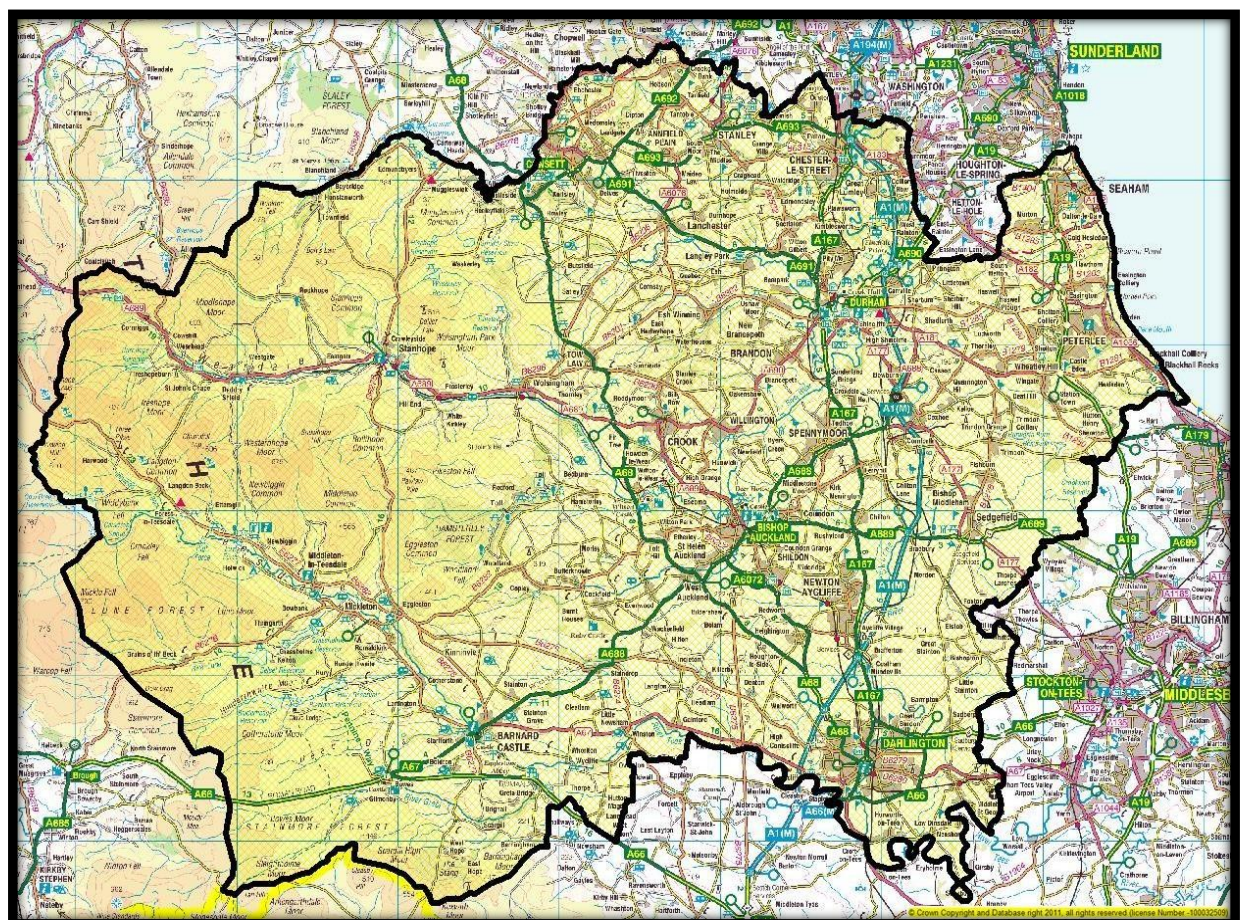




County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum

Annual Report 2012-2013



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Foreword by the Chair of County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum



This is the first Annual Report for the County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum and represents very comprehensively the progress that we have made over the last year. Since the founding of the Forum in 2005, after the enacting of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, partner organisations have always worked hard to develop our emergency capabilities but the restructuring and refocusing which we have gone through recently has been a seismic change.

It is appropriate that I pay tribute in this foreword to the fantastic work undertaken by everyone concerned and to express the fervent desire that we continue with this excellent progress. Partners rose magnificently to the challenge posed by the Olympic Torch Relay in 2012 which attracted huge public attention and interest and yet passed off safely and without incident. The extent to which it showcased County Durham and Darlington, not just in the rest of the country but around the world, should not be underestimated.

We face equal challenges later in 2013 when the tremendous Lumiere event returns to Durham City which in previous years has attracted huge numbers of people and whom we will work very hard to keep safe. Some of the risks for the coming year will be more mundane; who could have predicted the severity of the weather which we experienced at various stages in the summer and autumn of 2012 and yet by working together in a coordinated and confident way demonstrated a high level of professional competence.

The sheer range of the work undertaken over the course of the year is by any standards impressive and it is important that we communicate our efforts and successes not just within the Local Resilience Forum but also within the communities that we serve.



Mike Barton
Chief Constable and Chair of the Local Resilience Forum

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Introduction

The County Durham and Darlington Local Resilience Forum (LRF) came into existence in 2005 following the passing of the Civil Contingencies Act the previous year.

The range of work undertaken within the LRF has by any standards been impressive. As a result of the hard work of its members substantial progress has been made in areas as varied as community resilience, resilient telecommunications and mortuary capacity.



Figure 1 Exercise Briefing during COMAH exercise

Incidents during 2012-2013



Figure 2: Flooding at Tanfield Lea

The year has been dominated by severe weather events. The super cell which hit the north and west of the county on 29 July 2012 was almost unprecedented with volumes of rainfall over the space of 4-5 hours normally seen in a month or more. This was followed by a string of wide area severe weather events up to November of that year. The LRF and its partner agencies developed coordinated rapid response capabilities to engage effectively with some of the social problems which came as a result.

A particularly distressing incident in April 2012 was the search for Ian Thomas Bell from Sunnybrow in Willington which involved the deployment of police, fire and voluntary sector agencies along the River Wear for just less than eight days.



Figure 3: UK Civil Air Patrol, search for Ian Thomas Bell

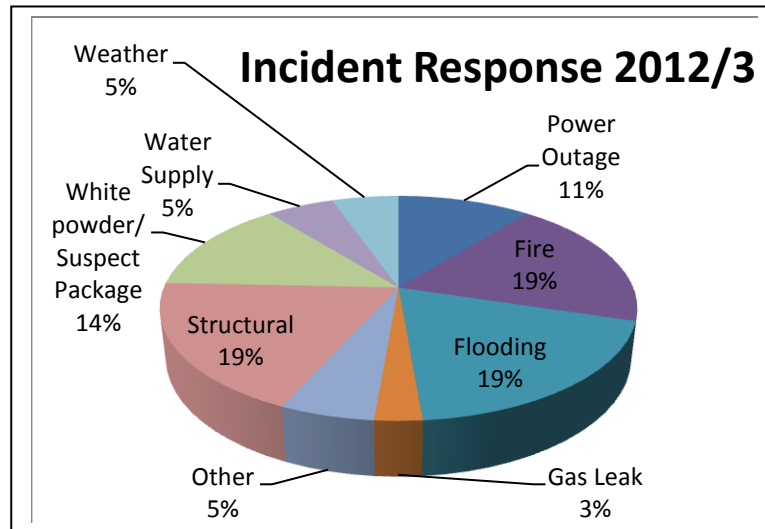


Figure 4: Incident at Darlington, September 2012

Regrettably accidents continue to occur sometimes in a fairly spectacular fashion.

An example of this was the explosion and fire in central Darlington in September 2012 which seriously injured one man, came close to demolishing the premises in which he was working and necessitated the closure of the main east coast rail link for some hours.

An indication of the variety of incidents which have arisen over the year is given in the figure below which represents the activations for the County Durham and Darlington Civil Contingencies Unit.



Conclusion

The work of the LRF over the course of the year has been fundamentally driven by risk. This can occasionally generate a slightly complicated picture because some situations embrace a variety of risk, weather being the classic example. The flooding in and around County Durham and Darlington in the latter half of 2012 not only impacted in our well know flood risk areas but also compromised roads and bridges which do not normally flood, curtailed the supply of utilities across large parts of the LRF area and threatened critical infrastructure.



Figure 5: Exercise Donnington, Durham Tees Valley Airport



Figure 6: Flooding in Durham City

The critical pre-planned event for 2012 was clearly the Olympics Torch Relay and the Evening Celebration Event in Durham City which absorbed a considerable amount of planning time over the year. The key thing for 2013 will be to take forward all of these lessons and best practice into high level public events such as Lumiere in November 2013.

Appendix 1

Standing Groups and Task & Finish Groups

Below is a summary of the work completed during the year:

Operational Resilience Group, Chaired by Superintendent Bill Dutton, Durham Constabulary

The Operational Resilience Group coordinates the joint working arrangements of the various agencies involved in emergency response. It ensures we are operationally ready for emergencies and have appropriate plans in place for likely scenarios. Over the last year such work has included preparing for fuel disruption caused by industrial action and mortuary arrangements for large scale disasters.



Figure 7: Fuel disruption

Public Information and Media Standing Group, Chaired by Roger Goodes, Durham County Council



Figure 8: Advice to the public

The Public Information and Media Group coordinates communication between the different organisations when planning and responding to emergencies. This includes use of the press, internet and social media.

The group also considers how we inform the public about how they can prepare for any potential future emergencies.

Risk Assessment Group, Chaired by Nick Springham, County Durham and Darlington NHS

This group leads on the management of the 56 community risks identified within the LRF Community Risk Register. The group also monitors national trends to assess and incorporate new emerging issues such as volcanic ash and space weather.

A useful guide summarising the top risks for residents and communities within County Durham and Darlington will be available shortly.



Figure 92: Severe Weather

Training and Exercising Group, Chaired by Alan Kernohan, County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service



Figure 3: Exercise Saltus, wildfire exercise

A huge amount of multi-agency training has taken place over the year including preparing for particular types of major incidents in the run up to the Olympics Torch Relay and, more generally, maintaining the competence of f key managers across the LRF to manage serious incidents as they arise.

The exercising agenda has also been very full with a variety of subjects covered including airport incidents, wildfire and reservoir inundation.



Figure 11 Exercise at Durham Tees Valley Airport, Friends and Family Centre

Community Resilience Task and Finish Group, Chaired by Chris Sivers, Darlington Borough Council



Figure 4: Flooding clean up, Lanchester

The aim of the group is to increase community resilience across County Durham and Darlington. This is about communities having the confidence, expertise and resources to help themselves in an emergency in a way that complements the work of the responding agencies such as the Police and Fire and Rescue service.

If you are interested in helping to develop resilience within your community please contact:

Bill Westland, Darlington Borough Council
 Tel: 01325 388552
 Email: bill.westland@darlington.gov.uk
 or
 Su Jordan, Durham County Council
 Tel: 03000 268055
 Email: su.jordan@durham.gov.uk



Figure 5: Community Flood Wardens, Hurworth

Severe Weather and Flooding Task & Finish Group, Chaired by Phil Welton, Environment Agency

The group meets regularly to discuss and review severe weather events and has recently produced a protocol which will assist agencies to respond quickly to all types of severe weather such as gales, storms, snowfall, rainfall, drought and heat wave. The group is also responsible for ensuring that the multi-agency flood plan is fit for purpose and provides a useful tool in the planning and response to severe weather incidents.



Figure 14: Flooding A66, Darlington

Telecommunications and Interoperability Task & Finish Group, Chaired by Lee D'Arcy, County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service

The group works to ensure that all forms of electronic communication between LRF members is effective and well-coordinated but also takes an operational remit when required including supporting the overall communications plan for the Olympic Torch Relay.

Voluntary Emergency Liaison Group, Chaired by Susan Williams, County Durham and Darlington Civil Contingences Unit

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting the delivery of public services, whether it is in the community, health service or in schools. In the case of civil protection, a wide range of voluntary organisations, both at the local and national level, play an important role in preparing for and responding to emergencies by supporting statutory agencies. The County Durham and Darlington Voluntary Emergency Liaison Group (VELG) was established to address the co-ordination of voluntary effort in response to and recovery from emergency events affecting the community within County Durham and/or Darlington.



Figure 16: Voluntary and Community Service

Any incident can overstretch the resources of the Emergency Services or the Local Authority and the value of additional support from the Voluntary Sector has been demonstrated on many occasions. Each of the organisations involved in the group are committed to providing the best possible support to the statutory

services and the people of County Durham and Darlington and ensure that appropriate plans and procedures are in place to coordinate its members in support of the Category 1 and 2 responders.

The Group consists of representatives from:

- British Red Cross – North East & Cumbria
- eVOLution (Darlington)
- Radio Amateurs Emergency Network (RAYNET) - North West Durham
- Rotary International Reaction/Resilience
- Samaritans
- Salvation Army
- St. John's Ambulance – North East & Cumbria
- UK Civil Air Patrol
- Teesdale and Weardale Search & Mountain Rescue
- WRVS - North East & Cumbria

Examples of work carried out by the group/ group members are:

- Production of the Voluntary Sector Guidance Document Version 1 Jan'13 which outlines the capabilities of those Voluntary Organisations who form the County Durham & Darlington Voluntary Emergency Liaison Group (VELG);
- Participation in an awareness event for International visitors from Kreis Wessel in Germany;
- Incident response in attendance @ Emergency Rest Centre(s), following evacuation of the public;
- Coordinated local authority recovery issues following major floods.



Figure 17: Members of the Community and Voluntary Sector

Members of VELG also take part in multi-agency training events, including table-top exercises; awareness sessions and full scale live exercises, sharing experiences & working-practice in order to engender a clear understanding of the roles & capabilities of all responders across the LRF area.

Appendix 2

List of organisations involved

Organisation
Durham Constabulary
Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service
NHS Foundation Trust (North East Ambulance Service)
NHS England
County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust
Durham County Council
Darlington Borough Council
Public Health England
Environment Agency
HM Coastguard
Northern Powergrid
Northern Gas Network
Northumbrian Water
Highways Agency
Transport Operators i.e. Durham Tees Valley Airport and Port of Seaham
Railway Operators including Network Rail
Highways Agency
Health & Safety Executive
Clinical Commissioning Groups
Telephone Service Providers (fixed and mobile)
Met Office
Department of Communities and Local Government (Resilience Emergency Division)
Military