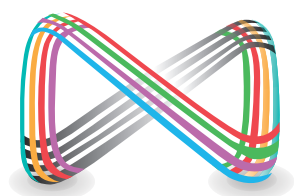




# NORFOLK COMMUNITY RESILIENCE STRATEGY

Enabling communities to prepare for,  
respond to and recover from emergencies.



**NORFOLK  
RESILIENCE FORUM**  
  
preparing for emergencies

# The Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) Community Resilience Strategy aims for communities in Norfolk to become more resilient to adverse events.

## Introduction

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**Foreword:** Recent events such as the January 2017 near-miss east-coast tidal surge, utility failures, surface water flooding and severe weather have all placed extreme demands on Norfolk communities. During these events communities and groups rally round to help each other in a wide range of resourceful and inventive ways.

With this in mind the revised NRF Community Resilience Strategy aims to enhance the ability of communities to respond to and recover from emergencies by recognising there are many different paths to resilience. Norfolk CC encourages communities and official emergency responders to work together in innovative ways to get there. Crucially this involves:

- Building on the 'social capital' that exists within communities
- Listening to what's important to communities
- Encouraging a flexible approach to resilience

Where communities want to produce a formal emergency plan we will assist them to do so. However, this strategy reflects the fact that a community may be just as resilient because of its existing social groups which, on the face of it, may have little to do with emergency preparedness. Experience around the UK has shown that it is often the help and support of these existing groups which allows a community to unite and recover following an emergency.

Parish, town, district, borough, city and county councillors all have a part to play in raising awareness among their constituents of how to prepare for, and respond to, emergencies when they occur. Councillors attend many community meetings and events. Members of the public approach councillors with concerns and queries. This close engagement with the people of Norfolk provides opportunities to raise awareness of what can be done at a community level to develop local resilience. The public often raise concerns, such as local flooding, and councillors are in a position to direct queries to relevant council services. Local elected representatives are in an ideal position to strengthen community resilience.

I hope that by using the principles and guidance within this strategy, all members of the NRF will be able to maximise the effectiveness of their own community resilience activities and ensure that all communities across Norfolk are better able to prepare, respond and recover from emergencies.

Simon Megicks

Assistant Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary  
Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) Chairperson (2018)



## Our Strategic Plan

### Why is this important?

Remember...

- Widespread flooding in Great Yarmouth 2007
- Pandemic Flu across Norfolk 2009
- 'Snowed in' in Norwich 2013
- Tidal surge impacts on Walcott, Hemsby and other coastal locations in 2013
- Fakenham fire closed the town centre in 2014

## To enable communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies, we will:

1. **Proactively engage** with community based activities which bring people together, increasing connectedness.
2. **Lead on capacity building initiatives** through creatively facilitating activities which identify, nurture and strengthen the skills and capabilities which exist in communities.
3. **Work with schools, community groups and other neighbourhood based organisations** creatively to develop campaigns and initiatives which raise awareness of emergency planning and preparedness.
4. **Collaborate with groups and community organisations** to develop locally driven activities, responding to locally identified priorities.
5. **Support the start-up and development** of 'community resilience' groups in a range of formats suiting each community.
6. **Develop a network** of place-based community resilience volunteers to represent communities across Norfolk.
7. **Share examples of successful work** and promote good practice of building resilience.
8. **Encourage partners, wider stakeholders and Councillors to collaborate** and adopt NRF community resilience principles,

**Communities with strong and vibrant social networks, where neighbours know one other and where friends offer support, are naturally resilient.**

In supporting communities to become better connected, the NRF will promote the use of social and community networks by demonstrating that through developing them, a community will become more resilient. By encouraging communities to go a little further to produce a community emergency plan, they can ensure that predictable support is offered during and after an incident is co-ordinated as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Connections through neighbourly friendships, interest clubs and sports teams, right through to people familiar with each other from the school run or from walking the dog, are all examples of established networks which can be used to help individuals through day to day challenges.

Importantly they can also be used to galvanise support when adversity strikes.

The leading 'Command and Control' approach to emergency management is appropriate for the official part of managing an emergency. In developing a Resilient Community, local 'connectors' in neighbourhoods can link into their street level networks whilst working in partnership with emergency responders, Voluntary and Faith sector organisations and statutory agencies to connect, build capacity, and work collaboratively from the outset.

**The NRF expects all members to be aware of and integrate community-based groups within their emergency planning.**



Who is this for?

This strategy is intended for all partners of the NRF and importantly for community-based groups, networks and organisations.

The strategy will guide the NRF on how to develop work with local communities to help them to become more resilient. Through understanding and using a shared strategy we will all be better able to increase Community Resilience across Norfolk.

## What is this for?

The purpose for this strategy is to create a shared way forward for Community Resilience work in Norfolk, by:

- Defining and illustrating the range of Community Resilience roles and activities for NRF bodies and organisations.
- Adopting a set of strategic objectives to inform and enhance Community Resilience.
- Establishing engagement principles and tools to enhance community resilience.
- Fostering stronger relations and partnerships between community leaders, community connectors, **links**, and emergency management practitioners within the NRF.
- Guiding and channelling future resilience thinking for Norfolk.
- Using a clear set of engagement principles.
- Clarifying the role of the NRF and its community resilience responsibilities.
- The development of principles, programmes and activity that specifically link with emergency planning, creating the opportunities for communities to influence emergency related outcomes.
- Enabling NRF members and communities throughout the County to develop and strengthen relationships, with a goal of working together to achieve mutually **beneficial** outcomes.
- Establishing good access to local information through two-way information flows, improving both message dissemination and the utilisation of local knowledge.
- Laying the groundwork for an effective and swift recovery after an emergency.

## Scope:

The NRF Community resilience strategy covers the county of Norfolk. Its main focus is on communities being better prepared, with a strong emphasis on generating social capital, to enable communities to become more resilient during emergencies.

## Benefits:

Having a community resilience strategy helps all of the NRF members, and communities working on resilience agendas across Norfolk, through:



# 3

How does a community make itself resilient to future emergencies?

To enhance community resilience, we must:

## Get connected

- Support activities that increase 'connectedness' and strengthen relationships, building social capital.
- Identify, discuss and share priorities. Then facilitate collective action to bring about solutions.
- Use Community Development approaches to enable local people to come together to bring about social change within communities.
- Ensure that work is underpinned by the values of social justice, equality and mutual respect, in line with the NRF Voluntary and Faith Group's ethical guidelines (see: [www.norfolkprepared.gov.uk](http://www.norfolkprepared.gov.uk)).



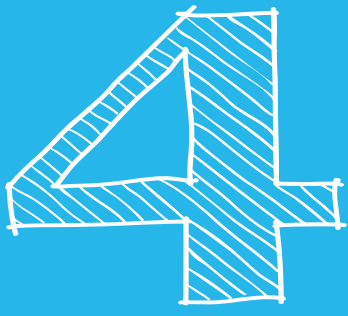
## Build capacity

- Everyone is good at something. Find out the 'who's and what's' through getting to know people via general community activities, and ensuring everyone's skills are used positively.
- Identify and strengthen skills, talents and capabilities amongst individuals and communities. It's amazing what people can do together.
- All of us want to feel in control of our lives. Recognise and respect the knowledge and resources within communities, supporting them to mobilise and act, when they need to.



## Work collaboratively

- Partner with communities to develop activities that build trust, encourage two way support, and bring about new and improved solutions for resilience.
- Facilitate collaboration by bringing a range of different people and communities together. This includes public service providers, voluntary and faith organisations, and communities working together, to incorporate a diverse spread of knowledge and expertise.
- The NRF member **organisations** will partner with communities and other stakeholders to improve social capital, which in turn will help to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency events.



Increasing  
community  
engagement

Members of the NRF aim to use a variety of approaches to interact with people, individually and collectively.

We know that people in communities have varied interests, priorities and resources. For this reason, the NRF aims to engage through conversation and action appropriate to these interests, priorities and resources. As a consequence, 'preparedness activity' will be varied, but proactive and meaningful.

Even if there is no obvious connection to traditional emergency planning, the very act of people coming together for a shared cause is enabling strengthening of the social fabric of the community.

“There is no  
power for  
change like a  
community  
discovering  
what it cares  
about”

Margaret Wheatley, author of *Turning to One Another*

# Engagement Principles:

The NRF will work with communities and stakeholders in a way that makes sure that trust and cooperation is built before, during and after an emergency event, ensuring that the opinions and priorities of communities are understood and considered as part of decision making processes.

The knowledge and expertise that exists in every community is extremely valuable for emergency planning. Ensuring community resources are utilised effectively for emergencies relies on genuine relationships being developed at the earliest opportunity, well before an emergency event.

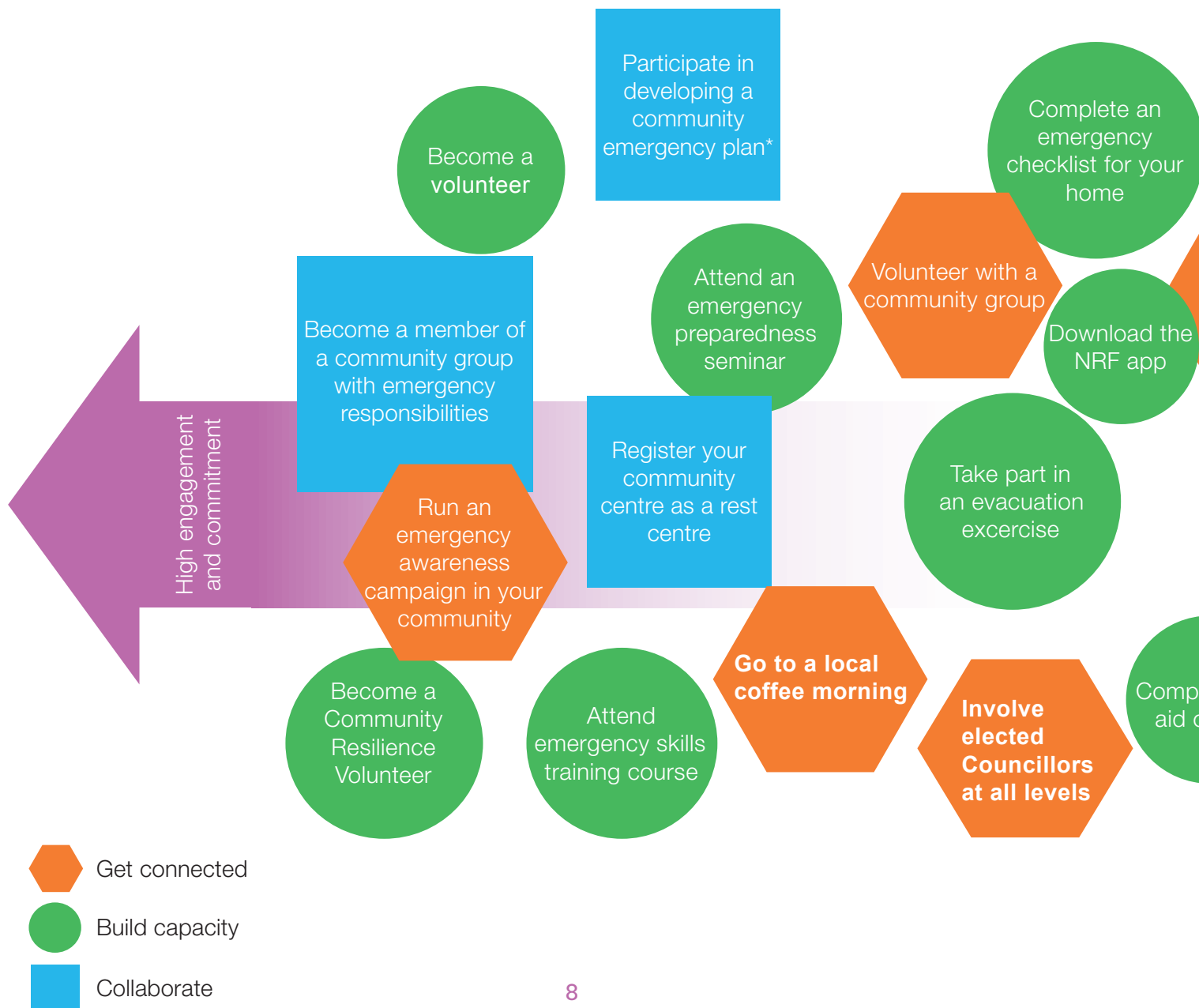
The engagement principles listed below are key to building strong, honest and effective partnerships.

- **Support local ideas**- Talk to people. Find out what a community cares about. Support action on those priorities before offering your own initiatives.
- **Encourage ownership**- Play a facilitative role, bringing people together to enhance resilience, whilst encouraging preparedness responsibilities on the individual, organisation and the community.
- **Make it meaningful**- Publicity and activities must make sense, be easy to adopt, and mean something to people.
- **Relationships matter**- It's social bonds that are the most effective in maintaining resilience during a crisis. Activity that strengthens relationships, and starts new ones, is key to building resilience.
- **Keep learning**- See what good work others are doing to build resilience. Utilise stories, knowledge and evidence to improve practice and effectiveness of NRF partner delivery.
- **Be creative**- Don't be afraid to innovate in working towards strategic objectives. Finding new approaches is likely to engage different people and produce a wider range of outcomes.
- **Find connectors**- Natural community 'connectors' know people and know what's going on. They exist in every community- from the shop assistant, to the pub landlord, to the parish clerk.
- Find them, get to know them, involve them.
- **Be inclusive and seek diversity**- Don't put all your eggs in one basket! The more diverse 'a system' is the more options it has to cope, adapt and develop. Diversity can therefore add to the capacity of a community.
- **Be transparent**- Always be clear on your intentions when working within communities.
- **Welcome people**- Doing something new can often be daunting. Be friendly, hospitable and make community gatherings enjoyable! We all prefer to have fun than not.
- **Do it together**- From issues, to ideas, to plans, to action. Work from the outset as a team with local resident groups, connectors, councillors, and organisations and your shared solutions will be stronger.
- **Act ethically**- Always act in a manner that reflects the NRF Voluntary and Faith Group's code of conduct.
- **Be reflective**- Try to take time to reflect on your action and activity. Building this into your practice helps uncover different and improved ways of working effectively with communities.
- **Be dynamic**- Community resilience is characterised by constant change, activity, progress. Add to this by bringing positivity, new ideas, and energy.
- **Appreciate skills and talents**- We can! Everyone is good at something and it's incredible to see how much a community can do when everyone contributes in some way.

## Levels of community engagement

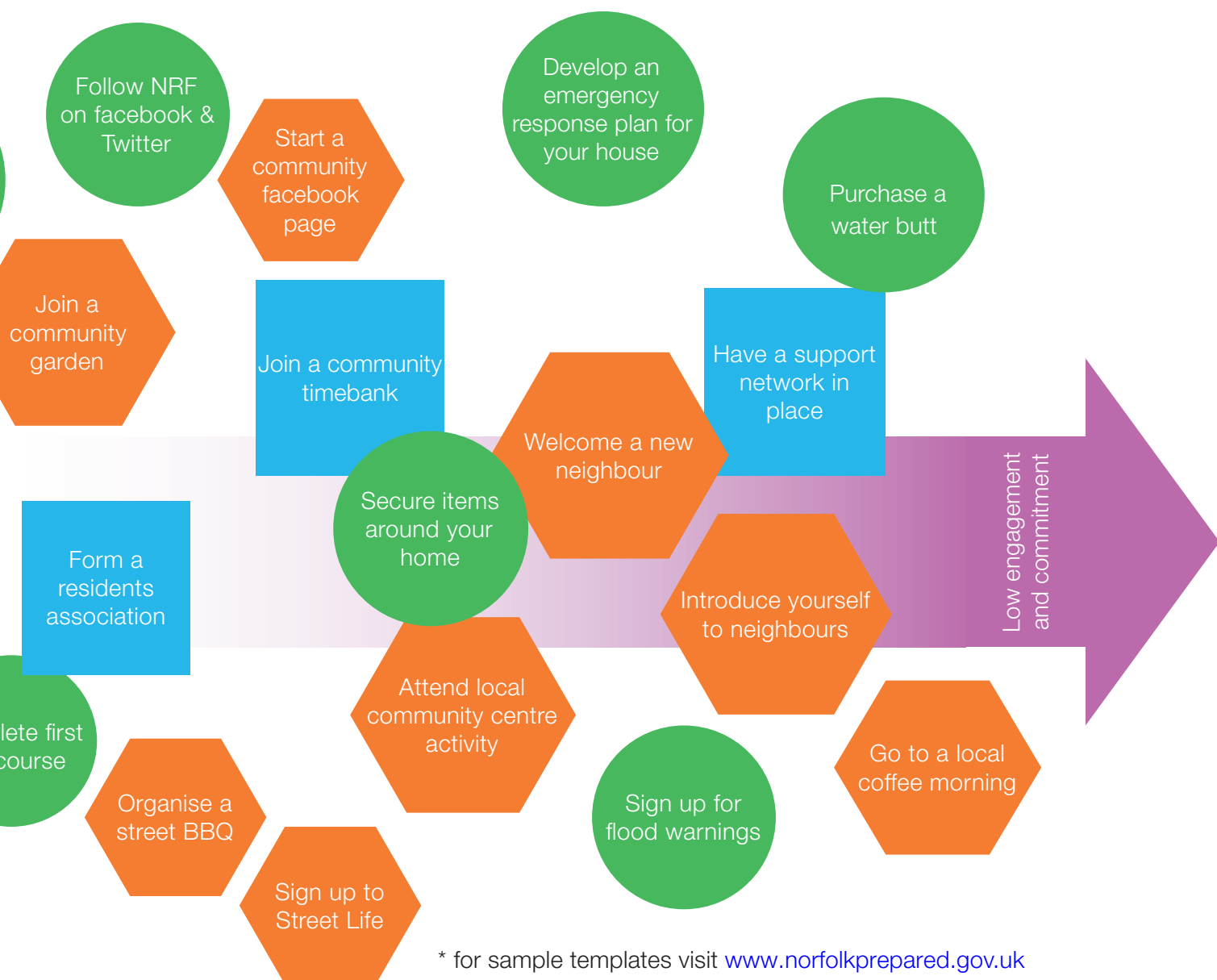
Some people will have a natural interest in emergency planning and actively take part in a community resilience group, or sign up to be a volunteer.

Others may just like to stay informed, and so may join a Facebook group, watch Twitter or register for text alerts.



And others may have so many other pressing priorities that they just don't feel they have the time to engage in emergency planning, although they may happily turn up to community fun days or coffee mornings for example, where they are likely to meet people, and build connections with people.

**It is therefore important that emergency management practitioners work with people in a wide range of ways.**



\* for sample templates visit [www.norfolkprepared.gov.uk](http://www.norfolkprepared.gov.uk)

## Understanding Community Resilience

### The Demos publication Resilient Nation defined resilience as:

“The capacity of an individual, community or system to adapt in order to sustain an acceptable level of function, structure, and identity.”

**There are many different definitions of ‘Community Resilience’, but this is okay. It is characterised by change, activity, and progress, owned by individuals and groups within society.**

It means that communities and individuals are able (and encouraged) to decide on what it means to them and what steps they may wish to take to become better able to identify issues, manage problems, and find solutions.

**“Resiliency is like a muscle...that must be developed in advance and consistently exercised [ to ] be both strong enough to withstand severe challenges and flexible enough to handle a wide range of unpredictable forces.”** - [www.globalresiliency.net](http://www.globalresiliency.net)

Communities and individuals are free to determine what an emergency means to them and may take steps which, for example, make them better equipped to detect house fires, protect their home from surface water flooding, or deal with sudden widespread illness.

**“The ability of a system or organisation to withstand and recover from adversity.”** - Sir Michael Pitt, 2007, reviewing flooding in England & Wales.

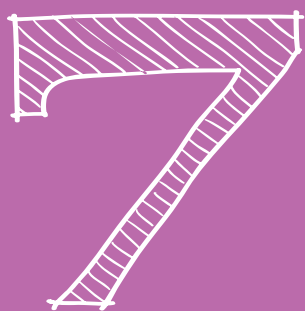
**Emergency Response and Recovery document published by the Cabinet Office, gives further guidance regarding how communities can assist during and an emergency event.**

“Communities can play a vital role in planning for, responding to, and recovering from, emergencies. Those individuals and communities who have spent time planning and preparing are often better able to cope, and recover, from national and local emergencies. Individuals and communities can provide resources, skills and expertise and will often have a good understanding of their geographical areas and of those people who may need extra support during an emergency. This can be very helpful for responding agencies. Communities can also provide links to pre-existing local networks that response agencies can use for the dissemination of information to the wider community.

(Emergency Response and Recovery, Version 5, October 2013: Section 3.4.30)

## Communities within Norfolk will be more resilient before, during and after an emergency event, if:

1. People feel a sense of place, pride and belonging in their community.
2. Communities are connected and work together for shared goals.
3. Individuals, groups and networks are engaged and empowered to make a difference.
4. Communities have clear channels of communication to link into physical and social assets and resources.
5. Individuals and communities have realistic expectations of the levels of support during an emergency event.
6. Communities take action to reduce the impact of hazards.
7. Communities have strong and trusting relationships with each other and all bodies within the NRF.
8. Private, public and community sectors are prepared to respond effectively and return to their core business quickly.



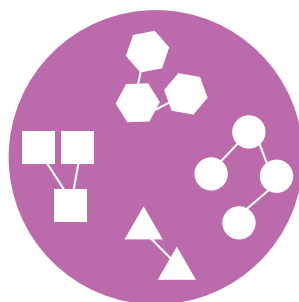
## Understanding Community Networks

The most successful communities are those with strong social bonds, connections and cohesion.

Human connections and social networks are extremely valuable for the formation of a healthy and strong community.

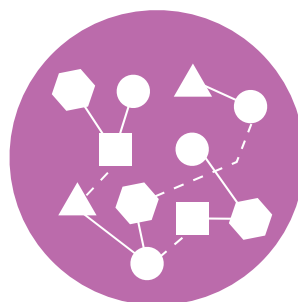
The familiarity, trust and reciprocity that come from connections and networks, help us to access physical and social resources every day, especially in an emergency. This is called 'Social Capital', illustrated below.

### Bonding (close ties)



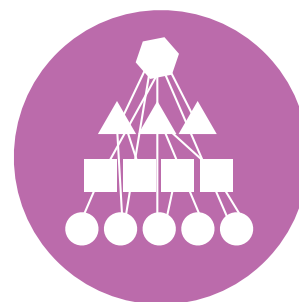
'Bonding' social capital refers to close relationships between people in similar circumstances, such as family, friends and close neighbours.

### Bridging (commonality)



'Bridging' social capital refers to looser relationships held between different groups who have shared interests, such as loose friendships and those in our wider social networks.

### Linking (wider interests)

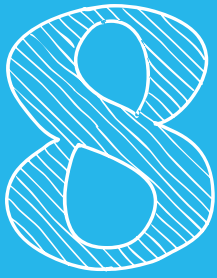


'Linking' social capital refers to hierarchical relationships between citizens and those in power, such as the local authority, **parish council**, or **community interest group** who can access, enable and provide resources.

**Social Capital** refers to resources that can be drawn upon via networks, connections and relationships based upon familiarity, trust and reciprocity.

A growing international movement has developed the practice and theory of social capital since 1970s, although the importance of social capital has only recently been recognised by practitioners within the Emergency Management sector.

High levels of social capital are one of the most important characteristics of a resilient community; therefore, building community resilience involves growing social capital within communities.



## Role of the Norfolk Resilience Forum

### The NRF aims to encourage and support Norfolk Communities to become more resilient to emergencies by:

- Providing a link to the emergency services and other responder agencies.
- Focussing on and developing existing relationships and networks within communities to enhance resilience.
- Assisting communities in assessing risks, producing plans and testing them via regular exercises.
- Building a support network of like minded communities.
- Raising awareness among emergency responders on how communities can help during an incident.

The primary role for members of the NRF is to facilitate opportunities that improve communities' ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency event. This can largely be achieved through working within the objectives of increasing connectedness, building capacity and collaborating.

**Get connected** - By supporting the development of strong and connected communities, social capital will be increased. This means that people will have better access to social and physical resources before, during and after an emergency. When traditional, non-emergency opportunities arise, the NRF members will play a supporting role by offering a hand, turning up and joining in. For example, supporting a general community group to form, enabling people to connect as a community via Facebook/Twitter or supporting a group to organise a street party.

All of these activities lead to increased and improved social capital. By forming positive relationships with a diverse group of individuals and organisations, the NRF members become the go-to people for emergency related info and advice, as well as a conduit to support a wide range of community building events.

**Build capacity and collaborate** - This could include; supporting community leaders to become Community Resilience (CR) volunteers, attending community events, facilitating training at community based workshops.

Individuals, and organisations, have competing priorities for their time and energy. In most cases, emergency planning does not rank highly on their list. Therefore, the NRF strategy does not expect everyone to be completely prepared for emergencies. Instead it supports small steps towards being better prepared. As individuals and groups become more connected and engaged, they will increase their social capital and strengthen their resilience. This process is similar to marketing strategies that offer a wide range of different products, which cater for different interests and budgets.

By supporting or facilitating an array of opportunities to connect and get involved, including those that are entirely community driven (and not necessarily appearing to be 'emergency planning' focussed), members of the NRF will engage with diverse interests, with different groups, at different levels, to build resilience.

By empowering groups to identify and decide on resilience solutions that suit them, greater ownership is achieved overall.

**Members of the NRF therefore recognise and support each person's level of interest as the right one for them. In turn the NRF members will aim to provide a wide range of ways to engage individuals and communities.**

**Across England there are 38 Local Resilience Forums (LRFs). The Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) is one of them.** Set up under the 'Civil Contingencies Act 2004', the **NRF is a multi-agency partnership.** Members, often referred to as Partners, include representatives from local public services, such as the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency and others. These agencies are known as Category 1 Responders.

The NRF is supported by organisations (known as Category 2 responders) such as the Highways Agency and public utility companies. They have a responsibility to co-operate with Category 1 organisations and to share relevant information with the NRF. The NRF also works with other partners in the armed forces, voluntary and faith sectors, and community sector who provide a valuable contribution in emergency preparedness work.





Who is part of the NRF? see [www.norfolkprerpared.gov.uk](http://www.norfolkprerpared.gov.uk)

# 9

## Activities in Norfolk

The following list comprises a range of activity undertaken across Norfolk which increases community resilience.

Examples were provided by NRF partners or community groups.

Norfolk Prepared week	A multi-agency promotional event including live exercises, roadshows and other activities held all around Norfolk. The week kicks off with a family fun day held in and around the Forum in Norwich with lots of emergency vehicles, stalls, live displays, music and games, to help raise community awareness of emergency preparedness.	
Crucial Crew	Multi-Agency emergency and safety awareness event for Year 6 School Children held at various locations around the County and co-ordinated by Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service. The fast paced event features 10 x 10 minute talks and activities ranging from how to stay safe online to how to get out of a burning house and how your family can be prepared for emergencies.	
Pre-Planned events, such as The Green Build	Many organisations hold pre-planned events where it may be possible to promote community resilience. The annual Green Build Festival organised by North Norfolk District Council is an example, where people are already engaged at the event about their homes, so they may be receptive to start thinking about wider personal and community resilience.	
Exercise Thor ..plus ..	Thor is a large scale live exercise held in Norwich at regular intervals, using differing scenarios, to test Control of Major Accident Hazard arrangements at site and demonstrating how commercial organisations play an important part in emergency response. Live and table top exercises are run periodically involving members of the NRF, including voluntary & faiths groups.	

The household flood defence DIY challenge	Using a community fete as the back drop, the Emergency Planning lead teamed up with the Community Development worker to run this creative activity. Aimed at young people and families, teams of residents were tasked with building the best DIY household flood defence capable of withstanding a flood- or in this case a jet of water, kindly provided by the local fire crews! A fun (and soggy) activity which got people thinking about protecting their homes from flooding.
Guiding and song	<p>A local resident, with a history of Girl Guiding and also involved in running a youth project, developed an activity where children danced and sang an 'emergency preparedness' song. They went on to perform in front of parents and neighbours at a local community event.</p> 
The Wave- are you prepared!	<p>Working with the local school, a community development worker employed through the voluntary sector ran activities to make blue streamers and a giant papier-mache 'boat' for a street parade. Children, dressed in blue, waved their streamers and sailed the boat down the street, simulating a human 'wave'. Blowing their whistles, handing out leaflets and chanting "Are you prepared?" Residents came to their doors to witness the parade, raising awareness of local flood risk.</p> 
NRF app	<p>Developed by the Norfolk team, the NRF app for Android and iOS is a quick and easy way to connect and gain emergency preparedness advice, live updates during an incident and an 'I'm Safe' feature for quickly contacting friends and family. The app has been so successful that it has been considered for use all over the country (see back page for more details).</p> 
Emergency Kit preparation game	<p>What do we pack in an emergency? Choose from a selection of 'emergency items' and pack a bag, against the clock! Some things are obvious, others less so (and watch out for a few red herrings!). An easy and fun activity, played in youth groups, schools and at community events.</p> 
Local hall activity	Church halls, Village Halls and community venues are often a hive of activity and a nucleus for community networks. We are working to ensure emergency planning colleagues engage with these venues, to meet, link, make connections, build capacity, and collaborate together on the things that matter most to communities. We are building valuable relationships with key 'connectors' in local communities.
2007 -10 years on Flood History	In 2017 on the 10th anniversary of the 2007 Norfolk flooding, mixed NRF teams on the east coast organised history displays, bringing those older residents who remembered the floods together with community groups and schools to reminisce, learn about how communities responded, recovered, and how communities today can prepare.

Home Watch	<p>Promoted by the police across the country Home Watch provides a way for local people to play an important part in making their communities safer and reducing crime.</p> <p>By being the 'eyes and ears' of a neighbourhood and protecting the most vulnerable members of the community, community safety is enhanced.</p> <p>Police work with groups to provide accurate information about risks, supporting victims, promoting a sense of security and a caring community.</p>	
Community resilience street sessions	<p>Great Yarmouth urban Community Resilience groups have, on many occasions set up a stall in the market place equipped with a variety of resilience related banners, leaflets, sample air-brick covers and flood maps.</p> <p>They engage passers-by in conversation and encourage residents to sign up to the Environment Agency's (EA) FloodLine so that they can receive automated warnings.</p> <p>Household preparation to cope with or prevent an incident interested locals and summer visitors are often attracted.</p> <p>Volunteers on one occasion talked to over 40 people.</p>	
University 'Community Resilience' internships	<p>In 2010 Great Yarmouth Borough Council joined forces with the School of international Development at the University of East Anglia to develop a work placement within the councils Communities team. This continues to be a great practical experience for students, translating theory into practice, and it bolsters the team's capacity to facilitate community resilience events, activities and campaigns with communities.</p>	
Resilience groups in action	<p>One very hot day a man started to weld his motorbike and set fire to his garage! The Fire Service set up an exclusion zone because of the danger of exploding gas cylinders. This meant moving people at a day centre and a residential home for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Resilience Officers organised an evacuation of the residents to a nearby pub. Local resilience group co-ordinators deployed within minutes to look after the people evacuated, supporting people with disabilities, entertaining children and even organising for melting shopping to be put in the pub fridge! The exclusion, thankfully, only lasted for four hours, but it was a great demonstration of the ability of volunteers to help out in emergency situations.</p>	

The Norfolk Resilience Forum aims to plan and prepare for emergencies. It works to identify potential risks and produce emergency plans to either prevent or mitigate the impact of incidents and emergencies across Norfolk.

“We work together to ensure that our approach to managing risks and emergencies is planned and coordinated.”

Have you downloaded the free Norfolk Prepared app yet?



## Acknowledgements

The key inspiration for this document has come from the WREMO team in Wellington New Zealand, providing us with a framework, structure and content. We thank them and encourage you to read their Community Resilience Strategy at: [www.getprepared.org.nz](http://www.getprepared.org.nz)

Produced by the NRF Community Resilience work stream.  
For more info on the NRF visit: [www.norfolkprepared.gov.uk](http://www.norfolkprepared.gov.uk)



**NORFOLK  
RESILIENCE FORUM**  
  
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