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COMMUNITY RESILIENCE RESEARCH: UK Case Studies, Lessons and Recommendations



Final Report

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Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL),
Strategic Analysis Group, DSTL Policy and Capability Studies, I-Sat J, C036, Floor C 153, Grenville West Court,
Portsmouth West, Fareham, Hants PO17 6AD
www.dstl.gov.uk

The report was authored by Dr Clare Twigger-Ross, Paula Orr from Collingwood Environmental Planning Limited (CEP), Dr Hugh Deeming, Jenny Stafford (CEP Associate Consultants), Dr Tracey Coates and Dr Mark Ramsden (Kingston University).

Collingwood Environmental Planning Ltd
1E, The Chandlery, 50 Westminster Bridge Road, London, SE1 7QY
Tel: +44 (0)20 7407 8700
www.cep.co.uk

Company Registration No. 06600181

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Cover photographs:

- People in Peckham, South London place positive messages about love of their community onto a boarded up shop window following the disturbances, August 2011.
- Flooding during the tidal surge of November 2007 at South Quay, Great Yarmouth. © Great Yarmouth Borough Council.

Map used in case studies

Maps used in the case studies created by Nilfanion <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:Nilfanion>, using "Ordnance Survey OpenData".

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1. Introduction to the Case Studies

Background

This report presents four case studies carried out for the Community Resilience project funded by DSTL and supported by the Civil Contingency Secretariat (CCS), Cabinet Office. The work for this project was carried out between September and December 2011.

The aim of the Community Resilience project was to develop a better understanding of the role of community resilience in emergency response and recovery situations in order to inform Cabinet Office / Civil Contingencies Secretariat policy on community resilience and to inform the development of future work. There were two parts to the research:

The first part of the project involved reviewing existing evidence on community resilience in order to explore:

- The importance of community resilience to emergency response
- The factors that promote or inhibit community resilience, including why some people choose to engage and others do not.

This is presented in a separate report “Community Resilience Research: Evidence Review”.

The second part of the project consisted of four case studies which examined the role of community resilience in the context of emergencies:

- Two on flooding (Thirlby, Yorkshire; and Great Yarmouth, Norfolk)
- Snow and ice (Gloucestershire)
- The summer 2011 civil disorder (riots) in August (specifically, Peckham, London).

The case studies enabled a more detailed understanding of:

- How communities respond in the face of adverse events
- The factors that facilitate people working together in those situations
- The extent to which that community response was linked with and assisted the response by ‘the authorities’/ emergency response organisations.

This report presents the case studies. Each case study starts with a social profile of the area for context. In addition to the Evidence Review and this report (the Case Studies’ report), a workshop was carried out on the 17th November bringing together case study interviewees, policy staff from CCS and DSTL, academics and national stakeholders in emergency planning. A record of the workshop was produced and forms an Appendix to the Final Report. The Final Report consists of:

- A Summary of the Evidence Review
- A Summary of the Case Studies
- Synthesis and analysis of the case study evidence
- Lessons
- Recommendations.

Research method

For each case study written material was analysed together with interviews/group discussions with key people identified through a snowball approach. In each of the areas the following people were interviewed. We have put their roles only to preserve anonymity.

Thirlby

1. Chair to the Parish Meeting
2. Chair of the social committee
3. A previous Chair to the Parish Meeting
4. Chair of the local history group
5. A trustee of the village hall
6. A long standing member of the village from the key local family
7. Someone involved with the maintenance of the recreation field
8. Member of the North Yorkshire Emergency Planning Unit, North Yorkshire County Council
9. Team Leader of Flood Warning Team, Environment Agency

Great Yarmouth

1. Small group discussion with community member/councillor, community member, headmistress and community development worker from Cobholm and Southtown.
2. Councillor/community member for South Yarmouth
3. Assistant Principal, communities, Ormiston Venture Academy
4. Community member involved in Homewatch
5. Neighbourhood Management worker, Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House
6. Service manager, Great Yarmouth Borough Council
7. Emergency Planning Manager, Great Yarmouth Borough Council
8. Flood Incident Manager, Environment Agency, Anglian Region
9. Gorleston Community Resilience Group Meeting: 18 attendees
10. North Yarmouth Community Resilience Group Meeting: ten attendees

Forest of Dean

1. Emergency Planning Officer, Forest of Dean District Council
2. Gloucestershire Highways member of staff Gloucestershire County Council
3. Member of Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
4. Mayor of Cinderford

5. Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) meeting. Attendees: Assistant Chief Executive, GRCC; Gloucestershire County Council Councillor and Lydney Town Councillor; and Forest of Dean Rural Advisor, GRCC
6. Forest of Dean District Council meeting. Attendees: Forest of Dean District Council, Corporate Support and Emergency Planning Officer; District Councillor (Cabinet member for community); Team Leader Street Wardens; Community Engagement Officer and Older People's Lead at District Council; and District Councillor, Welfare Officer for Lydney

Peckham

1. Head of Community Engagement, Southwark Borough Council
2. Chief Executive Officer Safe'N'Sound
3. Peckham Settlement member of staff
4. Tenants and Residents Association member
5. Community member
6. Community member
7. Two Peckham Network (initially known as Post-Riot Network) meetings
8. Meeting of community organisations and residents with UK riots inquiry panel led by Darra Singh

The interviews were guided by the interview schedule and recorded if possible and then they were transcribed in full. Where circumstances did not allow for recording, in some of the larger meetings detailed notes were taken.

Analysis

Each of the transcripts were read by the person who carried out the interviews. Themes relating to each of the sections of the questionnaire were drawn out together with relevant quotes. For each case study similarities and differences between the interviewees were attended to in order to ensure that participants' views were represented accurately.

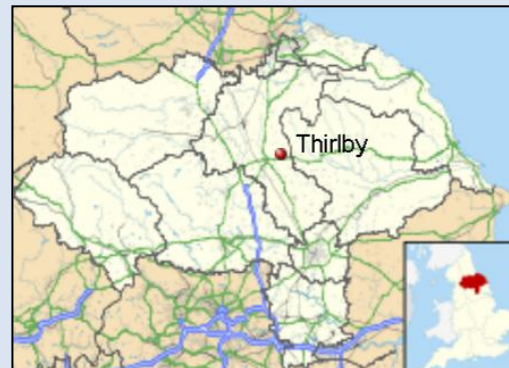
Limitations

It should be noted that whilst the time on the project was used effectively, because it was a short project the range of views and depth of information extracted was inevitably limited. There was a concern that it might be very partial leading to misunderstandings about the evidence and conclusions. In order to “ground truth” our work, a workshop was held where case study interviewees attended. At that workshop the early findings from the case studies were presented and corrected as required by the case study interviewees. Further, once the case studies had been written they were sent to case study interviewees for their approval. All the case studies presented here have been approved by one or more of the case study participants as fair and accurate.

2. Thirlby, Yorkshire: Flash Flooding

Social profile¹

Thirlby is a small rural village in the Hambleton District of North Yorkshire. The population is estimated at 110 in 2008 and has decreased from 130 in 2001. The population density for the ward is defined as 'super sparse' at 0 – 0.5 persons per Hectare, many of the surrounding areas are similarly defined. Thirsk is the nearest town and is three miles east of Thirlby. The age distribution of the District is older than the national and regional average and average age is increasing over time.



Employment

Agriculture is a major employer (3.9%), relative to the rest of the UK (1.3%) but hotels and restaurants are the biggest employer in the area (26.8%) followed by public administration, education and health (23.2%) and financial services and manufacturing energy and water (both 13.4%). The claimant rate (1%) is significantly lower than the national average (3.8%). Average weekly income is calculated as higher (£651 per week) than the regional (£520) or national figures (£567)².

Deprivation

No areas around and including Thirlby are considered deprived.

Other information

As of 2011 a relatively low percentage (16-20%) of people in the area, including Thirlby, feel confident that the police and local services are dealing with problems, this is lower than other parts of the district. However, 70-75% of residents in the area including Thirlby feel that they received fair treatment for local services. Over 85% of respondents in the area including Thirlby felt they were in a state of good physical health. 77% of people in the area including Thirlby own their own properties.

Sources

Hambleton District Council – Thirsk and Villages Area Profile: <http://tinyurl.com/7nbt rhe>

Hambleton Parish Populations Estimates: <http://tinyurl.com/ctuuxgr>

Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/indices2010>

¹ Due to the size of Thirlby specific information is not readily available

² Note this data is from 2001/02 and is the most up to date information available.

SUMMARY

- In June 2005 intense rainfall occurred in the south west part of the North York moors, causing the flooding of a total of 121 properties across the area. Thirlby, a small village of approximately 120 people was under the area of most intense rainfall and flash flooding destroyed a bridge and washed away some of the roads. Access was very difficult during the flood, help didn't arrive immediately, and eventually a helicopter was used to check on the village. The flood waters subsided within hours and after that access was difficult but possible. Approximately 18 properties were directly affected, in one case flooding reached ceiling height and the owners had to escape through an upstairs window. Some of these affected were out of their properties for over a year. There was no history of flooding and no flood plans in place.
- Residents of the village carried out most of the immediate clearing of trees and other debris. They helped one another to reach higher ground and to move cars. They also provided temporary accommodation, washing, shopping, and meals. They also helped look for lost items and provided small repairs to properties where possible.
- The authorities were involved with repairing the roads and bridges but there has been relatively little contact with residents and authorities with the exception of the Chair to the Parish Meeting who provided the main link between the village and 'outsiders'.
- Residents felt that they had coped well; they were able to clear up in the immediate aftermath and support one another physically and emotionally in the longer term. Whilst the extensive community events were initially reduced they returned to 'normal' and continue to thrive six years after the flood.
- Contact with the authorities was limited and the relationships not always successful. The authorities and other organisations such as service providers (and little distinction is made between the two) were generally seen as slow and inefficient.

COMMUNITY – CONTEXT AND PROFILE**General community characteristics**

- Thirlby is a small village in an attractive rural location. Residents include both 'local families' who have lived there for generations and newer residents, many of which are wealthier professionals. It is seen to be an exceptionally active community and the wide range of groups and activities is provided as evidence of this. There exists a culture of residents helping one another and the village motto is 'pulling together'. The residents identify with the village as the community; this demonstrates a complex relationship between the physical locality, local networks and the village identity. Boundaries play an important role in this, with the relative isolation of the village with little 'through traffic' being seen by a number of interviewees as important in the creation of Thirlby as a 'good community'.
- Residents know one another well and they meet through a whole range of events which are held in the village, either at the village hall or recreation field. Events are overseen by Thirlby Recreation Association (TRA) which plays a pivotal role in the community. Groups include the local history group, a book group, keep fit, an art group, a bridge group, a whist group, a craft group, and Neighbourhood Watch. Regular events such as quiz nights, garden parties, barbecues, cricket matches also take place. There are a number of one off events such as the recent outdoor live music event as well as regular annual events such as Christmas or New Year parties, a Sunday Lunch, a Cyclists lunch, a sports day, and the village show. As meetings occur largely through attendance of organised events or groups some people will meet more regularly than others. However, the village wide events bring the majority of residents together. The existing social structures and networks form a key part of the community's ability to respond effectively to a crisis situation.
- Another important organisation is the Parish Meeting, the boundaries of which largely coincide with the village boundaries. This is an important detail and residents are aware of and engaged with the Parish, which is not always the case in other locations. The Parish Meeting deals with all the external 'official'

information and matters such as planning. Its democratic nature, with only a chair and a secretary and all residents able to take part in a simple majority vote, is seen to be important. As one community member said *"the village meeting I think is about the most democratic thing you can get. We all can vote on anything and everything"*. Residents express a dislike of bureaucracy and being told what to do and so dislike the idea of a more formal Parish Council structure which is common in other areas. The chairperson is seen as the main conduit to outside officialdom, which is generally viewed with some suspicion. The Parish plays a less significant role in the day to day life of the community than the TRA but has greater significance in relations with outside agencies and dealing with 'problems'.

- It is important that relationships within the community are seen to be egalitarian. Although certain people play key roles they are not necessarily seen as leaders of the community and people resist the idea of somebody who would try and tell everybody else what to do. People take on particular roles at certain times, and *"different people are seen to be legitimate leading different things at different times"* (Chair to the Parish Meeting). There is an emphasis is on people contributing and anybody being able to play a role and many people taking part in a wide variety of ways. People offer help where it is needed, rather than being asked or told what they ought to do this. As the Chair of Parish Meeting said *"grandstanding, bulls**t, egotism is not terribly tolerated"*. This shapes the types of resilience that will take place and how external organisations could link to existing networks as can be seen in the sections below.
- The majority of residents appear to subscribe to a view of village life where residents should take part in local activities, and that a sense of belonging can be achieved through such participation. However, running alongside this is a sense of belonging through historical connection and a lifetime spent living in the village. Although superficially contradictory these did in fact reinforce one another. The relative newcomers took part in village activities and helped create an active and networked community and in turn the local family provided a sense of history and tradition which formed a part of the communal village identity.
- Despite the construction of clear geographical, social and institutional boundaries there are still some subtle differences to be found within the village in terms of belonging. The long thin shape means that there are two 'ends' to the village and interaction between these is not quite as extensive as that taking place within the ends and news doesn't always travel as quickly via word of mouth between these two. This has recently left some residents feeling a little isolated and receiving less help than they might have expected when they were ill and housebound.
- As one community member explained, *"for two whole winters we've been rather stuck and frankly feeling a little bit isolated, yes isolated ... No, I think the far end of the village where they do see each other, they are so close together they are bound to see each other as they go to and fro. They seem to be more aware of each other and what's going on than up here"*. This is not to say there is a complete separation or that she no longer feels this is a cohesive village, rather she feels that there is room for improvement. She supported the idea of some formalisation of the villages system of self-help as she did not like to have to ask for help as required in the current informal system. The other distinction that is sometimes made is that between the local family with the historical connection and the newer residents. At times the point of view of these two is seen to differ. However, it has proved possible to tolerate a certain amount of variation of opinion whilst still maintaining a sense of communal identity and the active local networks.
- Thirlby has a range of communication methods for within the village which helps to maintain activities and the shared identity. There are email systems for different types of communication, a regular village newsletter, notice boards, leaflets are delivered where necessary and 'word of mouth' can also be effective. This range of methods makes a complete communication breakdown less likely. They are perhaps less effective at external communication but the Chair to the Parish Meeting takes on this role together with the secretary to the Parish Meeting. They filter official information that comes to them and take what is judged to be relevant to the village. Similarly the Chair to the Parish Meeting takes the villages concerns to external organisations.

- In social capital terms the bonded networks within the village are strong but the linking networks with external agencies are relatively weak and could be developed further.

THE CASE STUDY EVENT – WHAT HAPPENED?

- The village of Thirlby on the edge of the North York Moors national park has a river running through it and it lies near the bottom of the steep Sutton Bank. Flash flooding swept through the village on the 19th of June 2005 after intense rainfall fell on the surrounding hillsides. The floods happened very rapidly, there was no warning and previous floods had been very minor. Water levels rose extremely quickly and ran through the village with frightening speed and power. Many of the residents and their children were together at a garden party being held in the village. This is believed to have prevented a loss of life. Large trees and a great deal of debris were swept down from the surrounding hillsides. This destroyed the bridge that is in the village, effectively cutting the village in half. It also destroyed roads leading out of the village leaving the residents cut off for some hours. This meant that they received little external assistance until the following day. Nobody was hurt but the force of the water could have caused injury. Approximately 18 households were affected with extensive damage being caused to these properties. Residents helped one another escape from their houses and move to higher ground within the village as the water rose. The water reached high levels, up to the second floor in houses close to the river. Fortunately nobody was injured or killed.

THE CASE STUDY EVENT – WHAT DID LOCAL PEOPLE AND THE AUTHORITIES DO?

Response by local people

- It was felt that the main factor regards impact was location, which determined who was flooded. Most of those flooded were close to the river and the bridge at one end of the village. However, a smaller number of properties at the other end were also flooded by water running off the sloping fields behind. After the floods the water subsided within hours and the weather that evening was then warm and dry. Once the water had gone residents felt a sense of unreality and an almost jolly atmosphere prevailed. This however dissipated once the extent of the situation became apparent. Local residents with suitable equipment quickly got to work and cleared away the very large trees and the debris that had accumulated. All of those flooded were quickly housed by people in the village.
- The next day residents offered what help they could with clearing up and household tasks. People provided meals, took in washing, fetched shopping, provided lifts, made phone calls, and helped to clear up. Help and support continued to be provided over the following months, both practical and emotional. It was felt that people had coped effectively and done as much for each other as was possible. This was enabled by the extensive networks that already existed.
- The community is also fortunate in having many resources within the village. There are a wide range of skills and assets present. These range from heavy machinery and people able to use it, to those used to negotiation and dealing with organisations. The response was seen as an extension of the community's normal behaviour and existing networks. The community felt themselves to have been very resilient and that this helped them to 'bounce-back' to normal. Some felt that there had been a strengthening of the local bonds and sense of community but they did not want to express this as a change in the community. Although villagers helped one another extensively people did also draw on friendship and family networks which extended beyond the village. So resilience was wider than just the immediate community, even though it was a strong community.
- The Chair to the Parish Meeting played a role in liaising with the local and district councils and various service providers. This role is given less weight in some people's account of the flood and not everybody is aware that this happened. The impact this had was on village wide issues such as repairing roads rather than on particular individuals needs which may explain the lack of awareness. The Chair is not seen as a community 'leader' in a straightforward way. As discussed earlier residents are resistant to the idea of leaders and it is important to them that relationships are seen as egalitarian. Nobody is seen to have control over the village, rather people offer themselves in service to the village and it is important that a range of people are involved and not just one or two powerful individuals. This is not

to say that nobody takes on any roles which may be described in some aspects at least as leadership. It is important that decision making is seen as inclusive and consensual which is one reason why the Parish Meeting structure which involving the whole village is preferred over the Parish Council which takes the form of a committee.

Response by the authorities, emergency services

- There was relatively little contact between the authorities and the community. By the time the authorities had access there was comparatively little to be done immediately, but it was agreed that local people still carrying out cleaning up work with heavy machinery would be paid for their time. There was no contact with the authorities prior to the flood as it had not been predicted. Following the flood there was some contact with local and district councils but residents seemed to be unaware of who had done what and felt that little had been done for them. More generally there is little faith in the authorities' ability to get things done. This is not a lack of trust as such; they are just seen as slow, inefficient and incompetent. People would rather get things done for themselves, which is seen as the quicker route and more effective because it is combined with local knowledge. This also forms part of the village identity, and people are proud of their self-reliance which is seen as a key factor in their resilience.
- This view that it was better to get on and do things yourself within the village was expressed as the opinion of both those born there and those who had moved in more recently. As one community member who has lived there nearly 30 years notes *"I think part of what makes Thirlby work is that there is a strong feeling that you can get everything that you need in Thirlby and that when outside agencies come in, it's not a very satisfactory outcome usually. I think that sums it up"*. Similarly when asked whether it would be helpful to have local authority involvement in organising an emergency response, another community member replied, *"Thirlby would say, when I say "Thirlby" that's the people born and bred here, who are the majority probably still, I'm sure they would say, "No, dammit, let's do it ourselves, it'll be more efficient"*. There is a feeling by many that self-reliance is more effective and so outside assistance is avoided. Although as this comment reveals there are some who are more open to seeking outside help than others.
- Following the flood residents appreciated those who come to help in a practical way. Representatives who turn up and appear to do nothing can create anger and resentment. As one community member recalls, *"I remember at the time of the flood that the lieutenant, whoever he is, and a chief constable and various people came round and it was like poison to people in Thirlby who were suffering from the flood, these people coming round to polish your forehead and tell you that it was going to be alright... Everybody said that if they'd got out of their car with a shovel it would have been a completely different thing"*. This visit although no doubt well intentioned did nothing to improve the residents' already low opinion of those in authority.
- Where a community identity coalesces around this belief in self-reliance it may help strengthen their bonding networks and common identity and it is likely to encourage them to help one another. They are however likely to be reluctant to want to work with 'the authorities' and it may make setting up good relationships in such a context more difficult. This is not to say however there is no contact with outsiders and they recognise that at least limited contact is needed. The Chair to the Parish Meeting is the village's main contact with 'the authorities' and people seem content to leave him to deal with them rather than have to have any involvement themselves. He is willing to try and improve relationships and he had quite a lot of contact with different organisations following the flood. However he found it difficult to contact those he felt had sufficient authority to take suitable action. *"I think the lesson I certainly learned is that you do need access to somebody in the emergency planning system in the local planning authorities to make services happen. You've got to have that conduit which can prioritise things, with local knowledge. I believe that's really important. I've had several attempts and I couldn't really ever get anybody to sit up and listen to that"* (Chair to the Parish Meeting).
- The Chair to the Parish Meeting also took on the role of representing the village when ringing up

different organisations or services in order to get things done on the village's behalf. He felt this was a useful role and one where a single person with some authority to represent the community can have more impact than a number of individuals. However, it was sometimes difficult to access the right people. *"There is this problem about having to go through the front desk all the time to these organisations. There is a need to have this conduit to leap frog that. What we found was that most but not all of the senior people in the organisation were really fairly responsive to that"* (Chair to the Parish Meeting). This role of representing the community in order to gain resources is likely to be acceptable as it does not involve telling residents what they ought to be doing. Whilst the Chair to the Parish Meeting feels that there would be benefit in him developing a closer relationship with the authorities this would require careful handling in terms of how it affected the rest of the village. They would need to be consulted and involved in any decisions. He does not represent the village in any straightforward way; rather he is a conduit for communication.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE EVENT?

Ways in which community resilience is being developed

- There has been a certain amount of reflection upon the event and consideration of lessons learnt by the Parish Meeting and the history group. These have considered emergencies generally, not just floods in particular. As the flood is considered by many to be a 'one off' there has been little engagement with flood issues. Also some of those flooded do not want to be reminded of the event.
- There has been reflection on the events and how well people coped. On the whole people felt they coped very well and did as much as was possible. There were some efforts to formalise the actions a little to improve their efficiency but there has been resistance to this idea.
- Where a community identity coalesces around this belief in self-reliance it may help strengthen their bonding networks and common identity and it is likely to encourage them to help one another. They are however likely to be reluctant to want to work with 'the authorities' and it may make setting up good relationships in such a context more difficult. This is not to say however there is no contact with outsiders and they recognise that at least limited contact is needed. The Chair to the Parish Meeting is the village's main contact with 'the authorities' and people seem content to leave him to deal with them rather than have to have any involvement themselves. He is willing to try and improve relationships and he had quite a lot of contact with different organisations following the flood. However, he found it difficult to contact those he felt had sufficient authority to take suitable action. *"I think the lesson I certainly learned is that you do need access to somebody in the emergency planning system in the local planning authorities to make services happen. You've got to have that conduit which can prioritise things, with local knowledge. I believe that's really important. I've had several attempts and I couldn't really ever get anybody to sit up and listen to that"* (Chair to the Parish Meeting).
- Formal plans were felt to be lacking in flexibility, for example as the Chair to the Parish Meeting explains: *"I think everybody felt what more could we have done? Do we want a set of formal plans which an emergency by its very nature is a surprise and it might be unusual, you say. If you had an aircraft crash here with burnt kerosene everywhere it'd be different than a flood. We know who's good at doing what and if they get wiped out by it anyway it's no good having a list and so on you go. People will just sort of say, "oh dear we don't, do we really need that?"* (Chair to the Parish Meeting). Other residents felt that such formalisation went against the Thirlby way of doing things. As one community member said *"an official plan would go down like a lead-filled balloon. Any attempt at having official plans for things in Thirlby is the death"*.
- Whilst this view has prevailed there are some who feel that some formalisation would be useful. For example one resident who has suffered from ill health and was at times housebound doesn't like to ask for help for herself and her husband, yet if there was a list of numbers or some semi-formal means of accessing lifts etc. then she would be more comfortable doing this. One reason she feels that they have

been to some extent overlooked is because of the more limited communication between the two ends of the village. Some formalisation of Thirlby's strong desire to help one another would prevent this situation where people in need can go unnoticed to some extent. This linking of existing networks is an important theme that comes up at a variety of levels.

- One form of reflection was the collection by the history group of accounts of the day of the flooding from residents of the village, which was supported by the majority of residents. These accounts, together with some general information on Thirlby and the flood event and photographs of the flood are going to be published by the history society and made available to the village and maybe other local places. It is felt to provide an important account and memory of the flood, from multiple perspectives within the village. They also sent out a questionnaire which was to be used to improve future responses to an emergency but this received less support. They have now decided not to include any recommendations.
- This quote illustrates something of the resistance to formalising the village's response: *Originally we were going to include a part at the end of the thing about dealing with future emergencies, but we've decided not to do it now because of them not wanting to be reminded and so forth. And because we didn't get the feeling that they wanted it. We've decided that it's perhaps not the duty of the history group to do that*" (community member).
- The history group also gathered accounts from the various authorities; they found them unhelpful and unwilling to provide information. The Freedom of Information Act was used in order to get the police to disclose their role. This reticence to provide information did nothing to improve residents' view of the authorities. When asked of it was clear why they had been so reluctant to provide information the interviewee felt that *"they were probably embarrassed at the skimpy nature of what had been recorded"*. The lack of apparently sensitive information reinforces the view that these organisations are secretive by nature.
- Since 2006 there has been relatively little communication between organisations responsible for dealing with emergencies and the community. Feedback on this is therefore limited. Residents had expected that information passed to the police would be handed on to other authorities as they became involved, this proved not to be the case. The authorities were generally seen as inefficient and the response inadequate, although it was recognised that their resources were stretched at this time. There is little distinction made between the various 'authorities' and service providers (phone, electric, water) are discussed alongside district and county councils and the Environment Agency. It was suggested that someone was needed with authority to ensure effective repairs, and that this should extend to private service companies such as telephone and electricity providers.
- Since the flood the Environment Agency has identified Thirlby as an area susceptible to 'extreme flash flooding'. 'Extreme flash flooding has been defined as where a river or stream reacts very rapidly to rainfall and generates large flood depths or velocities of water that pose an extreme threat to life'. The nature of flash flooding makes it very difficult to predict and provide warnings. The Environment Agency through their Rapid Response Catchment Project aim to ensure that all those living and working in catchments that have the potential to suffer from extreme flash flooding are made aware of the hazard and know what to do should they encounter flash flooding. The Environment Agency has approached Thirlby through a gathering of the Parish Meeting. There was some interest expressed in the idea of an emergency plan although concerns were raised regarding the expected time and resource it would take. A plan has not yet been created and it appears unlikely this will happen for all the

reasons considered above. The Environment Agency intends to contact Thirlby in January 2012 so a more formal plan remains a possibility for the future.

HOW IS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE CHARACTERISED IN THIS CASE STUDY?

Characteristics of community resilience as defined by this event

- Residents felt that they had proved themselves and their community to be resilient. There was an effective clean-up operation and flooded residents were well supported both physically and emotionally. This was based on the existing social structures and networks. Although the pre-existing non flood village activities were initially reduced they did eventually return to pre flood levels and they continue to thrive a number of years after the flood. The extensive networks, existing culture of helping one another, and belief in the value of self-reliance (as a village) enabled their resilience.
- External organisations did not play a significant role in community resilience and generally outside authorities are seen as inefficient and ineffective. The belief in self-reliance and a suspicion of external agencies makes forming relationships with authorities problematic. However a certain amount of contact did take place through the Chair to the Parish Meeting. Villagers were happy for him to take on this role as it enabled them to keep these authorities at a safe distance whilst allowing some necessary communication.

WHAT WORKED WELL?

Key positives from the event and follow up:

- Residents felt they had showed the value of their community and proved to be a 'good community' (in terms of working together, helping each other etc) who were effective in the face of adversity. They were able to recover relatively quickly and there was a feeling that existing bonds had been strengthened. It made people appreciate what they had and the value of living in such an active and close knit community.

WHAT WORKED LESS WELL?

Key negatives from the event and follow up:

- Relationships with authorities were not particularly successful and the villager's view of them as inefficient and ineffective was reinforced.
- There is still a reluctance to build on the lessons learnt from the flood in order to produce an emergency plan.

WHAT LESSONS CAN BE LEARNT FROM THIS CASE STUDY IN TERMS OF IMPROVING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO EMERGENCIES?

Lessons for improving community resilience in this case study

- One area for improvement is the relationship between external organisations and the local people. There a number of ways this could be improved:
 - a) Provision of a clearer understanding of these organisations various roles in an emergency and what they are able to do.
 - b) Overcome the belief that these organisations are ineffective through practical demonstrations of their ability to 'get things done'.
 - c) Improve for transparency and communication between external organisations and residents in order to overcome suspicion
 - d) The authorities need to recognise and work with existing local organisations such as the Parish Meeting to a greater extent. This should be carefully tailored for each locality.
- Encouraging the development of a more formal emergency plan which builds on the villages existing

social structures has the potential to improve resilience, both everyday resilience and emergency resilience. It is important that this is not simply a standardised 'tick-box' exercise but rather an engagement with current practices and the lessons that were learnt from the flood. This would need to be sensitive to the community's dislike of formality and outside interference. Some possible options for promoting this include:

- a) Demonstrating that there is a desire by at least some within the village to create a 'plan' of some sort
- b) Showing how the current informal practice may leave some gaps where people can be neglected
- c) Engaging with the village wide community and being creative to find a form of planning that is flexible and acceptable.

General lessons from this case study for improving community resilience

- Develop knowledge of the existing communities (of place, of interest) over time and collaboratively with local people. This would be useful for external organisations and people in local areas to do together in the planning stage of the emergency management cycle with the view to being able to understand how the networks might respond during an emergency and building on those networks. Ensure that communities that do exist are able to define their own boundaries so that any systems put in place make sense to local people. Allow time to research the community and its organisations. Talk with local people from a range of backgrounds. Ask local people about how they define their local community. Be prepared to work with differing viewpoints.
- Raise awareness with responders of the potential roles of more informal organisations and networks as well as the more formal structures such as the Parish. Investigate the informal structures present and think creatively how they might be involved. Consider whether there is the potential to create links between existing groups so that they can work together. Some examples of the types of groups that might be considered – local history groups, play groups, school based groups, book clubs, Women's Institutes (WI), art/craft groups, exercise/sport groups, civic societies, Neighbourhood Watch, local environmental issues groups, groups based around a specific ethnic identity, religious groups.
- Ensure that there is an attitude of openness and trust from emergency responders, external organisations in their dealings with people in local areas. Avoid excessive secrecy, respond promptly to questions, and communicate frequently through a variety of channels.
- Understand that solutions are unlikely to be effective if they imposed on local areas, it is necessary to work with the community to find something acceptable. When approaching local people to engage in developing emergency plans stress that they will help create this and discuss a range of ideas for possible formats.

3. Great Yarmouth, Norfolk: Tidal Surge

Social profile

Great Yarmouth is a coastal town in the County of Norfolk. The population of Great Yarmouth is estimated to be 93,900 in 2003, an increase from 90,801 in 2001, this is spread over 26.54 km² and as such Great Yarmouth has the second highest population density in the County of Norfolk (1,782 persons per km²). Almost three quarters of this population (68,400) live in the built up area of Great Yarmouth.



Residents are generally older than the national average with 20.43% over 65 (compared to the 15.7% national average); the biggest difference is the age band 16-44 which constitutes 34.9% of Great Yarmouth's population but 40.2% of the nation's. Ethnicity is predominantly white British (97.4%) with no non-white ethnic grouping making up more than 0.2% of Great Yarmouth's population.

Employment

A large majority of the working population is employed in the service sector (82.5%). Tourism -related services accounts for 16% of the workforce which is roughly double the national average (8.2%). Unemployment is identified as higher than national or regional – East of England - averages and as heavily seasonal (due to reliance on tourist industries) and the claimant rate of 6.1 is much higher than the regional (3.1%) or national (3.8%) averages. Weekly wages are increasing and in 2008 were £412.50 (from £332.70 in 2002), but are still lower than the regional (£494) and national (£502) averages.

Deprivation

Great Yarmouth is relatively deprived, being the only one of Norfolk's Districts to be in the 50 most deprived nationally in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010 (Great Yarmouth was ranked 30th). In fact, 22% of the population of Great Yarmouth live in areas which are identified as being among the 10% most deprived areas in the country; this has increased from 20.2% in 2007, suggesting an increase in relative deprivation.

Sources

Norfolk Insight - Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010:

<http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/Custom/Resources/Din311.pdf>

Overview of Great Yarmouth: <http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/view/ncc041458>

Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/indices2010>

SUMMARY

- This case study centres on the 8th/9th November 2007 tidal surge and consequent danger of widespread flooding of the Great Yarmouth area. A North Sea tidal surge was predicted to coincide with high tides at Great Yarmouth giving a combined tide level of about 3m resulting in localised overtopping of flood defences. There was a risk of flood defences being overtopped elsewhere along the coast, within the Broads system of tidal rivers as well as other areas in East Anglia. There were severe flood warnings issued by the Environment Agency at Great Yarmouth and on parts of the Rivers Bure, Yare, and Waveney all of which converge at Great Yarmouth. Over 1000 people were evacuated to rest centres and approximately 50,000 sandbags were given out to local people. Fortunately the weather changed and the flooding did not happen, but the plans were activated. After the event there was a clean-up of sandbags and of the rest centres that had been used.
- Local people helped each other as they could in terms of supporting those who evacuated, getting sandbags and looking after people's possessions. There was a sense of the local people not feeling prepared and that the communication between them and the emergency services could have been improved. The emergency services worked together to carry out the evacuation and distributing sandbags including getting more sandbags from outside the county. Police came from other authorities to knock on doors and support the process. Rest centres were set up and rest centre staff were brought in from outside the area.
- Since the "near miss" a number of developments have happened to support community resilience most notably the setting up of four community resilience groups around the four urban areas. The aim of these groups is to be the interface between the local people and the different groups (e.g. Homewatch, youth clubs, schools, tenants and resident associations). These groups are variously developing their community resilience plans with a focus on the development of communication trees that could be used in an emergency situation. In addition, in October 2011 one area had an "emergencies week" where they engaged with older people through stories of the 1953 flood and children from the local primary school raised awareness through a loud and noisy walk through the area, asking people if they were prepared and handing out leaflets. There were also events at the school to draw in parents.
- In terms of the key things that worked well during the event, people in the local area did help each other out drawing on existing bonded networks, the emergency services worked well together and the plans for evacuation were effective. Since 2007 the development of the Community Resilience groups and their progress in resilience planning is very promising together with the linking of the community development with community resilience and other networks. Finally, the "emergencies week" worked very well.
- In terms of what did not work so well, although people acted they did not feel prepared and did not feel they knew what to do in the event. Communication between local people and the emergency services was not as effective as it could be. The use of outsiders did not help relationships of trust e.g. in door knocking and at rest centres.

COMMUNITY – CONTEXT AND PROFILE

General community characteristics

- Great Yarmouth lies at the mouth of Breydon Water where the Rivers Bure, Yare and Waveney converge to enter the North Sea. Although there is a geological propensity for rapid runoff of excess water, Great Yarmouth has only been seriously flooded once on record during the East Coast Floods of 1953 (Environment Agency, 2005). During this event 9 or 10 people lost their lives and 3500 houses were ruined when the storm surge struck in darkness, and the town was flooded from both the storm surge from seaward and inundation from Breydon Water. There have been subsequent less severe floods in 1983; 1988; 1993; and 2006. Great Yarmouth is considered at high risk of flooding and as the Multi-Agency Tactical flood plan for Great Yarmouth borough says *"By far the greatest threat to life is*

from tidal flooding in communities around the coastline and along tidal rivers". (p. 7, 2010).

- As noted in the social profile for Great Yarmouth, the urban areas are areas of deprivation with many of those who live in the deprived areas also at risk of flooding. The Environment Agency estimate that in a worst case scenario (i.e. without flood defences) there are up to 8,330 properties at risk from tidal flooding in the urban Great Yarmouth area and Gorleston. (Environment Agency, 2010). It should be noted that the estimates are based on there being no defences and in reality it is considered to be less than this (Interview with Great Yarmouth Borough Council service manager), and nearer 1000 properties. The areas most at risk are Cobholm and Southtown, but all the urban areas have some level of risk from tidal flooding as well as other sources of flooding.
- The areas that we focussed on in Great Yarmouth are the urban areas which for the purpose of the community resilience planning is divided into four areas: North Yarmouth; South Yarmouth; Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House; and Gorleston. Each of these areas has different characteristics in terms of social capital, identities and geographical boundaries which are described below. Three of the four areas are covered by Neighbourhood Management Workers who facilitate community development in South Yarmouth (Community actual spelling is 'Comeunity'), Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House (Make it Happen) and Gorleston (Magdalen, Elmhurst Court and SHrublands (MESH). The first neighbourhood management programme started in 2006 in South Yarmouth which was focussed on coordinating service delivery to better meet the needs of local people and to generally improve local quality of life. As the programme was coming into its third year it was decided to roll it out across two other areas of deprivation in Great Yarmouth: Gorleston and Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House, and so those programmes started in 2009. In each of the areas there is a neighbourhood management team who bring together different partners e.g. police, NHS, county council, elected members and voluntary sector. As one neighbourhood management worker said this is *"to commit to working together and explore needs in innovative ways"* Crucially all of the teams have spaces where people can drop in and one is linked to a health centre (Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House). The approach taken by the teams was described by one neighbourhood management worker as *"going out there and getting to know people, exactly. Spending a lot of time doing that actually. Drinking tea just to develop relationships really. Get a bit of trust emerging. And then with those people, once there's a dialogue that's started then to start to explore what their priorities might be."* It can be summarised as engage, involve, empower. From those discussions the team can then link people up with others to access grants, set up youth clubs etc. One of these is 'The Den, Life Changes' which has been set up in Southtown and is discussed below.
- It is clear that the neighbourhood management teams play a crucial role in terms of bridging and linking capital, by bringing local residents together and linking them to wider service provision by providing trusted faces and spaces where people feel comfortable. Having this foundation of social capital within an area means that in an emergency there are existing networks to draw on. The resources (e.g. information, skills) to support community resilience are being nurtured and developed as part of everyday life.

Links and networks within the four urban areas of Great Yarmouth

Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House

- Cobholm and Southtown, are considered to be quite close knit areas, examples of bonded social capital, that is, networks based largely on family ties located in a small geographical area, so communities both of place and of relationships. Cobholm specifically has people who have lived there all their lives, together with families all living in the same area: *"had children, close knit families"* (Councillor/community member) and is geographically bounded described as an *"urban village, you have to come into it"* (Councillor/Community member). It has terraced housing which was also considered to facilitate connections between neighbours. In terms of activities, there is a school, community centre, a youth club and lunch club going on at the church, as well as the sea cadets and Make it Happen (the neighbourhood management centre). In addition, flooding is considered still part of the memory in Cobholm from the flood of 1953, there are people of whom it was said *"have the history of the flooding*

in the past And their houses have carried the stigma of it, you've got a tide mark up the wall...so the older families know that flooding is a serious thing and maybe the younger generation don't take it so seriously....(councillor/community member). People go round to each other's houses and there is a sense that they do help each other out on a day to day basis.

- From discussions it is clear that although it is only separated by a road, Cobholm and Southtown are regarded as clearly distinct places. Southtown also has terraced houses which was considered to facilitate communication between local people on a daily basis. Southtown is considered to have some strong networks and people who have lived in the area a long time, so has pockets of bonded social capital, but that is together with a transient population of migrant workers from a number of countries and there is a high turnover of pupils at the local school. The people living in Southtown were described as *"distrusting unless they know you. If they know you then they will trust you....and we have so many different areas of people"* (Community member). In Southtown one of the primary schools the junior school has become a key hub for the local people over the past ten years with activities being carried out there after school e.g., providing valuable bridging social capital between members of the local area and the school, bringing a wider range of information and resources to those people. From the discussion it is clear that there is a community of interest (education) and of place, centred around the school.
- A further key hub within Southtown, that brings local residents together with each other and links them into wider networks and services is 'The Den, Life Changes'. This is a house that was set up by some residents who were concerned that there was nothing for the young people, and who were also trusted members of the local area. It started with a youth club, with support from the Make it Happen team, and as the neighbourhood management worker said *"you might have heard it all sort of spiralled from there and then they did this youth club and they've done this big life skills project now and they're involved in a million things and they are linked into the school. They've got referrals from the school and it's all happening"*. At the house they provide an environment to support young people and families (the youth club is at the community centre) they do cooking, *"family problems, debt management, anything that they need doing in the area....But I think we're just a house, we're a friendly open house and they feel comfortable"* (Community member). The way 'The Den, Life Changes' has grown out of a bonded network of people, linked up to services and structures through the Make It Happen team to enable access to wider resources (social, economic, physical) is another example of the complex interrelationships between networks in local areas which when developed can empower, strengthen and develop local communities of place and interest.
- Halfway House was regarded as less bonded and described as *"completely different again, so there's no sort of hub, there's no shops that are in the area, there's a high proportion of houses that are council owned and then managed by community housing"* (Community development worker). Interestingly however it was noted that there is a strong sense of Halfway House not being allied with Gorleston although it is geographically closer than to Southtown and Cobholm.

South Yarmouth

- It was felt that there are pockets of community, people bonded together. Some of the area has been mostly B&Bs although that is changing with houses going over to private ownership or housing associations, and it is quite a transient community. From the perspective of the councillor she felt there was more of a community in terms of family bonds and geography on the Barrack Estate *"because there are still families that live up there"* (councillor/community member) whereas in Middlegate she suggested of the networks, it was *"a loose one.....in so much as though they're a compact area, not necessarily does everybody know everybody any more. And I think this is so of a lot of places"* (councillor/community member).
- The type of housing was also mentioned, that some housing was better at facilitating conversations with neighbours than others. In terms of community organisations e.g community associations and residents associations there seemed to be quite a bit of activity and the councillor gave an example of how from a single issue – "boy racers" – a group had sprung up and was linking with the police and the

council. Another group *“has recently sprung up and they’ve got quite a few members, they all sort of live within the square. There are First Move Furniture Aid which takes donations of furniture and that.....And they’ve started meeting there. And there is a piece of ground that is very grotty round it, and with pointing people in the right direction, saying that this person could help this person out, they’ve now got 6 great big flower pots there.. And Great Yarmouth in Bloom gave them a grant to get some plants.. so yes that’s another...it’s been going about 18 months..... still in fledgling days but it is getting stronger and they really do pull together...(councillor/community member).* In summary there seem to be pockets of activity, with an active councillor and also there is *“Comeunity”* which is the South Yarmouth neighbourhood management team.

- In terms of links through to organisations in emergencies the local councillor is a key link as she is also a resident in the area. There was some concern expressed that whilst there might be good relationships at a personal level with local police etc, that might not be the case with people higher up in these organisations. That is, whether or not they really wanted to work with communities and concern that there was high turnover in e.g. fire service and that relationships of trust had to be built all over again: *“the people that we know within an organisation we trust. We don’t necessarily trust the big part of the organisation.”* (councillor/community member).

North Yarmouth

- North Yarmouth also has a number of smaller communities within it. A key example are the people living around Northgate Street who after the flash flood of 2006 were galvanised into action forming the Northgate Street Community Association (NSCA). This group worked to get Anglian Water to clean and refurbish the drains in that area and once they had done that it moved into being more of a social group and has recently raised £130,000 to do up a play area in the local area. It does not have a neighbourhood management team as the other three areas do. This is an example of a community emerging after an event and in this case becoming centred around a specific area with interest in getting action to prevent flooding. What is interesting is that bonds of trust and reciprocity have clearly developed within that group which has enabled the group to move its focus away from flooding to the local community.
- In terms of linking with those involved in emergencies since the flood of 2006, the NSCA was set up and this linked effectively with Anglian Water, the local MP at the time and other services. This provides a good example of the role of linking capital, through the proactive nature of the group they were able to engage with Anglian Water and the local MP who were able to take decisions to reduce the flood risk and improve flood protection.

Gorleston

- Gorleston is also an area where there are tight knit family groups, for example around the Magdalen estate, so again communities of place and of family. It was described as *“a community that very much look after each other. At the same time, the same as Norfolk is, is quite reluctant with outsiders.”* (Assistant Principal). The networks tend to be family based and it was remarked at the Gorleston Community Resilience Meeting that sometimes people might not know people four doors away *“its very much family connections here”* (Assistant Principal). There were clear differences expressed between Bradwell (on one side of the road) and Magdalen on the other side of the road giving the impression of people having close attachments to their local areas. In Gorleston the neighbourhood team is called MESH. The local secondary school became an academy in 2010 and has a strong community focus and outreach. It is building links with the community through activities and events but it was acknowledge d as a task that would take time.
- In terms of linking with those involved in emergencies through the Homewatch network, there are links with the local police, and the community support officer attended the meeting of the Gorleston Community Resilience group. In addition, the local academy was a rest centre in 2007 and will be one again for future emergencies. The assistant principal is also part of the Gorleston Community Resilience group together with local residents, and staff from MESH. In many ways it would seem that the

networks are there and the community resilience group has been able to provide a space for members from those different groups to meet together.

- Having this foundation of social capital within an area means that in an emergency there are existing networks to draw on. The resources (e.g. skills) to support community resilience are being nurtured and developed as part of everyday life.

THE CASE STUDY EVENT: WHAT HAPPENED?

- The case study focuses on the 8th/9th November 2007 tidal surge and consequent danger of widespread flooding of the Great Yarmouth area. The tidal surge made its way down the North Sea and there was the possibility of it coinciding with peak high tides. There was a risk of flood defences being overtopped at Great Yarmouth as well as other areas in East Anglia. There were severe flood warnings issued by the Environment Agency at Great Yarmouth and on parts of the Rivers Bure, Yare, and Waveney all of which flow out to the sea at Great Yarmouth.
- The areas at most risk of flooding in Great Yarmouth were Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House, South Yarmouth and parts of Gorleston, although the risk was high for all urban areas.
- Over 1000 people living close to the river from South Denes to Caister Road on the east bank and in Southtown, Cobholm and Gorleston's riverside were evacuated to five rest centres set up in local schools around Great Yarmouth with more going to friends and families. 160 police officers and police community support officers from as far afield as Essex, Hertfordshire and London were deployed in Great Yarmouth through the night of 8th November. Many knocked on doors to tell people to evacuate.
- Sandbags were distributed free by the local council. There were 1500 already filled and available for distribution with more in store unfilled. By the end of the first day – 8th November the sandbag supply had been used. More sandbags were obtained from other authorities with 30,000 coming from Grantham and 4,000 from Aylsham. An estimated 50,000 sandbags were distributed over the period by Great Yarmouth Services
- By the morning of 9th November the surge had passed without flooding and silver command (tactical) had stood down. However, this left the clean up and taking of people back to their homes from the rest centres as needed. It is an issue to consider, when and who decides that an emergency is "over".

THE CASE STUDY EVENT – WHAT DID LOCAL PEOPLE AND THE AUTHORITIES DO?

Response by local people

- The people most affected by the case study events were those who were evacuated and those who experienced the flood warnings, so all those in the at risk areas. As it was a "near miss" no properties were flooded, however the threat of flooding was of course responded to. As noted over 1000 people were evacuated to rest centres and others self-evacuated out of the area. It is assumed that many went to homes of friends and families.
- In Southtown the response by the community was largely unplanned and relied on people who knew each other getting things organized. *"In Southtown we had the drains bubbling up from one side of the street, a friend went and got a thing that pumped it across to the other drain, somebody went and got sand bags, someone went and got water, someone went and got baby milk 'cause there was people with children, cooked food, everybody had a role in the area to go and do something to help each other out.....That just came off our own backs.....From a panic situation that's when we sort of said, Erika said we need this, we agree because yes, it's alright doing it once in a panic situation but it's not that easy.....Because at that time there were no structures in place to deal with it, nothing at all.....There was nothing was there, just get on with it.* (Community member).
- In Cobholm the response was felt not to be as organized at the community level as in Southtown *"In Cobholm no it was nothing like that. People did the usual thing, we had two sand stores and the usual thing is to panic and run up to the sand store and people were there with wheelie bins trying to fit in*

because the sand is just dumped on the ground, in a contained area actually.” (Councillor/community member).

- In South Yarmouth the response there was a feeling that they did not know what was happening *“because in this area the 2007 for individuals was quite scary, because I as a Councillor heard nothing about it until a resident rang me and said “where do I get some sandbags?” And I said “I don’t know what you’re talking about”.* (councillor/community member).
- In these three cases the impression given was that people did what they could, relied on existing networks and felt that they had “got by”. The community response was based largely on the existing networks and was organised to a greater or lesser extent in the different areas but it was felt that this needed to be structured and organised for the next event. The “just getting by” was felt not to be adequate, there was a lack of information and feelings of anxiety were created, and those who felt they should have some knowledge e.g. councillors did not feel empowered to act effectively.
- The other aspect was the evacuation of people, two things were mentioned here which influenced the community response, firstly the door knocking which was carried out by the police and secondly the use of rest centres. In terms of door knocking this highlighted the need to have local people who knew the area and the location of vulnerable people as police came in from outside the area to help who people did not know or trust and who potentially did not know where to go in terms of those people who were vulnerable. *“The fact the Police obviously brought in lots of people from outside the area who did not know the area I think was a problem for Yarmouth as a whole”* (assistant principle). This is a case where local expertise in terms of knowledge of streets and vulnerable people could have complemented the emergency services activities. Also without the trusted face at the door people were less likely to act on the instructions or even open the door.
- In terms of resources that the communities drew upon in 2007, it seems to have been largely existing bonded (families and friends) networks between people with support skills (e.g. cooking, shopping, providing beds for the night), together with some use of physical assets e.g. getting sand from the beach and taking it to those who needed it. The council provided the rest centres.

Response by the authorities, emergency services

- About 1000 people were evacuated to the rest centres and others would have gone to family and friends. There were some issues noted around rest centres. One rest centre became very full and another was underused. It was again felt that bringing people from outside to manage the rest centres was not so helpful, as for example with one of the schools it was felt that the space could be better managed by those who worked there and knew it. *“Unfortunately, it did mean they had no idea of the layout of the ... they might’ve had a plan of the school but they didn’t know the real essentials so in terms of that, I don’t think it was the best use of facilities etc.”* (assistant principal). Another issue raised in interviews was that the rest centres were not necessarily geared up for vulnerable people. Two examples: someone who was very ill and autistic children.
- From the perspective of the local council the big pressure was for sandbags. There were sand dumps around the town and 1000 filled bags in store with others to be filled. They had to get more sandbags from other counties to meet the demand. There were issues with people wanting sandbags and they had to be brought in from outside the county. Because people were very concerned to get the bags the lorries had to be escorted by the police. People also took sand from the beaches to fill the bags.
- In the case of 2007 what seems to have happened is that there was organization at the level of the emergency services and at the levels of command: gold, silver and bronze. Overall the system worked and it was felt that they had “coped well”. From the Environment Agency’s perspective they were able to give a longer lead time than usual which meant that there were daylight hours in which the emergency services could organise themselves which made a difference. In addition, they had practiced with the ambulance service so that they knew how it would affect their operations and so could organise themselves so that their usual service could be maintained.
- However, they were not prepared for the huge numbers of people calling Floodline and looking on the

website. This was a positive issue in many ways because it showed that the levels of awareness were very high, however: *"We had something called Floodlinewhich was totally overwhelmed frankly. We just couldn't get the calls answered..... normally on our Environment Agency website we get a thousand hits in a day, normally in terms of flooding things, that might get up to 10-20,000. On the night before we had this flood 457,000 - that's the kind of magnitude of increase, we have now had to build up to deal with".* (Environment Agency manager).

- In South Yarmouth it was remarked that the communication from the emergency services was not as good as it could be: *"The thing is I am a councillor and I was a councillor then but we weren't being fed any information"* (councillor/community member). In terms of support it was felt that there needed to be better information on what level of emergency it was, and to be told what is happening and what action needs to be taken.
- With respect to Southtown, the school felt the communication was *"really good because we had such an early warning.....that we were able to respond to that warning and make plans for the families for the following day 'cause if the warning had come after school had closed then we wouldn't have been able to get information out to families"*(local headmistress). For residents it was felt to be less helpful *"I didn't know 'til the last minute when it all happened which would've been nice if we'd known about the flood line number which nobody is actually told when you move into the area, we didn't know about it until it happened and people said well flood line rung us, well who are they?"* (community member).

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE EVENT

Ways in which community resilience is being developed

- There have been a number of key developments in terms of community resilience since the 2007 tidal surge:
 - The appointment of an Emergency Planning Manager days after the event who is working to facilitate the development of four community emergency resilience plans for the unparished urban areas of Great Yarmouth.
 - The development and extension of the neighbourhood management approach in three of the urban areas which aim to involve, engage and empower local people to act effectively in their local areas and to connect in with local services. The three neighbourhood management offices are places where people meet and connect. The staff are the vital links between local people and the local authority and through their approach to community engagement they are bringing people on board to improve community resilience in emergencies.
 - The development of The Den, Life Changes and other community initiatives which are developing and strengthening community ties and their links with the local junior school which is committed to community engagement.
- There are now four Community (Resilience) Emergency Groups in the unparished urban area, all of which are progressing with their plan writing, the process of developing plans is as important as the plans themselves. For each plan the groups are led by either councillors or community members. The EPM and the neighbourhood management workers (in those areas) are all very active in the supporting and empowering the groups to do the plans in the ways that they want to. There is a very active sense of wanting to nurture people to be active rather than telling them what to do. The plans involve assessing the local risks and then developing a list of people with different skills together with a clear communication tree so everyone knows who to contact. These groups are meeting on a monthly basis and cover all aspects of emergencies. The example below shows how the communications tree which is part of the Community Resilience Plans was used by the EPM to send out information to local people:

'...within those plans we've got emergency coordinators, as we call them...We don't call them flood wardens because that's just restricted to the flood scenario. We used to have flood wardens but now we're talking about emergencies generally, although in this area clearly flooding is a major risk. But it's emergency coordinators and deputies in case they're not around and then a network

of community contacts, geographically located, and that goes the same for the parish council I was talking about. They've got a contact for a street or a series of streets but I have my main contact who's the emergency coordinator and a couple of deputies in case she's not there or not well. For example, we had an incident on a beach in this particular parish. It's on the seaside. It was thought to be an unexploded wartime bomb washed up on the beach. A cordon was established, so residents seeing that would be thinking what's going on? So I phoned the emergency coordinator and say "This is what's happening. You can explain this to the parish members and anybody else who is enquiring. This is what's happening, this is the timescale and so on." So it allows that message to be put out through the community. It does rely very much then on how effective their plan is at communicating through their communications tree, but that's the aim anyway.' (EPM).

- Engagement through the Community Resilience Plan process gives the opportunity for local people to take ownership of the response. Part of planning involves a process of consultation, attempting to include the views and knowledge of all stakeholders and a way to build networks and give ownership to local people. The emphasis should be on process rather than a static construction of mechanisms of governance. Effective governance in the context of developing strong community resilience consists of a process of accumulating social capital: building networks of people and agencies who are engaged in a process of dialogue focusing on how to respond to situations.
- Each of these groups are drawing together different sectors of the local area but crucially this is being done organically in the way that fits that specific area, so in that way bridging social capital is being developed as well as linking hierarchially to services and the local authority. So for example in Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House, however, the 'Make it Happen' neighbourhood management team linked up with the emergency planning manager to start a community emergency group which has been in existence since 2010. It is clear that the Make it Happen team provide an invaluable link between the local community where they spend time developing and encouraging people and meeting them where they are at, and the more official services of the council e.g. emergency planning. In turn members of the local emergency group are linked to the local primary school whose headmistress sits on the group. However, in Gorleston the group is headed up by a local Homewatch (neighbourhood watch) co-ordinators. This group is still at the early stages of forming, and at the meeting in November had eighteen attendees which included a police community support officer, a number of Homewatch co-ordinators, a member of the Norfolk Resilience Forum, the Assistant Principal from the local academy where it was held, a chair of a tenants association, a member of staff from MESH (the local neighbourhood management team) and a number of local residents.

Ways in which the community have become engaged on adverse events

- Members of the local areas are becoming engaged on adverse events through the community resilience groups. Each group carries out a risk assessment on the hazards/issues that they view as problematic for their area. At the Gorleston meeting the EPM facilitated a session where members of the meeting discussed the issues in their area and located them on a map.
- In Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House during October 2011 there was an "emergencies week" where they engaged with older people through stories of the 1953 flood and children from the local primary school raised awareness through a loud and noisy walk through the area, asking people if they were prepared and handing out leaflets. There were also events at the school to draw in parents. This is a great example of bridging social capital being used and developed to raise awareness of preparedness for emergencies.

Links with emergency services and authorities

- At the level of the local authority it is felt key to take a multiagency approach and take a generic plan but with contingencies for particular types of emergencies. Having a plan in place provides a focus and implies that mechanisms can respond very quickly to events. Planning provides a focus to develop multi-agency collaboration. As the EPM commented in terms of the lessons learned from the 2007 tidal surge: *'It's often said we work in cells and we have certain statutory responsibilities which we comply*

with as far as we can, but it's looking at systems as a whole and saying, well, how do we make this work?'

- In the case of Great Yarmouth, the Local Resilience Forum brings different stakeholders together to collaborate in operationalising planning and strategy. An interview with the EPM suggests that since the tidal surge of 2007, the Resilience Forum has continued to expand its links with a range of actors e.g. through the Voluntary and Faith Group which supports the link between the LRF and community groups. The links between Category 1 and Category 2 responders has continued to be strengthened but there is still work to do on how "Community Resilience" is addressed by those responders within the Forum. The Forum provides a vital link between strategic decision makers and the local community. Information, or communication, flow between agencies is a key to bringing agents together. *'...to try and raise awareness of the fact there is this process first of all and that it doesn't just happen, and it isn't just one individual who's writing the plan.'* (EPM)
- As noted above the links to the emergency services and the local authorities in terms of community resilience are largely happening through the community resilience groups facilitated by key individuals (emergency planning manager and members of the neighbourhood management teams).

HOW IS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE CHARACTERISED IN THIS CASE STUDY?

Characteristics of community resilience as defined by this event

- From the response of the community to the 2007 event it would seem that people did manage, the resilience seemed mostly to be a muddling through at the level of local people, relying on existing networks for support and immediate help. In terms of the approach it might be characterised as "bounce back" – a desire to get back to normal as quickly as possible. In terms of the emergency services it was more organised and co-ordinated partly with an emphasis on keeping things going as normal (e.g. ambulance service) but also clearly planning for the complete disruption of a flood by evacuating large numbers of people at risk, so in that sense adapting.
- In terms of resilience since the 2007 event, in Southtown it was felt that there the event had had a positive effect on bringing people together which had continued so that it was considered that the community in Southtown was stronger, and that the event had had a transforming effect but that it was a continuous process to maintain awareness and engagement. As one community member said: *"I think it has continued, I think a lot of people now will talk who never talked before to people and again with the school, there's so many turnovers, everybody has to keep working at it to make them aware because if you get so many new people and people have moved out you're re-educating a new lot of people"*.
- In Cobholm it was felt that people were now better able to deal with similar situations, it had not transformed the relationships in the local area but there was an expression of adaptation to the possibility of a future hazard. For some though the effect of the near miss did transform their lives because they decided to leave. As one councillor/community member said *"what I've found is a lot of people who have been here for some time have actually moved out, they've had enough.....That really was... being moved yeah, which was nice people but they've just had enough and they took to the hills of Gorleston"*.
- The fact that there were pockets of bonded social capital meant that people did help each other where they could. Having some councillors who were also local community members meant that people had trusted people they could go to. However, given these were not clearly linked into the emergency services meant there was little two way dialogue: local people did not receive adequate information and the emergency services did not have useful local knowledge and trust to draw on for door-knocking.

WHAT WORKED WELL?

- People in the local area helped each other out practically drawing on existing bonded networks, but this was partial and not linked effectively into the organised response.
- The emergency services worked well together and the plans for evacuation were effective.
- There was a relatively long lead time for this type of flood which gave time for the emergency services to get organised.
- The development of the Community Resilience groups and their progress in planning: The four groups that have been set up meet every month and are bringing together a wide range of people from local areas.
- The linking of the community development with Community Resilience and other community networks (e.g. through schools) and local organisations.
- The “emergencies week” awareness raising was carried out in the Cobholm, Southtown and Halfway House area. This was a good example of people in the local area coming together to raise awareness among different local groups, creating some bridging social capital.

WHAT WORKED LESS WELL?

- People in the local area were not prepared and did not feel they knew what to do in the event.
- Communication between local people and the emergency services was not as effective as it could be: people in the local areas felt there was a lack of information.
- The use of outsiders did not help relationships of trust e.g. in door knocking and at rest centres, which in turn led to a less efficient response.

WHAT LESSONS CAN BE LEARNT FROM THIS CASE STUDY IN TERMS OF IMPROVING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO EMERGENCIES?**Lessons for improving community resilience in this case study**

- Be aware of the capacity of local people in terms of deprivation in the urban area of Great Yarmouth. It was noted that “*it is a socially deprived area, people live chaotic livesand way way down the list of priorities is thinking about emergencies ‘cause actually they’re juggling however many different things at once.*” (community development worker). It is important that time and resource continues to be invested in community development work so that there are resources to be drawn on in emergencies.
- Continue to improve lack of awareness and knowledge of practical things to do in an emergency – the local people did not have a systematic understanding of what was happening during the event which was disempowering and although many did act quickly and appropriately there was a feeling it was all done in a panic. Research from flooding shows that even when the same actions are carried out during a flood those who feel prepared fare better in terms of post-flood stress than those who did not feel prepared.

General lessons from this case study for improving community resilience

- Work with existing social networks to develop both the underlying resources and links and the structures to facilitate an effective response that complements the emergency services: two practical ways to do this:
 - a) EPM to work with local people to develop existing networks so they can be drawn upon in a systematic way during an emergency, e.g. in terms of locating vulnerable people, door knocking and providing local knowledge to outside organizations.
 - b) Work with rest centre “owners” e.g. schools to ensure that whoever runs them is aware of local issues and clearly links with the relevant on site personnel. It may be that the rest centre owners

wish to staff it themselves with volunteers and this should be complemented with training and support from the EPM.

- Be prepared for community resilience groups to look different in different areas: to be effective they will need time to develop and will reflect the local area so networks will not be uniform. This means that EPM's need to be able to ask the right questions to find out where the key networks are, rather than having a prescriptive list of which groups to go to.
- The resources that are drawn upon to build community resilience are developed when there are no emergencies through empowering community members and then giving them tools to use in emergencies that link with the authorities and wider information sources and networks. This is a key lesson and indicates that links should be made across departments within local councils but also at the national level to develop an awareness and understanding of many other aspects of government work e.g. education, social services, etc are crucial in developing resources that can be drawn upon during an emergency. However, those resources have to be systematically organised and linked into the Emergency Planning and Local Resilience system.
- Use local knowledge to improve engagement with local people: trusted faces are more likely to get messages acted upon and local people will know where those who are vulnerable live and what their needs might be. Developing a system e.g. communications tree that can be activated in an emergency but builds on existing networks.
- Develop two way communication with local people and emergency services. *'That's where for me the main linkage are the contact people on the ground through which we communicate. Through them we communicate and they communicate to us on their concerns and questions, and so on. It's as much establishing that communication to the people on the ground, the residents, as much as anything else. That's where it's part of the process.'* (EPM)
- Bridging and linking social capital are key to move people from a "getting by" type of resilience to a "bouncing forward" type of resilience. It is clear from this case study that having the links between different groups in the community (bridges) and between local people and service providers has enabled the development of the Community Resilience Plan and more importantly the communications tree and the awareness raising exercises of Emergencies Week.
- The process of planning is as, if not more, important than the plan itself (although it is still important to have one!). Getting community resilience groups going and motivated takes time, but through that process of inviting people, of discussion and debate relationships of trust are developed which can then be drawn upon during an emergency.
- Building trust is a key principal in the development of effective governance and strong networks. This involves regular, personal contact between agents. Face-to-face contact appears to be a particularly effective, and possibly essential, way to build trust.
- Individuals can make a big difference in terms of linking organizations together and building trust. An important characteristic of individuals is that they have strong communication skills and are able to empathize with people and communities. They need to take a very active role in promoting collaboration and dissemination of information, and this is undertaken through regular personal, often face-to-face, contact with stakeholders to build trust and co-operation. Such individuals must also be sensitive to each particular (local community) context and be aware of a community's needs, resources and abilities.

4. Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire: Severe Winter Weather

Social profile

The Forest of Dean is a local authority District³ in the west of the county of Gloucestershire. The District has a population of 81,901 spread over 526.4 km² with a population density of 157.5 persons per km². The population is expected to increase over the next 10 to 20 years.

The Forest of Dean is primarily rural with only 30.5% of residents living in areas classified as urban; the national average is nearer to 80%.

The age profile of the district is older than the national average with the percentage of people over 65 (23%) being much higher than the national average (15.7%). The vast majority (97.8%) of this population is of white British ethnicity and no other non-white ethnic group has more than 0.2% of the population.



Employment

Employment is more focussed on manufacturing (17.8%) in the Forest of Dean than at the regional (10.7%) or national (10.2%) level. With the service sector having a lower proportion (71.7%) in the Forest of Dean than at regional – the South West (82.5%) or national (83.5%) levels.

Deprivation

As of 2010 there are concentrated areas (specifically Local Super Output Areas) in the Forest of Dean that are in the top 10% most deprived areas nationally, though much of the District is not considered to be relatively deprived. This is consistent with previous assessments in 2007 and 2004. Generally the Forest of Dean is considered to have lower levels of deprivation than Gloucestershire County as a whole.

As of October 2011 total unemployment claimant rate is lower in the Forest of Dean (11.6%) than the national average (14.5%) and the regional average (12%). At £493.70 the average weekly wage is higher in the Forest of Dean compared to the regional average (£473.40), but lower than the national average (£503).

Sources

Forest of Dean District – demographic profile: http://www.fdean.gov.uk/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=7205&tt=graphic

Forest of Dean – Community and Living: http://www.fdean.gov.uk/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=6191&tt=graphic

Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/indices2010>

Nomis: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038431924/printable.aspx>

³ The 'Forest of Dean' is also used to refer to the area covered by the historic forest, an area smaller than that covered by the local authority area.

SUMMARY

- Along with many parts of the UK, the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire experienced adverse or severe winter weather over the last three winters (2008-9, 2009-10 and 2010-11), following a series of generally milder winters. This case study focuses on how those living in the Forest of Dean, also known as the Forest, responded when affected by a number of occurrences of this weather. The area for this case study covers a large number of villages, hamlets and three towns in the Forest (Coleford, Cinderford and Lydney). These occurrences have sometimes seen tens of centimetres of snow, with adverse conditions sometimes extending for more than a week. Icy road conditions, ongoing low temperatures and the Forest topography are often more problematic than snowfall levels.
- The last three winters created particularly difficult conditions in terms of access in and out of towns and villages or from the Forest to elsewhere. Whilst access on the main roads was maintained, access on other roads was typically challenging, sometimes treacherous and sometimes too dangerous for many vehicles. Some villages and hamlets in the Forest were only accessible using 4 wheel drive vehicles, sometimes for a period of several days and, in the case of some minor side roads, for more than a week.
- For both authorities and the local population the severe winter weather constrains or curtails travel (and distribution) and both adjust to the challenges this creates. This case study focuses on the experiences of the last three winters but sometimes discusses these in general terms, given that this severe weather has become a more familiar occurrence.
 - Many towns and villages see heightened levels of neighbourliness: existing social networks, both formal and informal, are activated with volunteers assisting health and social services providers e.g. by attending to the needs of the more vulnerable in the area or through use of 4x4 so that these providers can still deliver their services.
 - The overall response by the authorities (those not involved in snow clearance) can be summarised as delivery of services as far as possible and in accordance with their business continuity plans, focusing on ensuring the needs of the most vulnerable are met.
 - In general, the response is characterised by a 'getting by' approach, with many people modifying their day to day lifestyles and reaching out to support others locally through acts of neighbourliness (e.g. snow clearance, co-ordinating shopping, distributing medication, offering lifts in 4x4s, checking on or providing reassurance to more vulnerable people or those that are geographically isolated). However, there are exceptions with some individuals or households preferring isolation and having a tendency to 'hunker down' until the adverse weather eases.
- Authorities and residents in the Forest are, in general, better able to respond to the severe weather given the experience of the last three winters which followed several years of relatively mild winters. Some towns have been acquiring grit and salt and circulating supplies amongst shop owners in town centres in advance of winter. By 2010 a better understanding was developing within the Forest that clearing snow and ice from paths will not result in potential liabilities should accidents still occur on cleared paths. For the winter of 2011-12, town councils with shopping areas have acquired hand spreaders to allow salt spreading on footpaths (which they will undertake on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council highways). Overall both the authorities and residents of the Forest are starting to be more prepared. The process of developing community emergency plans is facilitating parish level approaches and responses to adverse situations.

Note: quotes used in this case study refer to both specific experiences over the last three winters and general experiences in the Forest of Dean during adverse winter weather, given the frequency of and therefore renewed familiarity with this in recent years.

COMMUNITY – GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT AND PROFILE

General Characteristics and Case Study Area

- The Forest of Dean is a rural, partly upland area in the west of Gloucestershire on the border with Wales as shown in Figure 1 below. The local government District of the Forest of Dean incorporates a wide area stretching towards Gloucester and has a total population of around 82,000. It includes the four towns of Cinderford, Coleford, Lydney and Newent, each of which has a population of 8,000-9,000 people with the exception of Newent which has a slightly smaller population of around 5,000 people. In addition to the main towns, the rural area has a scattered population with many villages, hamlets and isolated properties.
- For the purposes of this case study, the area being referred to as the Forest of Dean or ‘the Forest’ is focused primarily on the upland area in the south of the District (including the land which is still forested) and covering the towns of Coleford, Cinderford and Lydney. It is this area which tends to suffer most when severe winter weather affects the Forest of Dean District.

Figure 1: Location of Forest of Dean



Source: Forest of Dean District Council

- The Forest is varied in terms of its topography with the town of Lydney at sea level whilst many parts are characterised by undulating landscape and steep inclines. Some villages are located at heights of over 200m (e.g. Ruardean and Drybrook, west of Lydbrook). The approach roads to many localities, including the towns of Coleford and Cinderford, are characterised by hills with significant inclines.

These provide challenging access routes with some minor roads becoming inaccessible in severe winter weather.

- The winter climate of the Forest often sees temperatures several degrees lower than neighbouring parts of Gloucestershire, meaning that the area is more prone to snow and ice conditions. It is the Forest's combination of topography, climate and geography which means that winter weather can be worse and the impacts can be greater than other nearby parts of Gloucestershire and the west country: lower than average temperatures and the upland and hilly nature of the Forest increases the likelihood of snowfall. Many more inches of snow may fall in a few hours in one location whilst only a few miles away there may be little or none. When there is blanket coverage of snow across Gloucestershire / the West Country / West Midlands, there may be greater snow depths in parts of the Forest than elsewhere.
- Winter weather occurrences in the Forest of Dean often strike the area relatively quickly and in geographically specific parts of the Forest, frequently on the hillier areas. Road access from the west is principally via the A48 and the A4136. From the east the main road into the Forest is the A4136 from Monmouth. Typically, many routes become difficult or treacherous once motorists arrive 'in the Forest', sometimes effectively trapping motorists. Conditions can vary markedly e.g. between Lydney and Coleford or Monmouth and Staunton (the latter on the westward approach to the Forest). Many residents in the Forest commute to Gloucester or Cheltenham for work and struggle to return when significant snowfalls arrive: *"It's so different. In Lydney it can be okay, you get to Coleford and you think, "Why did I come in?"..... We've a high out commute to Gloucester and Cheltenham, you've got everybody trying to get back, those steep hills [get] blocked and there's chaos".* (Forest of Dean District Council employees).

Links and networks within the Forest

- The various towns, villages and outlying areas of the Forest are known to be quite traditional in nature. Many individuals and families in the Forest have chosen to remain in the area or return to live in the area for large parts of their lives. These Forest communities – the towns, villages and outlying areas - are often close-knit and are sometimes collectively referred to as being comparatively insular in character. Whilst there are newcomers to the Forest, many are long standing residents. Social networks and structures, both formal and informal, are generally considered to be strong. People know each other and there is strong familiarity and identity associated with the area with some people in the Forest referring to themselves and other residents as 'Foresters': *"I've lived here most of my life. I think it's a very old-fashioned type community. Everybody knows one another and you will look out for one another".* (District Council employee).
- The Forest can be considered to be egalitarian in terms of these structures and networks: there are generally few hierarchies. However, there can be a lack of cohesion between villages near to each other.
- Many of the social structures and networks are founded on clubs, activities and voluntary or community groups operating in the Forest, some of which are associated with schools and churches. These generate both formal and informal networks and assist or form the basis for many residents knowing one another.

THE CASE STUDY EVENT(S) – WHAT HAPPENED?

Severe winter weather, 2008-9, 2009-10 and 2010-11

- The Forest of Dean experienced adverse and, in some instances and locations, severe winter weather over these three winters following several years of generally milder winters. Snowfalls were significant and there were frequent prolonged instances of snow or icy weather in February 2009, December 2009, January 2010 and in November-December 2010. Frequent or prolonged stretches is

defined here as constituting more than six days of snow lying within a month. For January 2010 and December 2010 there were 10-15 days of snow lying per month.⁴ The topography, location of the different towns, villages and hamlets and road network configuration within the Forest meant the actual snow accumulation rates, icy conditions and severity of impacts varied considerably throughout the Forest. However, the last three winters saw occurrences of sometimes tens of centimetres of snow (over half a metre was said to have been recorded at Drybrook in December 2010⁵), with adverse conditions sometimes extending for a week or more.

- As is typical in the Forest, icy road conditions, ongoing low temperatures and local topography were sometimes more problematic than snowfall levels. Many routes into the Forest (from the A48 and A4136) were treacherous and sometimes even access on the A roads was difficult despite gritting. Some local roads could only be accessed by 4x4s and sometimes even these vehicles skidded. Many of the local roads within the Forest effectively remained unusable to most people for days as they were too treacherous given the ice and angle and/or extent of incline as this quote illustrates: *“You have to go through Cinderford where it just does this {respondent indicates steepness}. Even with 4 x 4s they were skidding, it was terrible.....A lot of the Forest is off the main road. If you live off the main roads you’ve had it really.”* (Gloucestershire Rural Community Council employee, speaking as a local resident).

Some very minor roads were not accessible without vehicles tailored to the conditions (e.g. 4x4s or vehicles fitted with snow chains) for more than a week, sometimes isolating the hamlets or households on those routes.



**Broadwell, near
Coleford, 2009**
Source: Joel Norris

THE CASE STUDY EVENT(S) – WHAT DID LOCAL PEOPLE AND THE AUTHORITIES DO?

Responses by local people

- In general terms, everyone throughout the Forest was affected in some way by the severe winter weather. The more vulnerable people and those with limited mobility were worse affected as they were usually unable to leave their homes. This was the case in the snow and icy weather occurrences over 2008-2011.
- Volunteers and neighbours helped the more vulnerable people, sometimes simply with visits to check whether they were okay or to bring food or medication. As these interviewees indicated: *“You’re like, ‘Oh I wonder if so and so is okay?’ And you just check whether they need anything”*. (District Council employee, Forest of Dean).

⁴ Data sourced from the Met Office, see <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/anomacts/> climate variable: ‘days of snow lying’.

⁵ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winter_of_2010%E2%80%932011_in_Great_Britain_and_Ireland

- However, not everyone accepted offers of help or appreciated these. The response is more likely to be accepted and welcomed where people already know each other; where a bond of trust has been established, as local councillors said: *“Some people keep themselves to themselves and that’s the way they like it. I mean they say ‘Are you alright?’ ‘Yeah, I’m fine’ and that’s it.....”* (Local councillor, Forest of Dean) and *“People won’t accept help if they don’t know you. They are suspicious. You have to get to know people, build up trust”*. (Local Councillor, Forest of Dean).
- Some volunteers provided support to those organisations offering meals on wheels (WRVS, Age Concern) which were not able to reach their clients with meals: WRVS, Age Concern and Gloucestershire Social Services rely on volunteer 4x4 owners to assist with the delivery of their services in severe winter weather. These volunteers are often identified and co-ordinated following requests for volunteer 4x4 owners broadcast on local radio or from a list of volunteers from previous winters, which may have been updated earlier in the year. Volunteers then drive social services staff to patients or meals on wheels’ staff to their clients. (Temporary winter weather volunteers are not CRB checked and therefore not able to replace existing staff, hence driving these staff to patients/clients).
- The services of Village Agents (see below) have also been drawn on when there have been problems associated with distribution of meals on wheels in the snow as discussed by one interviewee: *“One of [our agents was] rung up in the snow...she knew the people concerned so she could ring and say, ‘Look you’re not going to get Meals on Wheels today.’ She could find a neighbour who would be prepared to bring a meal round”*. (Gloucestershire Rural Community Council employee).
- Many local people walked in the snow and ice in their towns and villages and between towns and villages rather than driving e.g. for shopping, day to day needs or to visit friends and neighbours, often to offer support, run errands for one another or simply to ‘get out of the house’. For some people this involved walking several miles in the snow and on roads which were not passable in most cars or only passable with difficulty as one interviewee explained: *If you can’t get a vehicle out, which happened quite a lot last year, you’ve got to walk down to the village. You will call at various houses and say do you need anything from the Co-Op?* (Local Councillor, Forest of Dean).
- Those people who drove on main roads, for example because those roads were relatively accessible (even if minor roads were not) or because they needed to make essential journeys, sometimes left their cars on those roads which were accessible and walked the remaining distance in the snow; frequently a mile and sometimes several miles to their homes.
- Village pubs and other community facilities became an increased focus for local people during adverse winter weather given the travel difficulties and the fact that many people are not able to leave their villages. Some village shops also undertook deliveries providing an additional community service in the winter weather and it was remarked that these were an invaluable resource:

“Community/local shops came into their own”. (Gloucestershire Rural Community Council employee).
- Some villages co-ordinated shopping requests with one or two people driving in a suitable vehicle to a nearby town to purchase goods and returning to the village for these to be collected or distributed locally.
- Pharmacies and doctors’ surgeries co-ordinated prescriptions and delivered medication to the more vulnerable people in the area. Some pharmacies and surgeries co-ordinate dispensing of prescriptions anyway, but the delivery service was additional or expanded during severe winter weather.
- Many people worked from home where this was a viable option. Some people used buses to get to work, when these were able to operate, rather than driving their own vehicles. However, it was highlighted that others may take risks in terms of driving, particularly those with low incomes, temporary/ contract staff or those concerned about employment security. *“One of the groups that*

probably has the biggest problem with the snow is people who are on low incomes, need to go to work and need to keep their job. They keep pushing through the weather when they shouldn't. The number of crunched cars, cars off the road and cars abandoned". (Forest of Dean District Council Councillors).

- Some volunteer 4x4 owners provided lifts for employees to their work places, particularly those working in essential services such as hospitals.
- There was increased use of local radio which enabled people to understand how their area is coping with the weather, which services were still operating and what they could do both for themselves and to assist others locally.
- Some paths and driveways, either at people's homes or in town centres, were cleared of snow by householders, volunteers and occasionally voluntary and community groups, with such activity more likely by those who are already active in their villages or towns. Similarly, there was some spreading of grit on paths, though this tended to be sporadic: *"It's usually the same people, it's somebody who's the neighbourhood watch coordinator, they're members of other groups or leaders in some other way".* (Forest of Dean District Council Councillors and employees).
- However, some householders still did not undertake snow clearance on or near their properties and instead demonstrated 'resistance' to the severe weather by not leaving their homes: [At] a parish council meeting they said, *"Well people didn't go out because they wouldn't clear outside their house."*! (Gloucestershire Rural Community Council).
- In several towns in the Forest there have been widespread concerns about liability should someone fall on a footpath cleared of snow. Whilst this misconception has been overcome in some towns (see below), some property owners and shopkeepers were still reluctant to clear footpaths in the winter of 2010-11.
- Gloucestershire's Village Agents' scheme sees an individual 'agent' providing a contact point and support for the over 50s in villages and outlying rural areas⁶. The agents are paid individuals working 10 hours each week (though many work more hours) providing an information signpost service to statutory or voluntary organisations and carrying out practical checks. The agents play an important part in the more formal local level networks within rural areas during severe winter weather conditions and particularly between these localities and statutory authorities as discussed by these council employees:
 1. *Village Agents know the vulnerable people. If they were worried, they could raise alarm bells. Every parish I go to, they all know their Village Agent.*
 2. *And each [snow] warden knows their village agent and vice versa.*

Employee 1: "We are quite lucky in the forest that a lot of the agencies like the voluntary sector, the private sector, the public... that everybody works together and they talk, and they know who everybody is and that works very well". (Forest of Dean District Council Employees).

⁶ <http://www.grcc.org.uk/village-agents/village-agents>



Ruardean 2009

Source: Laura at
www.subworld.com

Response by the authorities, emergency services

- The Gloucestershire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) is the strategic group co-ordinating integrated emergency management arrangements within the county. The response to any emergency is led by emergency services working with other Category 1 responders including the local authorities (and including Gloucestershire Emergency Management Service at the County Council). Collaboration takes place within a hierarchical structure consisting of official agencies at the strategic and tactical levels and co-ordination between district and county authorities. Local or non-official organisations are involved largely at the operational level. *“We wouldn’t interfere with what they [emergency services] are doing. It’s quite a distinct role. They do the initial action and the local authorities do the clean up”.* (Local authority employee).
- The influence of local or non-official organisations in the hierarchy in terms of decision-making occurs principally through the LRF and, in particular, the newly formed Community Resilience Group, incorporating the former County Volunteers Emergency Committee and the Local Authority Planning Group. This Group has some local resident, parish and district council level representation.
- In emergency response situations, local resident or parish level involvement is principally as an information conduit to and from the official organisations such as the local authorities and emergency services. For example, local residents identify vulnerable people that need assistance. However, sometimes they can have a more active role in supporting the authorities on the ground: *“Where the police closed roads, admittedly that was in floods, local people actually took on the organisation of redirecting and so on, so that the police could then go and do whatever else it was that they had to do”.* (Local agency employee).
- In the case of severe winter weather local authorities and emergency services communicate advice messages on using (or not using) roads, other transport difficulties and on providing support for others, particularly the elderly and more vulnerable. Local radio and the internet⁷ are used very effectively for this. The use of social media, such as the introduction of the ‘Gritter Twitter’⁸ by Gloucestershire County Council which will allow people to follow road gritting reports on Twitter, are increasingly important.
- Gloucestershire Highways (County Council) work with parish councils and visit parish snow wardens and parish snow plough operators (typically farmers who use their vehicles to clear snow) to make sure they are aware of their responsibilities and ensure the snow plough operator has the correct

⁷ See e.g. <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/winter>

⁸ See www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=105976 and www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-15331785 Twitter feeds will be through: @GlosHighways and @GlosCC

insurance and their machinery is fit for use. The snow warden is essentially an information gatherer and coordinator whilst the snow plough operator clears roads. Both therefore work at an operational level in local areas, though are not involved in higher level decision making. Once in winter Highways staff contact the wardens and plough operators to warn them of snow coming into the area. As information comes in to Gloucestershire Highways regarding blocked roads or stranded motorists then local wardens and operators are directed appropriately: *“The County Council organise it but then the snow wardens are on the ground in their individual communities. Very often, different communities in the Forest will be affected differently so the more isolated ones, they will decide we need to plough. It happened where I live last year [2010]; several times they ploughed up through.”* (Local agency employee).

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE EVENT(S)?

Ways in which community resilience is being developed

- The experience of three successive winters of severe weather with snow and ice has served to develop a continuing improvement in response from local authorities and local residents, with greater community resilience as noted by this local authority employee: *“I think three winters [means] it is in everybody’s minds. it was a shock the first year. They were a little bit more prepared for the second and actually last year we were a lot more prepared working with our parishes..But we need everybody to buy into that as well...the residents of Gloucestershire. We can’t do it on our own when we’re dealing with such a huge issue.”* (Local authority employee).
- Gloucestershire, through the work of the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) and the local authorities, has been very active in working at parish level to develop community resilience, particularly since the Gloucestershire floods of 2007. The authorities have sought to encourage residents to take a more active response to emergency events, to be part of the local response where possible and to be more involved in understanding how the authorities work and how parishes can assist: *“The expectation in some people that [authorities are] going to do this for them, that’s been quite difficult to manage. ‘Why aren’t you clearing my bit of road?’ ‘Well actually you’re in a cul-de-sac and we can’t get our gritter down there.”* (Local authority employee).
- Similarly, local knowledge can be invaluable in allowing a more effective response by authorities or until authorities/ emergency services arrive: *“the communities know best where the vulnerable people are, how they can help themselves.”* (Local agency employee).
- The GRCC in conjunction with local authorities has been active in instigating the development of community resilience plans or community emergency plans, providing practical support to parishes on the development of these⁹. The process of preparing a plan encourages villages and parishes through their different, typically informal networks to consider how they would respond and starts to connect these informal networks to the more formal, official ones. Making use of existing networks provides a useful starting point and potentially empowering approach to promoting community resilience: *“I think from the community’s point of view yes it works if you’ve got a network that you start from. It’s very difficult to start from nothing”.* (Local agency employee).
- The process of plan preparation is a key way to involve local residents and build capacity to respond to emergency situations. It is the process, as much as the documentation of this in a plan, which allows a parish or local area to be better prepared having considered how and who would respond: *“It’s useful if you can plan generic[ally]. Let’s say you’ve had a particular incident that was related to a traffic accident which affected the gas main and there was a threat of an explosion from the gas main. [The parish] didn’t plan for that but they had a plan which had a place of safety. [Preparing plans] is information building, it’s relationship building, it’s organisational stuff which can be done in the calm light of day”.* (Local agency employee).
- Personal contact and relationships, both amongst local residents and particularly between those

⁹ <http://www.grcc.org.uk/emergency-planning/emergency-planning>

individuals and the authorities, including emergency planning staff, are recognised as being particularly important in community resilience or community emergency planning. This really assists in building trust between officials and the local community. *“For some people, to come to the Council is quite daunting..If you know who you are going to see and you know they are quite happy for you to email, ring and if I make people aware that I am always here if they need me and that no question is stupid...”* (Local authority employee).

“[We worked with] the gentleman who has prepared the emergency plan for that town [on behalf of the town Council] so he was local, knows people and he was going round with the more official people. Back to the trust I suppose.. he was able to introduce people, get messages across”. (Local agency employee).

- Community emergency plan preparation involves uncovering skills and capacity amongst the local resident population and joining up these skills and resources. Often the skills exist but sometimes people do not recognise them or are unsure about making any commitment. Engaging individuals so that they can identify a role and become involved, even in a small way, in community resilience planning is central to effective resilience planning: *“Some of the skills out there in the community are amazing. The other thing that is useful is local knowledge. Older people are really invaluable on that. A lot of older people say, ‘Oh well I’m not much use I can’t contribute,’ but I’ve found them absolutely invaluable. Get a couple of people talking about the winter of 1963 and they are valued..‘You’ve got to make sure that that bit doesn’t ice over because of,’..you get the geographical relationship coming through”.* (Local agency employee).
- Responses to the severe winter weather have been discussed by Councils and the Gloucestershire Local Resilience Forum. Some town and parish councils are sourcing their own grit and salt bags and distributing these locally ahead of winter. For the winter of 2011-12, town councils with shopping areas have acquired hand spreaders. These are pushable salt spreaders on wheels for use on footpaths (on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council highways). Snow codes and advice on dealing with winter weather conditions are communicated more widely and to great effect, sometimes formally and sometimes informally, by town councils and the district council.

HOW IS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE CHARACTERISED IN THIS CASE STUDY?

- The response in the last three winters can be described as ‘resistance ‘to the worst effects of the snow and ice given that both local agencies and the Forest residents adopt coping mechanisms, together with ‘bounce back’ as these people and the authorities clear snow and ice in an effort to get back to normal. After these winters with extended bouts of severe weather, local residents and the local level agencies (including the local authority, parish councils, other agencies) are, in general, becoming better at dealing with these conditions. This may be at a similar level and pace as other parts of the south of the UK. Overall, the developments in this response demonstrate elements of ‘adaptation’.

Particular characteristics of the Forest response to severe winter weather are as follows:

- Use of informal networks. When individuals reach out and support others during adverse winter weather, they are almost always using existing informal networks i.e. bonded networks: people are more likely to assist one another where they already know one another. Trust between individuals and trusted networks are particularly important.
- Existing groups (community and voluntary groups including church, sporting, musical and other interest groups) provide the basis for many local networks which may then be activated informally during severe weather.
- Communication within and between individuals and networks is a critically important component of resilience. This includes:
 - communication between neighbours and through social networks, informal or otherwise

(e.g. based on interest groups). Again these are bonded local networks; and

- use of landline and mobile telephones (though mobile phone reception is variable in the Forest) to allow people to keep each other informed and provide support to each other. This is of particular comfort to those who are isolated, either given their vulnerability or geographical isolation or both.
- Communication methods can be difficult during electricity outages as many landline phones use handsets charged by electricity. It may also not be possible to use the internet at this time.
 - use of and reliance on local radio, highlighting the need for good radio reception; and
 - use of internet, though this is still a less important communication method for some.

The comfort and reassurance which is enabled through phone communication as well as face to face social support structures is an essential part of resilience.

- Reliance on volunteers. Those authorities providing services to vulnerable people in locations affected by snow and ice are typically reliant on local volunteers, neighbours and family members to assist delivery of their services: to visit vulnerable people; provide food/ meals; sometimes to attend to basic healthcare needs or collect medication; and as 4x4 owners and drivers.

WHAT WORKED WELL?

- **The intrinsic social support network** - The ability of residents in the Forest to draw on their local networks, bonded social capital, to effectively support each other during the adverse weather. In particular, the innate propensity for many of the more longstanding residents to be neighbourly to others, building on their usual day to day familiarity with others locally.
- **Specific practical responses** – These include the volunteers directly or effectively supporting the work of health and social services providers e.g. as 4x4 volunteers, providing substitute meals/ food in place of meals on wheels, collecting and delivering medication. They also include snow clearance from paths and driveways, those with ‘snow-worthy’ vehicles providing lifts to people otherwise unable to travel and co-ordination and/or delivery of shopping.
- **Local level ‘agents’** – Those who were proactive in assisting others or their town, village or outlying areas overcome the difficulties presented by the adverse weather. They include snow wardens and snow plough operators, some village shop owners (e.g. those who delivered shopping or ensure vulnerable people in their villages are being checked on), Village Agents who support the over 50s locally, councillors and others who provide a link with authorities or assist with footpath clearance and salt/ grit distribution and local authority staff such as streetwardens who typically work in a similar capacity.
- **Community emergency planning** - The increase in the extent of community resilience or emergency planning work which has been undertaken in parishes and towns over the last few years. This process itself supports community resilience.

WHAT WORKED LESS WELL?

- **Snow clearance was mixed – scope for a more co-ordinated and proactive response to snow clearance.** This would include overcoming the concerns about liability throughout the Forest and more encouragement of path and driveway snow clearing generally (effectively ‘normalising’ this) by both local residents of their own and neighbouring properties and by volunteers in their towns and villages.
- **Travel difficulties - mechanisms to support travel to work for those who really need to.** A more co-

ordinated approach to car sharing where possible (e.g. by 4x4 volunteers) and innovative approaches to overcoming the difficulties associated with bus access on routes affected by adverse weather¹⁰ would allow more people to travel to work. This is particularly important for those unable to work from home, who work in front line services, agency staff and those on contracts or low incomes whose wages or salaries are affected.

- **Relatively low use of existing local social networks and the opportunity to capitalise on these.** Given the levels of neighbourliness by many in the Forest and the strength of existing networks, there is scope to develop more innovative responses to dealing with the adverse weather capitalising on these networks e.g. to mobilise volunteers for snow clearance, organise forms of community transport or better support households affected by power cuts.

WHAT LESSONS CAN BE LEARNT FROM THIS CASE STUDY IN TERMS OF IMPROVING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO EMERGENCIES?

Lessons for improving community resilience from this case study

- There is scope for a more widespread response to snow clearance, particularly in town centres amongst traders, but also encouraging more snow clearance in some village centres by volunteers and by residents of the properties (paths/ driveways) of more vulnerable neighbours. This could build on snow clearance by existing voluntary or community groups and make use of local networks, potentially 'bridging' some of these to parish level.
- The need for widespread understanding of the government's snow code¹¹ to dispel concerns over liability issues associated with snow clearance. This particularly concerns retailers and town centre traders. Local government and parish councils are best placed to continue to publicise the snow code and work with traders to overcome these concerns.
- Improving acquisition of and use of resources to assist with snow and ice clearance, including ensuring adequate stocks and supplies of grit and salt, knowing the locations of these stocks and distributing small stocks in advance of adverse weather. It also includes improving familiarity with equipment such as hand held/ pushed salt spreaders. Again, this is building on efforts begun by the district and parish councils in conjunction with the County Council where appropriate.
- Potential scope to further strengthen social capital and 'neighbourly' responses by local people during adverse events. Given the strong networks and familiarity between people in the Forest, this would build on existing bonded networks but these could be 'better bridged' to parish level and to other local authorities and agencies. This linkage can be developed in part through the work to support parish level emergency plans.

General lessons from this case study in terms of improving community resilience

- Social networks, both formal and informal, are essential to ensuring resilience. Trust and knowledge of individuals is key to maintaining and enhancing these networks. Understanding how to support and develop these networks needs to be part of emergency planning.
- Having proactive individuals, Village Agents, snow wardens and others including councillors who are connected with the authorities (linking social capital) is important for community resilience to be effective when emergency responders and other authorities are at work. Working to develop and support those key individuals needs to be a priority with emergency planners and responders.
- Understand that the value of emergency response plans at Parish level is very much around the process of their preparation as this allows residents to become engaged on how to respond

¹⁰ Inaccessible or treacherous roads mean buses may not be able to service some villages and towns. One example approach might be for some form of shuttle service using 4x4s or other snow worthy vehicles to transport passengers to a main road which buses can reach or to Lydney train station.

¹¹ http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/N11/Newsroom/DG_191868

effectively in adverse situations and strengthen both their confidence and ability to respond.

- Communication and a sense of neighbourliness in addition to practical actions (snow clearance, collecting food and medication) is a critically important component of community resilience, particularly for those that are isolated, either geographically or because of their vulnerability. Emergency planning and formal response to emergencies should consider how this can be facilitated. The role of a community snow wardens initiative as has been developed at Lambeth Council in south London (see <http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/TransportStreets/StreetCareCleaning/SnowWardensScheme.htm>) potentially provides a useful example of what can be achieved. Emergency planning and formal response to emergencies should consider how this can be facilitated.

5. Peckham, South London: Civil Unrest – “Riots”

Social Profile

Peckham is an urban Ward in the South London Borough of Southwark. The population of Peckham is estimated to be 19,500 in 2005. Of this population 65% are of working age and only 10% are pensionable age indicating a younger than average population structure (compared to both London and the nation). The Greater London Authority expects Peckham’s population to continue growing and to remain largely younger than the national and London averages. The two most populous ethnic groups are black African (34%) and white British (29%), Peckham is the only London district where the biggest ethnic group is Black African.



Employment

The latest figures (May 2011) show that total benefits claimants in Peckham (23.2%) are higher than the Southwark (15.8%) and national (14.5%) averages, particularly job seekers allowance which at 8% in Peckham is much higher than the Southwark (5%) and national levels (3.6%).

Deprivation

For 2010 Southwark is ranked as the 25th most deprived Local Authority (Rank of Average Rank) in the Country (out of 326), doing especially poorly in income and employment deprivation (25th and 33rd respectively). Within Southwark, Peckham was the most deprived community council in Southwark for 2004 and 2007 and although no equivalent analysis exists for 2010 the IMD data show that of the eight areas in Peckham five are in the 10-20% most deprived nationally category and the other three in the 20-30% most deprived category suggesting a very high level of total deprivation. This is however a slight relative improvement from 2007 when two areas were in the 10% most deprived category, four in the 10-20% most deprived category and two in the 20-30% most deprived category. Income and employment deprivation are particularly high in both the 2010 and 2007 IMD data as is deprivation with relation to barriers to housing and services. The areas concomitant to Peckham also have high levels of deprivation generally equivalent to Peckham in 2010 though again there is a slight improvement compared to 2007.

Sources

NOMIS labour statistics: <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/ward/1308625652/report.aspx>

Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/indices2010>

Peckham Community Council’s Population: Now and the future October 2008:

<http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CBsQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.southwark.gov.uk%2Fdownload%2F750%2Fpeckham&ei=zhrOTtr9BdOr8APNxak&usq=AFQjCNGRxFuv2MzU1-GdYlw2ufWkKkoTA>

SUMMARY

- On Monday 8th August, following a weekend of disturbances in Tottenham, north London, there was an afternoon and evening of rioting across London. In Peckham, south east London, confrontations between young people and the police in the area around the bus station, rapidly escalated to running battles along Peckham High Street with missiles thrown and shop windows broken. The police were slow in sending reinforcements and were not able to control the disturbances which spread south up Rye Lane, the main shopping street. At this stage the rioting seems to have begun to give way to looting with other types of people, including older people, getting involved. As well as the attacks on well-known chains like Burger King and the targeting of shops like off-licences for looting, there was also random destruction and a small clothes shop on Rye Lane was set on fire. The disturbances continued until late into the night and got as far as East Dulwich.
- During the riots, many local people took action to stop the damage from active intervention on the part of youth workers to encourage young people not to get involved, individual acts of heroism e.g. saving stock from a burning shop, defence of local estates by local people through to people who spent the evening locked in fear inside their homes.
- In terms of what happened next, the following day Council workers were out very early clearing up the debris: by 10am all the broken glass had been removed and broken windows boarded up. However, at the same time, people were turning up with their brooms in response to a London-wide tweet (#postriot) but finding that everything had been done. There wasn't much that helpers could do because the shops and businesses were waiting for the police and forensic teams to come; after that most of the businesses wanted to clean up by themselves.
- Peckham Shed, a local organisation that uses theatre to work with young people, felt so moved by what had happened that they took their own initiative by writing a simple message of "We love Peckham because..." on the boarded up Poundland shop on Rye Lane. They gave out coloured Post-it notes and pens and invited people to offer messages of good will. The hundreds of messages quickly became an iconic image of the recovery from the riots and has been seen in newspapers and websites around the world.
- Southwark Council called an emergency meeting 36 hours after the rioting which involved residents' leaders, community organizations and youth groups and gave people a chance to raise their issues.
- In terms of what has happened since the event, the Council organised a number of other meetings with the community after this initial meeting. These were more formal events with a Q&A format and an emphasis on what would happen (e.g. emergency fund for businesses). One local voluntary organisation says that the meetings also provided an opportunity for people to get a sense of the work being done by other organisations – and that this was a surprise to many.
- In this context a number of community organisations decided to hold a meeting which would be multi-faith, multi-sector and multi-interest. This was the starting point for an initiative to create a community network, which met three times between August and November.
- In terms of what worked well, opportunities were created for people to express emotional responses to the emergency. This came out as 'rants' in two meetings organised by the Council in the days immediately after the riots and was reflected in the messages posted on the Peckham Peace Wall which became a channel for these strong emotions.
- The relationship between official agents (the police and Southwark Council) was felt by the Council to have worked well, with effective communication and collaboration. Relationships and networks between the official structures and the local community have been nurtured and established over a long period of time. The community has demonstrated lots of examples of resilience, at the very minimum a determination to keep going but there are many examples that going beyond coping, that offer some very positive signs that people want to build a stronger community.

- Since the disturbances the Borough Council has been actively engaging with residents through ‘community conversations’, street stalls and a questionnaire. The authority is keen to obtain the views of the community and find out what they think caused the civil disorder, what the impact is and what can be done to help people and businesses. This has provided a channel for people to be able to put forward their views, albeit in a formalised setting.
- In terms of what went less well, the police response was felt by many local people not to have been effective in limiting the impact on local businesses and to reflect aggressive approaches to young people which have been the subject of concern in the past *“Obviously there were tensions there and there were issues in terms of people’s trust of the police etc which is one of the things that has been said to us since”*. (Southwark Council Community Engagement).
- While the Council’s idea of holding ‘community conversations’ was welcomed, there were a few concerns about the format and outcomes of these events. In particular, it was felt that the formal setting had excluded many of the people that the Council should have been talking to, like young people and people in more deprived neighbourhoods. Furthermore, it was not always clear what would come out of the meetings.
- Lack of leadership and communications during the rioting and in the early stages of the response: youth workers couldn’t communicate with the police, people wanted to volunteer but didn’t know how.

COMMUNITY – CONTEXT AND PROFILE

General community characteristics

- While people live in areas of Peckham that are differentiated (e.g. North Peckham, Rye Lane, Bellenden, etc.) they generally identify with the wider area. This is seen as extending from New Cross Road in the north to East Dulwich in the south, and from Camberwell to the west to Nunhead and New Cross in the east. The centre of the area is the streets which have been a commercial centre for decades. The main streets are Peckham High Street and Rye Lane.
- Peckham is an extremely diverse area, with people from many different national communities living together. It is also socially mixed: there are council estates next to residential streets, especially to the south of the commercial area, where older houses have become popular with professionals and young families.
- There is quite a high proportion of young people in the area. The young people are sometimes perceived as trouble makers by sections of the community and there is a lot of policing, involving frequent stop and searches. This has made many young people see the police as enemies.

Links and networks within Peckham

- Residents in the area have different experiences of how well members of the community know each other. While there are active Tenants and Residents Associations (TRA) on some of the council estates, which organise activities of their own and have community halls and centres which provide a space for different community groups (e.g. national community groups) to organise their own activities, on other estates there are only a few individuals who act as links between people. These are usually people who spend a lot of time outside on the estate, for example people who regularly walk dogs or take young children to activities. In all part of Peckham there is a significant proportion of people who work outside the area and are therefore gone for most of the day and often for longer periods.
- On the estates people do things for each other if they can see things to do, this depends on personal circumstances and how local organisations work. For example, one active TRA asked residents to let them know where there were elderly people. During the cold weather last winter, a group from the TRA went to these properties to check whether the people were in any difficulty. Where they found people who needed extra help, they contacted the Housing Office to take action. A member of the TRA also reported that local parents help each other by taking other families children to school – he takes

another family's children to primary school each day with his son.

- In residential streets there are also different experiences. In the Bellenden area residents have organised community activities such as the Big Lunch (for three years) and community music festivals (for two years). These bring together the different types of people living locally. Nevertheless, many people in these areas report that they do not know their neighbours and this was one characteristic that for many people was highlighted by the rioting.
- Other kinds of organisation that exist in the area and that involve parts of the community are faith groups (there is a mosque and churches from a number of different denominations). More research is needed into the numbers and types of people involved in these groups and how their activities relate to the neighbourhoods where they are located. One local resident said that the people participating in the services of some of very active Pentecostal churches come from a long way outside the area, as far away as Hackney and Croydon. This might suggest that these faith groups do not represent social capital for the area.
- Some people felt that while there are a large number of active groups in the area, they are not well connected. On the estate where the TRA hall is used by national groups (South American, Afro-Caribbean, Turkish, etc.) for parties and national celebrations, while residents often attend each other's celebrations, they don't necessarily have other relationships outside their own small national group. As one tenants' leader put it:

"The events do bring people together but I wouldn't qualify the relationships as strong". (Community organisation 3).

- Overall there is a sense that there are many strongly-bonded groups within Peckham, such as national groups, faith groups and some Tenants and Residents Associations. However there are other parts of the area where there appears to be less bonding, possibly because of changing demographics as younger people who work outside Peckham and make less use of local shops move in.
- Relationships between community organisations and groups are not very strong, which means that the area has less bridging capital to draw on in situations like the riots. Some umbrella organisations (such as Peckham Voluntary Sector Forum) and virtual networks (Bellenden Residents' Group, Peckham Residents' Network) exist but don't currently provide the immediate face-to-face contact or practical bridging capital that is needed in a crisis situation like the riots.

Links with wider authorities and emergency services

- Reflecting their diversity, community organisations in Peckham have different kinds of relations with the authorities. Many local organisations have close relations with departments of Southwark Council that are relevant to their work: for example, Tenants and Residents Associations are in regular contact with the Council's Housing Department and with teams providing services for young people and children. There are forums such as Peckham Community Council, where local people can go and meet and raise issues with their local councillors and council staff.
- Relationships with the police are generally limited to participation in Ward Panel meetings organised by the police to let local people know what issues are being encountered and to hear their concerns. Some organisations working with sensitive issues such as young people at risk of becoming involved in crime, have closer working relations with the police.

"The police ward panel works well: the police say that they rely on the local community to do their job well. The ward panel would help with relations between the youth and the police if the youth were on the panel. Just from a visual survey of the meetings, it doesn't feel like youth are represented". (Community organisation 3).

- There are important links between local organisations and the authorities responsible for emergency response and recovery, but this does not cover all the range of local groups. In particular, young people's groups seem not to have strong relations either with other local organisations or with the

authorities.

THE CASE STUDY EVENT(S)

- On Monday 8th August, following a weekend of disturbances in Tottenham, north London, there was an afternoon and evening of rioting across London. In Peckham, south east London, confrontations between young people and the police in the area around the bus station, rapidly escalated to running battles along Peckham High Street with missiles thrown and shop windows broken. A bus was set alight. Some young people afterwards talked about having stood up to the police. The police were slow in sending reinforcements and were not able to control the disturbances which spread south up Rye Lane, the main shopping street. At this stage the rioting seems to have begun to give way to looting with other types of people, including older people, getting involved. As well as the attacks on well-known chains like Burger King and the targeting of shops like off-licences for looting, there was also random destruction and a small clothes shop on Rye Lane was set on fire. The disturbances continued until late into the night and got as far as East Dulwich.
- The most direct impact of the riots was on shopkeepers. While some of the shops targeted were national chains (e.g. Burger King), a lot of local shopkeepers had windows broken and suffered looting. The most extreme case was the burning of a small clothes shop which has been in Rye Lane for many years. Shopkeepers were generally affected by the loss of business during the days after the riots when the areas where the rioting had occurred were eerily empty. A longer term effect is the fear of having their businesses attacked which has persisted after the riot. Local people are concerned that shops could close or move away and point out that this would have wider effects on the area. One local resident commented that the small grocers and newsagents in Rye Lane are open until late, making it feel safe for people to be out at night or come home late.

THE CASE STUDY EVENT – WHAT DID LOCAL PEOPLE AND THE AUTHORITIES DO?

Response by local people

During the riots there were different responses, reflecting people's role in community organizations and their experience of the area.

- The most direct response was by organizations and people working with young people who tried to prevent the people they had been working with, and young people more generally, from getting involved in the violence or from taking more extreme actions. One organization supporting young people (Safe`N`Sound) has established relations with the police (the CEO is a member of the police's Critical Incidents Response Advisory Group and was able to take effective action on the night, in one case stopping a group of young people from attacking a photographer, and talking to people to diffuse anger. *"For the fact that I work with the youths on the ground, I tend to know more than what the police know. So, I tend to get information before police would get the information."* (Community Organisation 1).
- Other youth workers found it more difficult to be effective, in some cases because they had no way of identifying themselves to the police, so ran the risk of being treated as rioters and in other cases because they felt that the people on the streets had taken on a crowd mentality where and it had become impossible to engage with them as individuals.
- Local residents in some areas came out to protect local shops and premises. This was seen as effective in putting off the looters – if the looters saw groups of people outside the shops, they seemed to move on.
- Many residents reported that they had gone inside and locked the doors because they didn't know what else to do or who to talk to. They felt isolated and very frightened.
- The way that different groups and individuals responded to the rioting reflects the relationships they already had with people in the area, with other community organizations and with the authorities most involved in dealing with the riots (the police and Southwark Council). Safe`N`Sound was very active on

the night of the rioting and that was able to help direct cars and people away from the area and to avoid some of the actions of those involved in the rioting (for example by negotiating with an angry group of young people to let a photographer leave the area unhurt). The fact that organisation's CEO is a member of a police advisory group meant that she was in regular contact with the police and could show an identification when she was out on the streets:

"After the riots the next day we had a full Gold [Command] meeting, which I attended ... and we just talked about strategies of basically getting reinforcement in, and teaming up with other police forces so that we don't get a repeat of the next night. But I was there to reassure them that, there's nothing to build up again because the looting's been done, there's nothing left to loot... at the GOLD meeting it was ... where I could put my input in as a community, and just be able to advise them in community steps and what they could take." (Community organisation 1).

- Other youth workers and organizations felt disempowered because they had no way of communicating with the police. The police operation aimed to clear everyone from the streets and there was no differentiation between people who were trying to help and those involved in the rioting.
- In the aftermath of the rioting, there was initially little contact between Southwark Council over the clean up of the area and support for people who had been affected directly or indirectly. This meant that there was no clear structure for channeling the efforts of people who had been shocked by the events and wanted to do something to help. Local organizations with existing relationships with other community groups and organizations and with the Council played a vital role in getting an idea of the different initiatives that were going on (e.g. support for local businesses in cleaning up their premises, the Peace Wall, youth organizations mentoring young people, etc.) and help put people in contact with initiatives where they could contribute. These links to different groups within a diverse area were essential in providing an overview and building up a shared response. It also helped to make sure that creative responses like the Peace Wall were maintained and kept as evidence of the views of local people, for example by encouraging Peckham Shed, the organization that started the Wall, to set up a volunteer rota system, as Peckham Shed soon found that they did not have enough staff to be at the Wall all the time.
- It is also important to recognize that the events acted as a catalyst for new links between people in the area by creating a sense of shared interest. At the very local level, residents in one street invited their neighbours to meet at the local pub to get to know each other and make sure that they wouldn't feel so isolated in the future. This initiative was reported in a 'Good News Newsletter' that Peckham Settlement's brought out after the riots, and similar contacts were made in other neighbourhoods.

Response by the authorities, emergency services

- The emergency response was co-ordinated through the gold-silver-bronze emergency command structure with the police taking the lead. Relationships between individuals in the emergency response organisations have already been established through emergency planning and rehearsed procedures. For example, there is a well established relationship between teams from the Borough Council and the Police via the Crime and Disorder Partnership Board: *'... we were working with the police on and so our assessment of events were unfolding after things started to happen in Tottenham were done jointly between the Council and the police. So you know quite close relationships there.'* (Southwark Council Community Relations).
- Because the disturbances occurred in other parts of London before they occurred in Southwark, the authorities were to some extent prepared and were able to consult with a range of officials and some residents: *'It was before things started happening in Southwark. People like our head of community safety were out and about on the streets with various community leaders who were in town centre areas and looking to minimise any impact as things were developing, talking to people, reassuring people and there were all sorts of things happening in relation to people visiting known gang members and that sort of thing.'* (Southwark Council Community Relations).
- Few of the organisations in Peckham seem to have been aware that these conversations had happened before the rioting and most describe being taken by surprise: *"I called into the borough commander to*

inform him as well that, word out is that it's gonna kick off in Peckham, roughly around what time and so forth, so at least they can be prepared also. For the fact that I work with the youths on the ground, I tend to know more than what the police know. So, I tend to get information before police would get the information.” (Community organisation 1).

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE THE EVENT?

Ways in which community resilience is being developed

- Following the riot there were two ‘emergency’ meetings called by Southwark Council. These brought together community organisations that had been seen to be involved during the incidents and in the immediate response and the police Borough Commander. They were important to allow those involved to vent their emotions.
- Subsequently the Council organised a series of ‘listening’ events in different parts of the borough (not just Peckham). This was felt by some community organisations as a return to ‘default’ Council practice of setting up rather formal events in which members of the community are invited to say their piece while council officers listen and take note. It is not always clear what will come out of these events. These community organisations felt that the Council should have done more to go out to areas and groups where people are less engaged and unlikely to come to this kind of formal listening event. *‘...we also launched a series of community conversations straightaway across the whole borough to find out what people who live and work here think about what the causes of the disorder were, how we can stop them happening again. To find out from people directly affected what support local communities might need, what support the small businesses, independent traders, might need but also the thing we’re trying to build on there is what people can do themselves.’ (Southwark Council Community Relations).*
- The Borough Council was concerned to assess the impact on local businesses and to think about what support could be provided for them. *“We also particularly looked at the issues about supporting small local businesses because one of the features of who was impacted by what was going on is, in some cases-, yes, it was a wide range of businesses large and small but actually it is because of the nature of the local economy in Southwark, lots of very small marginal businesses were very, very badly affected by what was going on.” (Southwark Council Community Relations).*
- The fear of crime has increased and this is seen as potentially having a lasting impact on individual behaviour and community relations as people are more frightened of going out or going to places where they don’t feel secure. This reinforces the problem for the local economy, as local people may identify parts of Peckham as no-go areas. A member of a community organization commented that people’s behaviour has changed.
- There has been a major impact on young people in the area who are more worried about being stopped and searched by the police. Many young people were already angry about what they saw as excessively aggressive policing before the riots, and this is seen by many people as an important factor contributing to the events. Young people who had had problems with the police before the riots have chosen to stay indoors or move away to other places. This impacts young people’s organizations and their attitudes to authority.
- At the organizational level, a Peckham Network is being developed. This was initially called the Post-Riot Network but the organizations (and some individuals) involved recognized that there was a need for coordination and joint initiatives going beyond the response to the rioting. The Network has met three times following the riots. The numbers of people participating has gone down, but there is still a lot of enthusiasm for continuing work and it will be interesting to see how the network develops.
- There are many people in the area with capacities that made response possible; these include youth workers, community organisers, community arts workers and facilitators. Most of these people are working on an unpaid basis or are only paid for part of the time they spend working in the community. This capacity is reflected in the widespread and creative responses to the rioting. The problem is that it is difficult to maintain the response, as ‘bounce-back’ for these people means getting on with the

difficult task of keeping their regular activities going and keeping their organisations afloat. There is widespread recognition of the need to work more closely together in the future, but little spare capacity to engage in additional coordination and cooperation activities. Some organisations have more capacity to bring people together and to look for funding to support joint initiatives, but it is not yet clear whether that will be sufficient to keep the wide range of groups and interests engaged over the longer term.

- The riots took local people and organisations by surprise. There are formal opportunities for people to raise issues and concerns with the police (police Ward Panels which meet periodically and are open to local residents) and the Council (for example Peckham Community Council, which is a forum rather than an organisation: Southwark Council organises quarterly meeting where local Councillors and Council officers meet members of the community to discuss local issues and Council initiatives, meeting are open to all). While crime, anti-social behaviour and policing are regularly discussed and both the police and the Council are taking action on these issues, with some involvement of communities in terms of reporting anti-social and suspicious behaviour, no-one in the community was prepared for an event on this scale.
- This meant that there was no procedure or structures in place for taking action when the rioting occurred. The police took the approach of clearing the streets and were criticised for not applying the strategy effectively as there were not enough police in the area to stop the rioters from moving on to target shops and premises in other places. So while the trouble started in Peckham High Street and the bus station, police didn't contain the rioters there. Local people felt that the police should have prioritised stopping the rioting and looting from spreading south to the commercial premises in Rye Lane and eventually to East Dulwich.
- There is some appetite on the part of community organisations to be able to play a role in preventing the spread of rioting before the full police response of clearing the streets occurs. However other members of the community are more concerned with creating neighbourhood support structures to make sure that people are safe and can contact others, rather than proactively engaging with the disturbance.
- Overall there appears to be little understanding among community organisations or members of the community about how the emergency response organisations work. The police are clearly identified as the organisation responsible for dealing with the rioting. There seemed to be little link between the ongoing neighbourhood policing work being undertaken by the police in Peckham and the police response to the riots. More work needs to be done to understand how the Borough Command (which covers the whole of Southwark) works with the local police (based at Peckham police station), to what extent the management of the rioting took account of the community contacts built up through the ongoing neighbourhood policing work being done in Peckham and what lessons Borough Command has taken from the events about the value of engaging with community organisations and representatives in the case of future emergency events.

HOW IS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE CHARACTERISED IN THIS CASE STUDY?

- The experience of the events of the riots and their aftermath varied between organisations and individual members of the community. Among residents who felt frightened and hopeless in the face of the violence and retreated inside their homes and shops, there are many different reactions: from those who have decided not to let this happen again and who are trying to **transform** their neighbourhoods by building links between neighbours so that people get to know each other, those who have **"bounced back"** and returned to their everyday activities in the hopes that the rioting was a "one-off", to those who are going out less because they are still in fear of being attacked.
- In neighbourhoods where people did take action to defend their property and surroundings, the **resisted** the impact of the violence but this action also increased trust between members, creating the potential for **transformative** action:

"During the riot I was surprised that people responded by coming out. The mood was, "We won't let

this happen in our community!"... Situations like the riots make people strong. But it takes time to build a strong community. (Community Organisation 3).

- For many local voluntary organisations, while the context of the riots created the possibility of **transformative** action, the constraints of their funding situations made it hard to do anything more than **bounce back**:

"Everything quite quickly went back to business as usual. Especially for voluntary organisations that don't have any money and can't take on additional work. Funded community organisations have more resources to look at what more can be done." (Community organisation 2).

- One of the aspects of community resilience highlighted by this event is the relationship with the main responder organisation (the police) in a situation in which some organisations within the local area (youth groups) were thought to be involved in attacks on other members of the local area or their property. This is a difficult situation for local people to control by themselves and in general people felt that a police response was needed. However, there was a lot of frustration about the nature of that response, from people who complained that the police did not have a good enough knowledge of the area or understanding of local people to do an effective job. Some local people who already had relations with the police were able to provide information and advice directly to those involved in the police operation, but these were only a very small minority. Most local organisations felt that they could have done more to support the operation but that they were not allowed to by the police.
- The strongly bonding within the local area is reflected in the immediate actions by organisations and groups, both to defend their property and to find ways of expressing their identification with the area. Since the riots, this is being channelled into actions to collaborate with local organisations working with young people, community painting and similar activities. In areas where there was less existing bonding, initiatives are springing up to create local groups.
- There is a recognition among local voluntary and community groups that they need to work more closely together to create bridging capital within the area and links to organisations outside Peckham. Networking initiatives such as the Peckham Network have been started with a view to addressing these more deep-rooted problems and get people working together at different levels, from the street and estate level to coordination between organisations across Peckham and building links to institutions like the Council and the police.

WHAT WORKED WELL?

- The relationships between official agents appeared to work well, with effective communication and collaboration. It was remarked that, *'There were no great issues in terms of relationships necessarily falling apart. Certainly in terms of the immediate response we were working quite well together.'* (Southwark Council Community Relations).
- Relationships and networks between the official structures and the local community have been nurtured and established over a long period of time. A lot had been invested in these links before the summer disturbances, *'...some of that is actually about many years of work building relationships and building trust with people. So it's not something that happens immediately or be available to happen immediately.'* (Southwark Council Community Relations).
- Both voluntary organisations and the Council created opportunities for people to express their response to the rioting. This gave a chance for people to externalise their emotions and move on from anger and fear to looking for ways to improve the situation and work together.
- The community has demonstrated lots of examples of resilience, at the very minimum a determination to keep going but there are many examples that going beyond coping, that offer some very positive signs that people want to build a stronger community. *'... I suppose things like the Peckham Wall of Love just sort of sums up this determination to move on but to sustain this positive response and that's something we were particularly keen to try and keep going.'* (Southwark Council Community Relations).

WHAT WORKED LESS WELL?

- The police response was felt by many local people not to have been effective in limiting the impact on local businesses and to reflect aggressive approaches to young people which have been the subject of concern in the past: *“Obviously there were tensions there and there were issues in terms of people’s trust of the police etc which is one of the things that has been said to us since”*. (Southwark Council Community Engagement).
- Few local organizations or individuals had a close relationship with the police. Only one community organization seemed to have a formal relationship with the police and have been in contact with the police during the riots.
- While the Council’s idea of holding ‘community conversations’ (see above) was welcomed, there were a few concerns about the format and outcomes of these events. In particular, it was felt that the formal setting had excluded many of the people that the Council should have been talking to, like young people and people in more deprived neighbourhoods. Furthermore, it was not always clear what would come out of the meetings.
- Lack of leadership and communications during the rioting and in the early stages of the response: youth workers couldn’t communicate with the police, people wanted to volunteer but didn’t know how, etc.
- Links between organisations (bridging capital) are still fairly weak. Further work is needed to build these links between the many diverse communities within Peckham. These need to include practical actions, not just work as talking-shops, so that people have experience of working together.

WHAT LESSONS CAN BE LEARNT FROM THIS CASE STUDY IN TERMS OF IMPROVING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO EMERGENCIES?**Lessons for improving community resilience in this case study**

- It is unclear whether the current policing strategy for these kinds of incidents includes any consideration of the potential role of community organizations and community members. It would be important that this relationship is discussed and clarified.
- The importance of the emotional response to the emergency – people have a strong emotional response which they need to express. This came out as ‘rants’ in meetings following the riots. The Peckham Peace Wall was a positive channel for these strong emotions. People of all different kinds went and left messages; it was a meeting place where people could talk to others about what had happened. It was spontaneous and never taken over by any group so it was felt to really represent the community.
- The willingness of the Council to create opportunities to listen to people’s experiences and concerns: there was a channel for people to be able to put forward their views, albeit in a formalised setting. There is, however, some concern among community organisations that the formal setting excludes many people who are not comfortable in those situations.

General lessons from this case study for improving community resilience

- Develop better networks between community organisations and people in local areas to enable people to act quickly together in emergency situations:
 - Linking up between organisations and community leaders, and between these organisations and the emergency responders.
- Look for ways to develop bonding capital at the neighbourhood level so that residents support each other rather than retreating in fear into their own homes.
- Support the development of bridging capital: there are organisations of people in different parts of the

area (e.g. Tenants and Residents' Associations, organisations bringing together national groups, faith organisations, etc) but they did not link up quickly to take action to deal with the emergency. This bridging is beginning to happen, catalysed by the rioting, as often happens post-emergency, but could be supported through community development or community resilience planning.

- Strengthen linking capital between community organisations and the emergency responders: some community leaders feel that they could have been more effective in stopping people from destroying their own neighbourhoods and the livelihood of local businesses if there had been better understanding with the police.
- Recognise and support the role of local organisations in building bonding capital. While some areas have strong bonding capital, which is expressed in regular activities which bring members of the community together, like trips, celebrations, etc. Where this kind of bonding capital does not exist, efforts need to be made to find and develop it. Linking up at the neighbourhood level so that residents support each other rather than retreating in fear into their own homes.
- Create channels for people to express their emotions about the emergency. Although this can be uncomfortable, especially for the authorities, it is important to create opportunities and to support organisations or individuals in the area who create their own channels. It is important that these channels are open to all and that they are not seen as being managed or dominated by particular interests.

6. Lessons from the Case Studies

Thirlby

General lessons from this case study for improving community resilience

- Develop knowledge of the existing communities (of place, of interest). This required by external organisations and people in local areas. Ensure that communities that do exist are able to define their own boundaries. Allow time to research the community and its organisations. Talk with local people from a range of backgrounds. Ask local people about how they define their local community. Be prepared to work with differing viewpoints.
- Raise awareness of responders of the potential roles of more informal organisations and networks as well as the more formal structures such as the Parish. Investigate the informal structures present and think creatively how they might be involved. Consider whether there is the potential to create links between existing groups so that they can work together. Some examples of the types of groups that might be considered – local history groups, play groups, school based groups, book clubs, Women’s Institutes (WI), art/craft groups, exercise/sport groups, civic societies, Neighbourhood Watch, local environmental issues groups, groups based around a specific ethnic identity, religious groups.
- Ensure that there is an attitude of openness and trust from emergency responders, external organisations in their dealings with people in local areas. Avoid excessive secrecy, respond promptly to questions, and communicate frequently through a variety of channels.
- Understand that solutions are unlikely to be effective if they imposed on local areas, it is necessary to work with the community to find something acceptable. When approaching local people to engage in developing emergency plans stress that they will help create this and discuss a range of ideas for possible formats.

Great Yarmouth

General lessons from this case study for improving community resilience

- Work with existing social networks to develop the both the underlying resources and links and the structures to facilitate an effective response that complements the emergency services: two practical ways to do this:
 - EPM to work with local people to develop existing networks so they can be drawn upon in a systematic way during an emergency, e.g. in terms of locating vulnerable people, door knocking and providing local knowledge to outside organisations.
 - Work with rest centre “owners” e.g. schools to ensure that whoever runs them is aware of local issues and clearly links with the relevant on site personnel. It may be that the rest centre owners wish to staff it themselves with volunteers and this should be complemented with training and support from the emergency planning manager.
- Be prepared for community resilience groups to look different in different areas: to be effective they will need time to develop and will reflect the local area so networks will not be uniform. This means that EPM’s need to be able to ask the right questions to find out where the key networks are, rather than having a prescriptive list of which groups to go to.
- Recognise that the resources that are drawn upon to build community resilience are developed when there are no emergencies through empowering community members and

then giving them tools to use in emergencies that link with the authorities and wider information sources and networks. This is a key lesson and indicates that links should be made across departments within local councils but also at the national level to develop an awareness and understanding that many other aspects of government work e.g. education, social services, work etc are crucial in developing resources that can be drawn upon during an emergency. However, those resources have to be systematically organised and linked into the Emergency Planning and Local Resilience system.

- Use local knowledge to improve engagement with local people: trusted faces are more likely to get messages acted upon and local people will know where those who are vulnerable live and what their needs might be. Developing a system e.g. communications tree that can be activated in an emergency but builds on existing networks.
- Develop two way communication with local people and emergency services. *'That's where for me the main linkage are the contact people on the ground through which we communicate. Through them we communicate and they communicate to us on their concerns and questions, and so on. It's as much establishing that communication to the people on the ground, the residents, as much as anything else. That's where it's part of the process.'* (EPM).
- Understand that bridging and linking social capital are key to move people from a "getting by" type of resilience to a "bouncing forward" type of resilience. It is clear from this case study that having the links between different groups in the community (bridges) and between local people and service providers has enabled the development of the Community Resilience Plan and more importantly the communications tree and the awareness raising exercises of Emergencies Week.
- Understand that the process of planning is as, if not more, important than the plan itself (although it is still important to have one!). Getting community resilience groups going and motivated takes time, but through that process of inviting people, of discussion and debate relationships of trust are developed which can then be drawn upon during an emergency.
- Be aware that building trust is a key principle in the development of effective governance and strong networks. This involves regular, personal contact between agents. Face-to-face contact appears to be a particularly effective, and possibly essential, way to build trust.
- Know that individuals can make a big difference in terms of linking organizations together and building trust and these people can be "locally grown". An important characteristic of individuals is that they have strong communication skills and are able to empathize with people and communities. They need to take a very active role in promoting collaboration and dissemination of information, and this is undertaken through regular personal, often face-to-face, contact with stakeholders to build trust and co-operation. Such individual must also be sensitive to each particular (local community) context and be aware of a community's needs, resources and abilities.

Forest of Dean

General lessons from this case study in terms of improving community resilience

- Social networks, both formal and informal, are essential to ensuring resilience. Trust and knowledge of individuals is key to maintaining and enhancing these networks. Understanding how to support and develop these networks needs to be part of emergency planning.

- Having proactive individuals, village agents, snow wardens and others including councillors who are connected with the authorities (linking social capital) is important for community resilience to be effective when emergency responders and other authorities are at work. Working to develop and support those key individuals needs to be a priority with emergency planners and responders.
- Understand that the value of emergency response plans at Parish level is very much around the process of the preparation of which allows residents to become engaged on how to respond effectively in adverse situations.
- Communication and a sense of neighbourliness in addition to practical actions (snow clearance, collecting food and medication) is a critically important component of community resilience, particularly for those that are isolated, either geographically or because of their vulnerability. Emergency planning and formal response to emergencies should consider how this can be facilitated.

Peckham

General lessons from this case study for improving community resilience

- Develop better networks between community organisations and people in local areas to enable people to act quickly together in emergency situations:
 - Linking up between organisations and community leaders, and between these organisations and the emergency responders.
- Look for ways to develop bonding capital at the neighbourhood level so that residents support each other rather than retreating in fear into their own homes.
- Support the development of bridging capital: there are organisations of people in different parts of the area (e.g. Tenants and Residents' Associations, organisations bringing together national groups, faith organisations, etc) but they did not link up quickly to take action to deal with the emergency. This bridging is beginning to happen, catalysed by the rioting, as often happens post-emergency, but could be supported through community development or community resilience planning.
- Strengthen linking capital between community organisations and the emergency responders: some community leaders feel that they could have been more effective in stopping people from destroying their own neighbourhoods and the livelihood of local businesses if there had been better understanding with the police.
- Recognise and support the role of local organisations in building bonding capital. While some areas have strong bonding capital, which is expressed in regular activities which bring members of the community together, like trips, celebrations, etc. Where this kind of bonding capital does not exist, efforts need to be made to find and develop it. Linking up at the neighbourhood level so that residents support each other rather than retreating in fear into their own homes.
- Create channels for people to express their emotions about the emergency. Although this can be uncomfortable, especially for the authorities, it is important to create opportunities and to support organisations or individuals in the area who create their own channels. It is important that these channels are open to all and that they are not seen as being managed or dominated by particular interests.

7. Recommendations

Support local people to engage with resilience

1. Provide support to the process of community resilience planning recognising that the process of plan development can, in itself, foster a sense of community and build resilience. Communicating with risk-exposed communities is an *expectation* of good practice for LRF members (Cabinet Office, 2009b). However, local authority staff interviewed for this project had a perception that their time spent on this activity was undervalued as a quantifiable good practice *indicator*. It would be helpful if within local authorities, endorsed by central government a method could be found through which teams or individual staff (e.g. emergency planning officers), who actively engage with at-risk communities in order to develop contingency arrangements and to build resilience, can be provided with time and resource to do this, and that it is recognised as part of their job descriptions.
2. Emphasise the importance of working with existing social networks for community resilience planning, e.g. informal networks between neighbours, neighbourhood watch, networks through schools (i.e. adult, e.g. clubs, PTA etc., as well as pupil networks). Some possible examples include:
 - Emergency planners to work with local people to develop existing networks so they can be drawn upon in a systematic way during an emergency, via a communication tree e.g. in terms of locating vulnerable people, door knocking and providing local knowledge to outside organisations.
 - Work with rest centre “owners” e.g. schools to ensure that whoever runs them is aware of local issues and clearly links with the relevant on site personnel. It may be that the rest centre owners wish to staff it themselves with volunteers and this should be complemented with training and support from the emergency planning.
3. Be prepared for community resilience groups and plans to look different in different areas and recognise that the imposition of solutions, plans or processes is less likely to be effective. Time will be needed for networks to be understood and having the right questions to ask will be important. A “community analysis process” is suggested below.
4. Develop a simple community analysis process e.g. flow diagram of key questions to be asked about communities. This would be aimed at local authority emergency planning officers, community resilience group members and would sit alongside the Guiding Principles. The focus will be on the local community as this is the scale at which much emergency response must, at least initially, take place. However, it will also consider networks that extend beyond the local level and how these may also be used. Users could work their way through the guide, choosing from various alternative answers and in this way build a clear idea of the type of community that exists currently. This could be supported by existing guidance on how best to use existing networks as well as the types of support that are likely to be needed. This process could be used within a “community impact assessment” where

emergency responders would consider the impacts of the emergency on different parts of communities and develop their response accordingly.

5. Facilitate the “community” of community resilience champions by enabling sharing of stories, coming together and for them to go out to other communities as “experts”. For example it would be helpful if LRFs and local authorities:
 1. Enable network development to take place through the simple provision of a venue for these activities. This could create opportunities for trust to be built between all stakeholders (i.e. LRF and community/ies).
 2. Consider how their budgets could be sufficiently flexible so that the reasonable costs incurred by ‘champions’ travelling between specified communities for specific knowledge sharing activities could be covered.

Improve communication between the Local Resilience Fora and local communities

6. Encourage appropriate community representation on the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) so that links between people at a local level and the level of the resilience forum are developed. Whilst the Local Resilience Forum operates at the Police Area level, many hazards and risks threaten only very localised populations. Engaging Elected Members directly and at the appropriate scale, in the development of all plans for risks cited in the Community Risk Register (and not just planning for their “role” during the response and recovery phases: see HM Government, 2009: p.38, 108; Cabinet Office, 2009a), could allow LRFs to better characterise exposed populations into communities (e.g. geographical, interest: Cabinet Office, 2011) and to better identify and plan for the needs of vulnerable groups and individuals (Cabinet Office, 2008). In addition methods to ensure a good information flow should be sought. It would allow for the identification of individuals, social networks and communities who could provide important support for the LRF membership and useful information conduits (i.e. two-way) through which ‘resilience’ information could pass into and out of the wider population.
7. Support and look for opportunities for knowledge exchange between LRFs and local community resilience groups and community development workers e.g. through workshops, dedicated sessions to community resilience. Local Authorities have a duty to provide general advice on Business Continuity to businesses and the voluntary sector. If this duty could be considered positively, as a means through which to engage networked communities (e.g. local volunteer organisations and the people they engage with) with contingency thinking this may open up opportunities for innovative outreach (see Great Yarmouth case study). Such an approach also opens up the opportunities presented by engaging with groups interested in other resilience domains (e.g. Transition Towns, Community energy, youth support groups, etc.).
8. Consider training and awareness raising for LRF members on the role of communities in emergencies. This might be in the form of examples of how engagement with communities in emergencies is being carried out and the issues around it together with some introduction

to some of the key issues around community resilience (e.g. different types of social capital), together with some case studies for illustration.

9. Foster an attitude of openness and trust from emergency responders, external organisations in their dealings with people in local areas. Avoid excessive secrecy, respond promptly to questions, and communicate frequently through a variety of channels.
10. Be aware that building trust is a key principle in the development of effective governance and strong networks. This involves regular, personal contact between agents. Face-to-face contact appears to be a particularly effective, and possibly essential, way to build trust.
11. Ensure that the language that is used by emergency responders is appropriate and is sensitive to the nature of the communities that are being engaged with. Responders should be aware that they are sometimes not the best people to effectively contextualise the importance of contingency planning for people whose most pressing priorities, often justifiably, lie elsewhere. In such cases the efforts of responder staff who develop links of trust to such communities through intermediaries need to be encouraged and recognised as good practice.

Further research

1. How are emergency responders (e.g. police, fire, Environment Agency) engaging with communities around resilience? What are their views of the role of communities in emergencies? How does that help/hinder the development of community resilience? This research would examine not only what types of engagement might be happening but also the institutional cultures and attitudes towards community engagement and community resilience.
2. Carry out an action research project examining how community resilience develops over time and context. Take a longer look at the case studies in this research to see how community resilience develops over a couple of years – what helps and what are the barriers? This could build specifically on both Great Yarmouth and Peckham as there are currently active efforts being made.
3. Collect more case studies of different types of community and different types of hazard. The research to date has only looked at a limited number of community and hazard types. Further research with additional community forms and hazard types would enable a better understanding of how these interact to shape community resilience.
4. Examine in more detail the varying ways in which community resilience is understood by both community members and emergency responders. How do varying definitions shape the actions undertaken? Does variation in definition lead to difficulties in different groups working together? Is there an ideal definition and can groups work together to create a shared understanding?
5. There has been some suggestion that small businesses may play a role in community resilience. A pilot project has started to examine this and shows that the wide variation in business types and community contexts means that this role can be very varied. This project

could be developed further to try and identify how small business might be successfully included in community resilience plans.

8. References

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Appendix 1: Interview schedule

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE: CASE STUDIES' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Name:

Organisation

Date of interview:

This research seeks to provide a detailed understanding of how the community responded to XXX [name of case study]. In particular, we'd like to hear about the different ways in which people were involved, their willingness to be involved, the effectiveness of their involvement and the extent to which this response linked with that of 'the authorities' (emergency response organisations and others),

Text in italics below is not necessarily to be read out to interviewee but provides guidance on what can or will be said, e.g. to elicit responses or to clarify the aim of certain questions.

A. INTRODUCTION	
Thanks and personal introductions	
B. SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE DISCUSSION	
<p>CEP in conjunction with Kingston University has been commissioned by DSTL and the Cabinet Office (Civil Contingencies Secretariat) to undertake a project to better understand the role and nature of community resilience in emergency response and recovery situations.</p> <p>The first part of the project involves reviewing existing evidence on community resilience whilst the second part involves developing case studies to explore how the community responded. Two case studies focus on flooding (Thirlby, Yorkshire; Great Yarmouth, Norfolk), one on snow and ice (Gloucestershire), and the final one on the riots in August (specifically, Peckham, London).</p> <p>The case studies will allow a more detailed understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How communities respond in the face of adverse events • The factors that facilitate people working together in those situations • The extent to which that community response was linked with and assisted the response by 'the authorities'/ emergency response organisations. <p>Overall, the project will allow DSTL and the Cabinet Office to be more informed about the factors which allow communities to be effective in responding to adverse events and which facilitate working with the responding authorities in those situations.</p>	<p><i>Aim: Inform interviewee about focus for discussion.</i></p>

C. INTERVIEWEE'S ROLE / POSITION	
1. Could you confirm your position and the main focus of your work? <i>Or</i> Could you confirm your role in the community?	
D. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR CASE STUDY	
2. Could you describe how you are/ were involved in [case study name]?	
3. Could you describe this community, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Where is it located and what are the main characteristics of that area e.g. urban/rural, population dense, scattered or isolated? b. What are the boundaries of the community or the specific area that it covers? <i>What defines that area? E.g. edge of town, specific road, hills, local authority boundary?</i> c. What kinds of things do local people do for one another on a day to day or month by month basis? d. What organisations are there in the community? e. Do different organisations/groups communicate well? 	<i>Aim:</i> <i>To understand nature of the community – its make up and characteristics.</i>
4. How well would you say local people know one another and how do local people get to know one another? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What opportunities are there to meet and to what extent do people have something in common - local events to go to fetes, parades, bonfire night, etc, local groups, schools, church etc., common cause or campaign? b. What are the relationships between different groups in the community like e.g. are there strong links between community groups, schools, churches etc? Or do some areas operate in isolation e.g. certain housing estates? c. How linked are members of the community to wider authorities and organisations that might provide support during emergencies e.g. LA, fire service, community organisations? 	<i>Aim:</i> <i>To understand how well connected a community is or how cohesive/ close knit it is</i>
<i>ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS BUILDING ON THE ABOVE:</i>	
5. Do you consider that the community is a well connected community?	<i>Aim:</i> <i>To explore this connectedness in more detail.</i>
6. What kinds of relationships exist between local people, e.g. formal/ informal, hierarchical/ egalitarian? Are there different 'ends' of the town/ village or e.g. isolated estates?	
7. How would you describe this community to a stranger – is there anything else you would add in addition to the above?	

E. THE CASE STUDY EVENTS	
<p>8. Which people or groups in the community were most affected by [the case study] events?</p> <p>a. How were they affected?</p> <p>b. Were any other people or groups also affected in this way, or affected in different ways?</p>	<p><i>Aim:</i></p> <p><i>To understand who was affected in the community</i></p>
<p>9. Who in the community (individuals or groups) took action in response to [case study] events and their effects?</p> <p>a. What kinds of things did people do to help one another?</p> <p>b. Were the people who took action also the people who were affected?</p> <p>c. Did different people or groups respond in different ways?</p> <p>d. Did any groups or organisations play a particular role?</p> <p>e. Were there any clear leaders? If so, what did they do to give leadership?</p> <p><i>[Think about adapting, extending and emerging behaviour] - how did people/organisations adapt their usual behaviour, what did they do which was additional to their usual roles/function in the community?</i></p>	<p><i>Aim:</i></p> <p><i>To understand how the community responded.</i></p>
F. TYPE AND NATURE OF COMMUNITY RESPONSE	
<p>10. How do you think the nature and characteristics of the community which you have just outlined affects the type of response to [case study event(s)]</p> <p><i>Prompt:</i></p> <p>a. <i>What characteristics affect the way people respond?</i></p> <p>b. <i>Is there some kind of hierarchy/'pecking order' in the community or do you think people generally treat each other as equals?</i></p> <p>c. <i>Are relationships well-established or do people and organisations change frequently?</i></p> <p>11. What assets or resources does/did the community have that helped people to take action? <i>This refers to all kinds of resources, e.g. financial resources, physical assets like vehicles, meeting spaces etc, human resources like skills, etc).</i></p>	<p><i>Aim:</i></p> <p><i>to understand how the nature of the community may affect the way it response to adverse events.</i></p>
G. EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNITY RESPONSE	
<p>12. Which of the following best describes the response by your/ the local community as a result of the [case study] events?</p> <p>a. It stopped the worst impacts from happening [<i>resistance</i>]</p> <p>b. It helped things get back to normal [<i>bounce back</i>]</p> <p>c. The community became better able to deal with these sorts of emergencies</p>	<p><i>Aim:</i></p> <p><i>to sum up the type of response by the community to the event.</i></p>

<p><i>[adaptation]</i></p> <p>d. The community (completely) changed in some way, in order to become a stronger and more resilient community <i>[transformation]</i></p> <p>e. None of the above – please give your own 1 or 2 line description</p> <p>Could you explain why you chose this description, ideally giving examples?</p> <p>13. From this experience, what would you say are the characteristics of communities that influence resilience?</p> <p>14. In what ways do you think that community structures (or governance/outside support) influence community resilience?</p>	
H. ROLE OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER AUTHORITIES	
<p>15. How have people in the community learnt about the risks they face <i>in terms of adverse events or emergency situations</i>?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What opportunities have they had, if any, to discuss these with each other and with the authorities?</i> <p>16. How do you think the way that people learn about and discuss these types of risks affects community response and the willingness of different groups in the community to get involved in preparing for or responding to emergencies?</p> <p><i>E.g. does it make local people more engaged/ willing or is there [still] reluctance to get involved?</i></p> <p>17. How well do you think that the organisations responsible for dealing with emergencies (e.g. local authorities, police, fire and rescue, ambulance service, etc.) communicate with the community about the emergency situation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is good or bad about this communication?</i> • <i>How could they improve the way in which they communicate?</i> <p>18. To what extent does the way this communication happens <i>[by the emergency response organisations]</i> promote community resilience?</p> <p>19. How could these organisations do more to support the community in responding to emergencies?</p> <p>ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:</p> <p>20. Do you think that the emergency response organisations coordinate and cooperate with each other?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What examples can you give of this cooperation (or lack of cooperation)?</i> <p>21. How does coordination and cooperation between emergency responders affect community response and resilience?</p>	<p><i>Aim:</i></p> <p><i>To understand links between the community and the emergency response authorities.</i></p>

I. GOVERNANCE ASPECTS	
<p>22. Are there any particular organisations or individuals that linked the community response with that of ‘the authorities’? <i>i.e. joining up the community with the authorities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If so, what did they do and how do you think they achieved this?</i> <p>23. Were there any particular opportunities for the community to work with the emergency response organisations/ authorities?</p> <p>24. Were/are there any particular initiatives or forums where the community met with/engaged with authorities dealing with the events?</p> <p><i>Where these initiatives/forums existed:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To what extent did members of the community play an active role in such initiatives? <i>And what was this role e.g. to pass on info, to take a lead, to make decisions, to articulate community views?</i> b. In your opinion how effective were the mechanisms for engaging with the community? <p>25. Do you think there were barriers preventing the community becoming more involved in the response? <i>E.g. lack of trust, apathy (and if so what causes this), concern about their ability to assist/ lack of knowledge or skills, fear over ‘health and safety legislation’, fear of injury or of making situation worse, lack of opportunity?</i></p> <p>26. Would you consider that community members trust the relevant authorities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do they trust some more than others?</i> <p>27. Are there any lessons from this [case study] event that could help us learn how to build more community trust in the authorities/ emergency response organisations?</p>	<p><i>Aim:</i></p> <p><i>To understand how the extent to which the community response is linked or integrated with that of the authorities.</i></p>
J. CONCLUSIONS	
<p>28. Given the above:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. how would you describe a resilient community? b. what do you think are the most important factors in making a community resilient to emergencies? <p>29. From your own experience, do you see any barriers that stop communities from becoming more resilient to emergencies? If so, what are these barriers?</p> <p>30. Are there any other aspects relevant to community resilience that we have not covered and that you would like to mention?</p>	

Many thanks for your time.

If we follow up this case study and have further questions, would you mind be contacted again in the future?