risks to the UK as a whole and allocate them some sort of priority. We look at this data in a local context so that we can provide members of the public with simple, understandable and relevant information about risk.

Why do I need to know about community risks?

The intention is not to scare you – but rather to put you in a better position to cope in the event of an incident. Again, a common misunderstanding is that this is the job of the emergency services and has little to do with the general members of the public. It has been demonstrated time after time that when communities come together to support each other during an emergency they can be hugely effective.

Is this not all just common sense?

The document is intended to bring together in a readable format a lot of information that some people may be partly aware of and other people may have much less understanding of the problems that could arise. Airline pilots do not work from a checklist because they do not know how to fly – they work from a checklist, so nothing gets missed!

Is this not a bit extreme?

Unfortunately not. Major and serious incidents are comparatively rare in this country, but we are still better placed by understanding what might happen so that we can respond effectively.

Will the emergency services understand what we are doing?

Absolutely. Let's take one example – flooding – and think about what you can do to help. You have the local knowledge, you know where the most vulnerable people live, you may be able to offer somebody hospitality for a couple of hours and, mostly, you care about your community. In the early stages of a serious incident, the emergency services will probably be stretched and greatly welcome your support.

Personal information page

Useful personal contacts	Name	Details
Schools		
Work		
Electricity		
Gas		
Water		
Telephone		
Insurance		
Doctor		
Other		
Other		
Other		

If evacuated, where could you stay?

	Name	Contact details	Location
First choice			
Second choice			

Other useful contacts

Contact	Telephone number
Environment Agency Incident Hotline	0800 80 70 60
NHS	111
Gas leaks	0800 111 999.
Electricity faults	105
Water	0345 717 1100
Police	999 in an emergency if not 101
County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service	999 in emergency