

MVDC Resilience Meeting

Representatives of Residents Associations and Parish Councils were invited to attend a presentation at Pippbrook on Emergency Planning.

Contingency planning for emergencies such as Fire, or Flood, requiring the evacuation of residents from their homes, necessitates the importance of knowledge of the location of vulnerable residents and possible available sites/buildings for temporary relocation of those who have had to leave their homes. Major reliance is put on the availability of records from the Community alarm base, but it is recognised that not all vulnerable adults use the Council operated provision. It is suggested that Residents Associations and Parish Councils should set up their emergency contact groups which would involve a team/sub group to research organisations and keep vulnerable resident records. A number of 'how to' documents have been received, together with details of SCC, MVDC plans and details of flood areas. Leatherhead is an area of high risk for flooding.

Small residential estates often have their own residents associations, Neighbourhood Watch areas have representatives who know their own local residents, but there are many areas which are not covered by such knowledge.

In matters concerning health emergencies, where there may be delays in ambulance response to cardiac arrest, it is useful for community organisations to be aware of the location of the nearest defibrillator. Clubhouse is currently undertaking this research.

Basically MVDC would welcome any initiative from Residents Associations or Parish Councils to advise them of any organisations who would have knowledge of vulnerable adults, who would need support in an emergency situation, by setting up our own resilience plan. With a community as large as the area covered by Leatherhead North and South, I would think that at best the Residents Association could keep a record of representatives of voluntary organisations such as The Swans, Rotary, Round Table, Voluntary Car Schemes, North Mole Valley Age Concern, The Conservatory Club and Carers Organisations, who would have records of local residents whom they support.

Arising from the CPRE meeting on the subject of Localism and the research involved in setting up a Neighbourhood Plan, it would seem that working from the bottom upwards necessitates almost a total survey of residents. But first comes the requirement of establishing whether or not this is justified by NEED. Should there be a severe drought this summer we have a prospective contingency of the need to provide water by volunteers from stand pipes to the housebound. Can one guarantee that residents will be concerned about anyone but themselves, or will they care about their neighbours?

I am assuming that the first responsibility lies with the council, secondly the emergency services, fire, ambulance and police., and in the event of drought, the water authority. My initial response is to raise the subject at our local police panel meeting, before taking this matter further.

Food for thought - action, discussion ?

Hilary Porter 25.3.12

