



# Community Resilience Newsletter

## Welcome

Welcome to the first biannual edition of the Community Resilience Newsletter for the Scottish Borders.

### In this first edition we will:

- highlight Winter preparedness
- look ahead to the annual Resilient Community Co-ordinators evening
- feedback on the recent First Aid and Basic Life Support awareness training
- and provide an overview of the potential impacts for communities from a National Power Outage (NPO)
- Share Winter safety messaging from Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

## Preparing for Autumn and Winter

Every year the resilient communities of the Scottish Borders respond effectively to local issues affecting their homes, schools, essential local services and look out for the more vulnerable members of society.

Winter brings the greatest demand on these community resources, and the Scottish Borders is fortunate to have over 50 active Resilient Community groups.

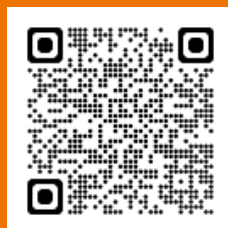
### The main activities undertaken include:

- Clearing snow from pathways and community facilities
- Placing sandbags and domestic floodgates in risk areas to prevent flooding
- Providing hot meals and assistance within community centres and village halls
- Activating flood signage in their areas
- Providing information to Council officers in an emergency.



The Scottish Borders Council website has a wealth of information relating to preparing for winter.

Scan the QR code to find out more:



## ISSUE 1 AUTUMN/WINTER 2023

### In this issue ...

- Resilient Community Co-ordinators Evening
- Resilient Community group First Aid and Basic Life Support Awareness Training
- Loss of electricity - potential impacts and what we are doing to minimise risk
- Seasonal advice from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Later in this issue we will highlight loss of power (electricity). Severe weather and power outages are common in rural areas. Having a home emergency plan, emergency kit and essential items is extremely helpful in those scenarios.

### This includes:

- Torches (battery powered)
- Radio (wind up/battery)
- Stocks of tinned/dry food
- Fuel supplies restocked (logs/coal/heating oil etc.)
- Bottled water for drinking. Conserve rainwater if possible, for toilet flushing
- Dry/tinned foods
- Blankets and warm clothing
- A good supply of prescription medication
- Preparing a winter car kit (small shovel, blankets, torch, high energy foods). Ensure tyres have plenty of tread and are at the correct pressure, and screen wash and antifreeze are topped up.



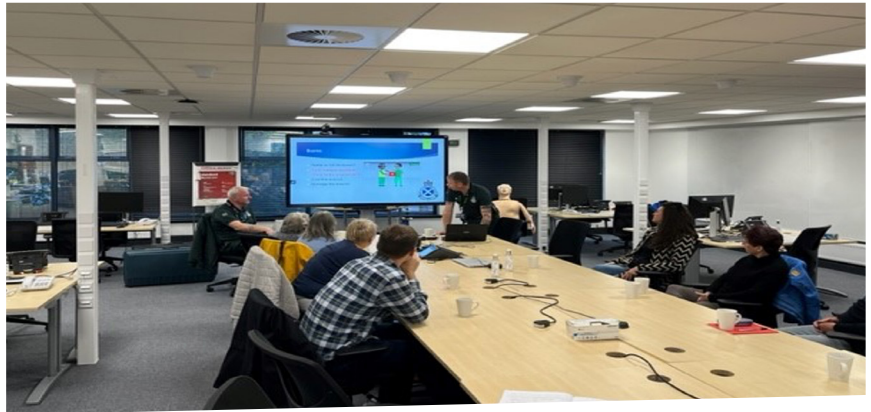
# Resilient Community Co-ordinators Evening

## Wednesday 1 November 2023

Our annual Resilient Communities co-ordinators evening will be held on the 1st of November. Due to recent accommodation changes at Scottish Borders Council we will be hosting the evening at Gala Rugby Club, Nether Road, Galashiels TD1 3HE, from 6 – 9 pm. This is a fantastic venue, with ample car parking close at hand.

Resilient Community groups clearly play an important part in supporting their local communities during an adverse event, and in assisting in the recovery phase.

Resilience Co-ordinators have a massively important role, and we will shortly be sending out invites to attend. On the night, we will run a workshop covering the impacts of a National Power Outage (NPO) and what it may mean for Resilient Community groups.



There will also be the opportunity to ask questions and it is hoped that this will not only enhance knowledge, but

also assist with building on existing relationships between everyone involved in preparing for, responding

to, and recovering from emergencies, in a way that complements the work of the emergency responders.

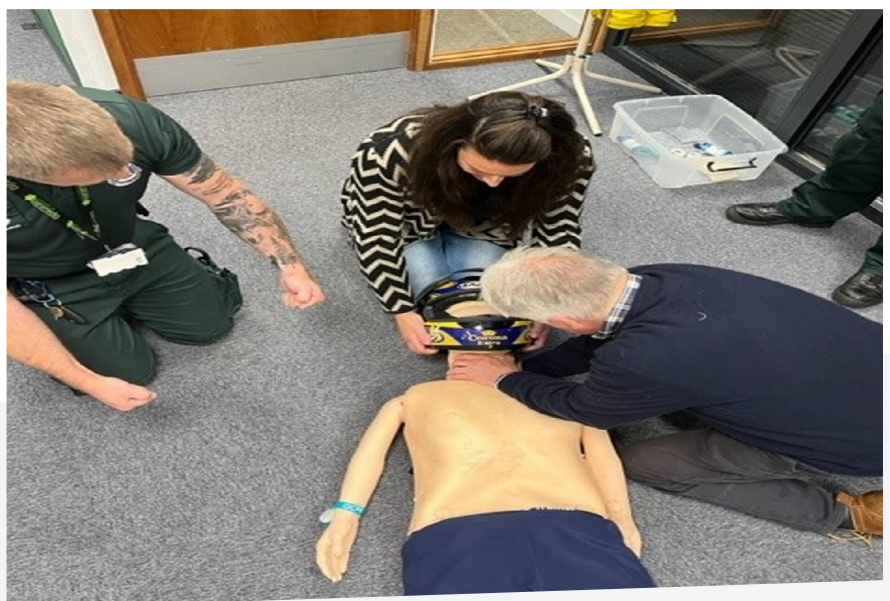
# Resilient Community group First Aid and Basic Life Support Awareness Training

In response to feedback received at the co-ordinators evening in 2022, the Emergency Planning Team in conjunction with Scottish Ambulance Service planned the delivery of First Aid and Basic Life Support Awareness Training sessions in September this year.

Representatives from seven Resilient Community groups joined us in September for a three-hour session and received input from Lee and Garry from Scottish Ambulance Service on basic life support, cardiac arrest and the use of defibrillators.

The input was a mix of theory and practical, allowing an opportunity to refresh techniques and hone skills. Trauma management provided some entertainment in the application of bandages and supports (think mummies).

We looked at the actions to take if encountering a road traffic collision, which also covered motorcyclists and safe helmet removal.





# Resilient Community group First Aid and Basic Life Support Awareness Training cont...

The underlying theme was around ensuring that the responder remained safe at all times through awareness of the hazards and risks inherent to situations where they may be providing assistance.

Throughout the session the level of engagement and interaction was excellent, and everyone left feeling they had improved not only their skills but also confidence should they need to assist someone in the future.

## Feedback received from an attendee;

*"To say it was both educational and supportive is no exaggeration and it was so good to be reminded of the details involved in required procedures not least as we don't always have the practical experience on a regular basis, unless we have been called upon to assist in an actual incident. The latter can affect our confidence rating so it was good to have to embrace that whilst being observed by others albeit that only reminds one of how inexperienced one is!*

*The information shared was both interesting and helpful and it was somewhat awesome the almost 'casual/offhand' way the experts delivered key life saving information in helpful detail that helped to encourage us to feel a sense of confidence.*

*The atmosphere during the session was so very positive and encouraging so please share my thanks with your colleagues. The messages and information received will hopefully stay with me hereon. All I need to do is be more confident!"*

**Huge thanks to Garry and Lee from the Scottish Ambulance Service for providing a fantastic interactive, informing session for all involved.**

## Loss of Electricity Potential impacts and what we are doing to minimise risk

Starting with some really good news, following the Ofgem review of the response by distribution network operators to Storm Arwen they have ordered the compensation cap to be raised from £700 per household to £2000. This is a welcome development designed to provide increased assistance to customers who are affected but also to encourage better resilience and response preparation by companies.

**There are three types of potential power outages you should prepare for:**

### National Power Outage (NPO)

Most severe - large scale, 'no-warning' power outage due to failure of the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS), whatever the cause - critical national system/infrastructure failure, cyber-attack etc. So severe and wide ranging that this would

impact communications, all public services, all utilities, food and fuel supplies etc. It may take you some time to realise power has been lost nationwide rather than just locally. This type of event would last for days but the knock-on disruption would last for weeks.





# Loss of Electricity

## Potential impacts and what we are doing to minimise risk cont...

### Unplanned/event driven

Storm Arwen being a good example. More localised event with potentially severe short-term impacts. Should

get some warning to prepare if weather related, which is the most likely cause.

### Planned Power Outages (Rota Load Disconnection)

These are measures implemented by National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) to handle excessive demand on the national system, for example during an extended period of very cold weather.

This involves scheduled disruption to the power supply on a 'postcode basis' whereby power would be switched off in four-hour blocks at differing times, several times per week. Every address is allocated a block letter code so that individuals can identify and plan for when their power is switched off.

You can find your block letter code by entering your postcode at [powercut105.com](http://powercut105.com) or it is printed in a small square on the top half of your electricity bill, or contact SPEN by telephoning 105.

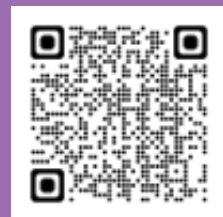
Planned Power Outages could also be implemented as part of the repair/reconnection process following either of the first two scenarios, but will be for the minimum period required to complete the repair. This happened post Storm Arwen.

Whatever the cause of power outages, we will again look to you for assistance in the response as you have done previously.

Remember Ready Scotland advice from the Scottish Government and encourage individual preparedness in your communities.

SP Energy Networks has information online on [preparing for a power cut.](#)

Scan the QR code to find out more:



## Communications

Scottish Borders Council along with partners across the country have been reviewing resilient telecommunications in power outage scenarios.

Local Resilience Partnerships around Scotland have been involved in testing and exercising with a view to identifying joint solutions to issues related to these scenarios. To this end we at SBC are in the process of updating our existing RAYNET equipment as well as recently acquiring Starlink equipment to provide satellite Wi-Fi based communications.

More information on these systems can be found below:

### Raynet

RAYNET-UK is the UK's national voluntary communications service provided for the community by licensed radio amateurs. RAYNET was formed in 1953 following the severe east coast flooding, to provide a way of organising the valuable resource that amateur radio can provide to the community. RAYNET groups have access to a wide range of radio bands, operating modes and equipment which allows RAYNET to offer a unique range of emergency communication services to both the statutory and volunteer emergency service organisations. RAYNET routinely deploy to events assisting with communications and as part of the wider 4x4 response.

### Starlink

Starlink is a system supplied by Elon Musk's Space X organisation to provide satellite communications via low earth orbit satellites. This equipment should allow us to maintain Wi-Fi calling, internet, MS Teams, emails etc during power outages in order that we are in a position to link in with partners and Scottish Government colleagues. We have extensively tested it ourselves and already deployed the system at several events with very positive results so far.





**SCOTTISH**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**  
Working together for a safer Scotland

# Seasonal advice from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

As Autumn/Winter approaches the Scottish Fire and Rescue service begin to turn our attention towards our Autumn/Winter Seasonal Thematic Action Plans.

## Chimney safety, stoves and carbon monoxide

Each year, SFRS attend over 1,000 chimney fires in Scotland yet some simple steps can help reduce this number and keep occupants safe within their homes.

- Keep chimneys clean and well maintained.
- Always use a fireguard to protect against flying sparks from hot embers and to keep pets and children safe.
- Make sure you have working smoke and carbon monoxide detection.



## Water safety

- During the Autumn/Winter season, the risk around water and ice increases with localised flooding and iced over rivers, pond and lochs.
- Never enter or drive into flooded areas. You can very quickly get into difficulty due to the speed and depth of the flood water. Similarly, never walk onto frozen bodies of water and keep pets on leads near to frozen water.



## Winter and festive safety

During Winter, house fires and casualties increase, with a high risk over the festive period. Higher energy costs have seen people consider different methods of staying warm within their homes, so follow these simple guidelines to help protect yourself this winter:

### Portable Heaters

- Keep heaters away from curtains and furniture and never dry clothes on portable heaters
- Unplug or switch off portable heaters when you go out or go to bed
- Ensure you have a carbon monoxide detector in all rooms containing gas or paraffin heaters

### Electric Blankets

- Never leave an electric blanket switched on when in bed unless it is marked "suitable for all night use"
- Check the blanket, plug and flex regularly for damage, if you are in any doubt, do not use it
- Have electric blankets tested and serviced in line with the manufacturer's guidance



For more information scan the QR codes or go to the SFRS website and follow the service on Facebook (search Scottish Fire & Rescue Service – Scottish Borders) or on X (previously Twitter) @SFRSYourSafety.

We hope you have found the content of this newsletter informative. The Emergency Planning Team would welcome any feedback on this issue and invite suggestions from you on anything you would like to see included in future editions.

These biannual editions will precede Autumn and Winter and Spring and Summer. Seasonally these times of the year generally present different challenges for communities with weather and the associated challenges (flooding/storms, longer dryer summers increasing the risk of wildfires etc.)

We will also (where appropriate) provide updates on current projects which may be of interest such as the NPO information covered in this edition.

Best regards  
The team at Emergency Planning  
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