

HORAM PARISH COUNCIL

EMERGENCY PLANNING ADVICE

June 2015

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INTRODUCTION

It always pays to be prepared for a response to events that are often beyond our control. We may not be able to avoid emergencies or difficult situations that confront individuals, families and households, communities and the Country as a whole.

However, the effects of adverse weather conditions, pandemics, failure in utilities, local difficulties, transport or communication problems, emergencies caused by nature or people, accidents and conflict can be moderated or ameliorated.

This concise booklet has not been designed as a "survival" guide but is presented for consideration as an aid in forward planning to reduce the impact of emergency situations- however you define them.

This booklet is for guidance only and is not a definitive guide in pre or post emergency or trauma scenarios.

Given the fact that difficult situations or emergencies do occur and will happen in the near and distant future- one piece of guidance is to follow the advice of the specialist "blue light" services (fire, police, coastguard, ambulance and bomb disposal) or directives from local and/or central government. Of course if other services become involved- the military or specialist veterinary departments or the environment agency or NBC staff you may have to follow their guidance or instructions.

Some people say it will never happen- let us all hope so. However, we know statistically, for example, we are due for a world wide influenza epidemic and there is now an

increased threat of terrorist activity in the western world.

We are a small population and, to a degree, need to be self reliant and community conscious. Of course most difficulties can be addressed by the application of common sense and considered thought.

The following is intended as a guide only and is not a definitive "how to" booklet.

The guidance is divided into short sections that provide generic advice that you may need to evaluate in the light of your own circumstances. The sections concern food/water, communication/information, utilities, medication/first aid, entertainments, security and "other matters".

There is no formal control centre in the HPC conurbation.

However, in the event of the defined need for such a centre Horam Chapel has kindly offered the use of its hall as a central focus point for the community.

FOOD/WATER

It seems obvious to have a store of food in reserve, as we do now for convenience and for the unexpected demand or occasion.

In some parts of Europe it is a requirement to have up to three months stock of food. Some religious groups and communities in America demand six months reserves.

We suggest that you have *at least* a two week (14 days) supply of food stores in reserve to your normal use.

If you think about it you may have this level already. This could be in the form of tinned goods, dry products, frozen produce, fridge food, garden fresh items, freeze dried and bottled.

Examples for consideration could include:

- Tinned goods- meats, fish, pies, vegetables, fruit, cream and milk, sauces and soup;
- Dry products- pasta, rice, sugar, biscuits, flour and bread based mixes, tea/coffee, herbs, soup and sauces, milk, condiments and cereals;
- Frozen produce- almost anything including meat/fish, dairy products, vegetables and bread;
- Fridge food- almost anything, not forgetting to keep watch on the use by date;
- Garden fresh- vegetables, herbs, eggs, etc;
- Freeze dried or dehydrated foods- packet soups, potatoes, camping rations, etc; and,
- Bottled- soup, honey, sauces, fruit, jams and preserves, pickled goods, drinks.

All food items should be rotated by date to ensure that they are fit for consumption and nutritionally viable. Obviously if there were problems with power (electricity) food items in fridges and freezers must be used as a matter of some urgency. However, a freezer should keep food items in good condition for about 72 to 96 hours before cooking, use or consumption.

Some foods are best cooked from frozen others require a thawing out period- so it is possible to plan a phased food preparation and cooking regime.

Also it is possible to give, trade or swap items with others.

We all require water for drinking and cooking purposes. It is recommended that an adult should consume at least 3 litres of water a day. Therefore we suggest that this amount of liquid is held in reserve for each individual in the household for a period of at least three days. You do not need to buy expensive bottled water. Used plastic clean bottles can be filled from the tap and stored in a fridge where they can be replenished on a rotational basis and, as a by product, provide cold water for regular day to day drinking. Water in itself may become a monotonous drink especially for younger members of the community. So some bottled squashes may prove useful.

Spirits, beer and wine may improve morale at difficult times but should be consumed in moderation so not as to cloud judgement and analysis.

Water not required for drinking or consumption purposes can be stored in other containers- saucepans, jars, plastic "jerry" cans and for large domestic use a bath could be utilised.

COMMUNICATION and INFORMATION

Information, communications and knowledge of events can be a source of reassurance, power and security. It is also an aid to planning and decision making.

In our technologically based world we have many forms and ways to access information (and entertainment).

However, in emergency situations these can often be interrupted or reduced in quality and content.

In past difficult situations the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has merged TV and radio stations to maximise coverage and information combining news items with various forms of light entertainment and guidance. Radio in its various forms of FM (Frequency Modulation), LW (Long Wave), MW (Medium Wave) and DAB (Digital Audio Band) all have their role to play in communication and information. A list of stations is presented for consideration that can be readily received in the HPC conurbation (and beyond).

FM (Frequency Modulation in MHz)

<u>Station</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Output Content</u>
BBC Radio 4	93.5	News/Politics/Light Entertainment/Plays
BBC Southern Counties Radio	104.5	Local News/Travel/Talk and "phone ins"
BBC Radio 2	89.1	Light Music
BBC Radio 3	91.3	Classical Music/The Arts/Plays
Classic FM	100.9	Classical Music
Heart	102.4/103.5	Pop Music/Travel
Sovereign	107.5	Pop Music/Travel

LW (Long Wave in kHz)

BBC Radio 4	198	News/Politics/Light Entertainment/Plays
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MW (Medium Wave in kHz)

BBC Radio 5 Live	693	News, Current Affairs, Phone Ins and Sport.
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DAB (Digital Audio Band)

In the HPC conurbation the following stations can be located using the electronic tuner that most DAB radios enjoy:

- BBC Radio 1 Pop and Contemporary Music
- BBC Radio 2 Light Music
- BBC Radio 3 Classical Music, the Arts and Plays
- BBC Radio 4 News, politics, light entertainment and plays.
- BBC Radio 5 Live News, Current Affairs, Phone-ins and Sport.
- BBC Radio 5 Sports Extra Live Sport Events
- BBC 6 Music Contemporary and World Music
- BBC 4 Extra Comedies, Quizzes, Light Entertainment, Stories and Plays.
- Parliament Politics, Debates and Analysis.
- BBC Asian Network Programmes Dedicated to the Asian Community.

- BBC Radio 1Xtra Contemporary and Dance Music
- BBC World Service News, Politics, Finance and Health Matters.
- BBC Radio Kent Kent Local Radio.
- BBC Sussex Sussex Local Radio.
- Capital Gold Pop and MOR Music.
- Chill Gentle Music.
- Classic FM Classical Music.
- Passion Pop
- Planet Rock Rock and Heavy Music.
- Gold (Kent) Music for Kent.
- Invicta (Kent) Music for Kent.

Freeview TV and Freesat offer a number of additional radio channels.

Some radios have the facility for SW (Short Wave) reception. This is now quite a specialised reception method allowing the listener to access many overseas stations. SW also provides the opportunity to listen to some emergency services, air and shipping frequencies and SW broadcasting enthusiasts in conversation.

The use of a "copper wire" aerial extension can enhance reception.

Some portable radios can be solar and "wind up" powered as well as battery.

TV via terrestrial, cable, internet and satellite sources offer the opportunity for accessing information, news, guidance and entertainment at a time of need.

Do not forget Freeview TV for Parliament (131), BBC News (130), Sky News (132), Al Jazeera Eng (133) and Russia Today (135).

For Children we have:

Milkshake! On 5;

CBeebies (121);

CBBC (120);

CITV (122) and,

Tiny Pop (126).

For Films we have:

Film 4 (15);

Movie Mix (32) and,

Movies 4 Men (48).

Some computers with the aid of an attachment allow for TV reception. Of course this may prove difficult without independent power supplies if electricity failed for example.

Telephones offer a ready means of communication especially now that most homes benefit from mobile phones as well as land lines. It would pay dividends if phones were fully charged and if pre-pay is a chosen method then there should be a reasonable credit available.

It is possible that some national governmental directives may be disseminated by text or recorded messages.

Do not forget the limited number of pay phones that we have in the area.

Newspapers offer a delayed form of information and one would hope that many would continue to print.

However, at times of emergency it is possible that print runs, circulation and distribution might be limited. It is possible that newspapers produced by individual publishing houses will merge some or all of their titles.

"Word of mouth" and news sheets may be a limited form of communication in the event of significant decline of information. Information received by "word of mouth" may need to be treated with caution as the "Chinese whispers" phenomena could exert an influence.

HPC will attempt to get information out to the community via notice boards, local radio (BBC Sussex and Heart), "word of mouth" and at our "emergency centres" (should they need to open), Horam Centre answer machine and horam.com (our own web site).

We would wish to add that in the event of information or news from any sector that residents should apply common sense, consideration and judgement to their situation. After reflection come to a conclusion on the correct course of action for yourselves and others in the community.

Co-operation, collaboration, community spirit and determined resolve should see us all through most difficulties and challenges.

UTILITIES

For this exercise utilities are seen as power (electricity), water, gas, sewage and petrol/diesel.

Electricity is fundamental in all homes and its loss would prove problematic and challenging. In the very short term it could be an adventure and fun (especially for children). But for more than a few hours there are implications for cooking, heating, light, the storage of some foods, medical wellbeing and, in some circumstances, communication and security.

If you cook on gas (mains or bottled) this may be an advantage. Bear in mind that you may need a reserve bottle of gas for your cooker or central heating.

If you cook by electricity you will need to seek alternative sources of heat- use a neighbour's facilities, use a camping stove, cook simple foods safely on an open fire, use a BBQ or chimenea or eat cold foods such as sandwiches or salads. Even if you heat your home by gas, oil or coal/wood central heating you still need a pump to circulate it around the home.

If you are fortunate to have a generator make sure it is regularly serviced and operate according to manufacturers instructions and in a WELL ventilated area with the fuel safely stored.

Batteries of all types should be readily available for radios, torches, shavers, computer games, portable CD and DVD players, some medical equipment, personal hi-fis and some basic power tools.

Car batteries can be used for some domestic applications but you need to know how they operate.

Batteries of a rechargeable type need to be powered on a regular basis- this includes mobile phones.

Light is another issue. Candles should be used with caution and placed on a stable base (large dinner plate or in a large jar) or in a specifically designed candle holder.

Gas camping type lights are effective and provide some heat. Remember to have a small reserve of gas canisters to hand- stored safely.

Battery torches and lamps provide adequate light and are safe and can be fun for young children if they make "camps" under tables with blanket walls.

Water has been discussed earlier but it is worth restating having a supply of drinking water and water for other uses (washing, flushing toilets and cooking- where water is boiled) would be beneficial. Do not forget water in butts outside. These can be used for other purposes such as flushing toilets via a bucket. If water access is a major issue and you are fortunate to have two toilets you may wish to designate their use. Also the Australian phrase may be helpful if there is a water shortage- "if it's yellow let it mellow, if it's brown flush it down" might be applicable.

Petrol and diesel might be in short or limited supply.

Again we are not suggesting that you have a store or stockpile goods. However, it is always worth having your car reasonably full of fuel if you need to travel across country- especially at night.

Also if you cook by or use oil as a resource then do not leave it until there is a problem before you fill up the

tank- cost may be an issue but if it is basic requirement in your home then the debate may be already resolved. If major problems arise with utilities and services you may wish to consider changing aspects of your life for a short time. You might move into the living room for heat, sleeping and eating because of a lack of some services. Indeed a few people may choose to join resources, accommodation and skills for their collective benefit- this is to be encouraged and applauded for various reasons.

MEDICATION/FIRST AID

All houses should have a basic first aid kit including antiseptic and additional common medication such as aspirin, paracetamol, lotions and other treatments. Also if anyone has to take regular medication it is worth ensuring that prescriptions are up to date and not due in a day or two's time. We are not suggesting stockpiling of pills and potions. We are, however, suggesting that if there was a problem over delivery or availability of medication a delay of a few days would not place anyone in jeopardy.

Further important treatments of a preventative nature should not be placed at risk due to lack of planning- contraception, thyroid/heart/blood pressure treatments, medication for epilepsy and neurological conditions, mental health regimes and diabetes routines should continue without interruption.

A good book on first aid, basic medical conditions and treatment may prove beneficial.

ENTERTAINMENTS

A major concern when basic needs and security have been resolved is often what to do to entertain or constructively occupy the individual or group especially at a time when technology and, by implication, electrical items appear to dominate our collective lives.

This could be a time to rediscover book reading and story telling. Talking to each other and discussing matters of common interest including planning for events. Listening to the radio- music, plays, politics/news, comedies, current affairs and stories may provide amusement. Playing board games, cards and other entertainments could help pass the time and raise spirits.

SECURITY

We are a relatively safe and secure area. However at times of stress and anxiety some people will take advantage of difficult situations.

Be secure, be vigilant, be observant, be supportive, be helpful and be confident that the vast majority of people will help at a time of joint crisis.

Dr Len Parkyn
Emergency Officer
20th January 2019

OTHER MATTERS

Obviously at times of emergency or difficult community situations we must all pull and work together for the collective benefit of us all. Communication, collaboration, compassion and co-ordination should see us through most difficulties.

In our immediate area we have cooked food outlets (pubs and cafes). We have very local food outlets in the area in shops, farm shops and the garage- it could be legitimately argued now- "use them or lose them" and local farm outlets.

Papers and news can be got locally. The post office has always been a two way communication source.

We can get bottled gas supplies locally in Horam and Heathfield.

We as individuals, families and communities need to think ahead of difficulties so that our lack of planning does not become someone else's emergency.

We cannot and should not forget the spiritual needs of the community. We are well served by various churches in the immediate area of all denominations.

The welfare and wellbeing of our community is paramount.

If we can support the individual, the family or group, the wider area and others at a time of need, difficulty, challenge or conflict then we can be justifiably proud of where we live and what we stand for.

Credit cards and cheques may for a short time carry limited validity. It may be prudent to have some cash at home or other negotiable commodities.

Keep your private documentation secure and accessible to you if need arises.

YOUR OWN NOTES OF JOBS TO DO OR THINK ABOUT

- To get in

- To plan for

- To consider

- To buy in

- How can I help in the event of a problem?

- Do I have skills or abilities to assist others as I would like them to assist me?

Finally, remember the words of John F Kennedy when he said "do not ask what my country can do for me; ask what I can do for my country".

~END~

To be reviewed in September 2020

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