

The guide for communities



EMERGENCY LIAISON POINT

Community Emergency Liaison Points (ELPs) provide a place for communities to come together during emergencies and major disruptions. Events such as evacuation from the home, flooding, severe weather, power outages or cyber incidents can have widespread impacts on daily life. While emergency services and local authorities focus on the most urgent incidents, communities are often the first source of support. ELPs enable local people to share information, coordinate assistance, and use local skills and resources to help one another while maintaining links with the council and emergency responders.

About this guide

This guide provides information to help you set up and run your Emergency Liaison Point (ELP). Take the time you need to set up the ELP properly. You do not have to open until you are ready. Your safety is the priority. If you cannot do something safely, do not do it. **Always phone 999 when situations are life-threatening.** Although in an ideal world everyone would read the whole guide, and be trained in the main roles, it is designed that you can easily skip to the part that is pertinent to you or your community.



A safety briefing is included in the kit along with this guide to help you get started.



Where a community has gone through a Community Emergency Response Planning Process, there is more detail about how to respond to local incidents with the local resources available. In communities that have not yet been through this process, there are questions which may assist you in finding solutions.



Adapt the ideas in this guide to suit the emergency and the facility.

Look out for these symbols within the guide:



Useful advice or information



Important information



Considerations for people with disabilities



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Safety briefing for all volunteers

Help keep everybody safe by reading this safety briefing first

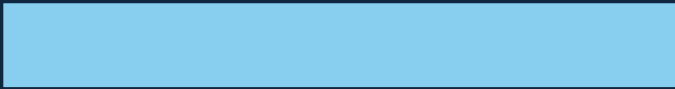
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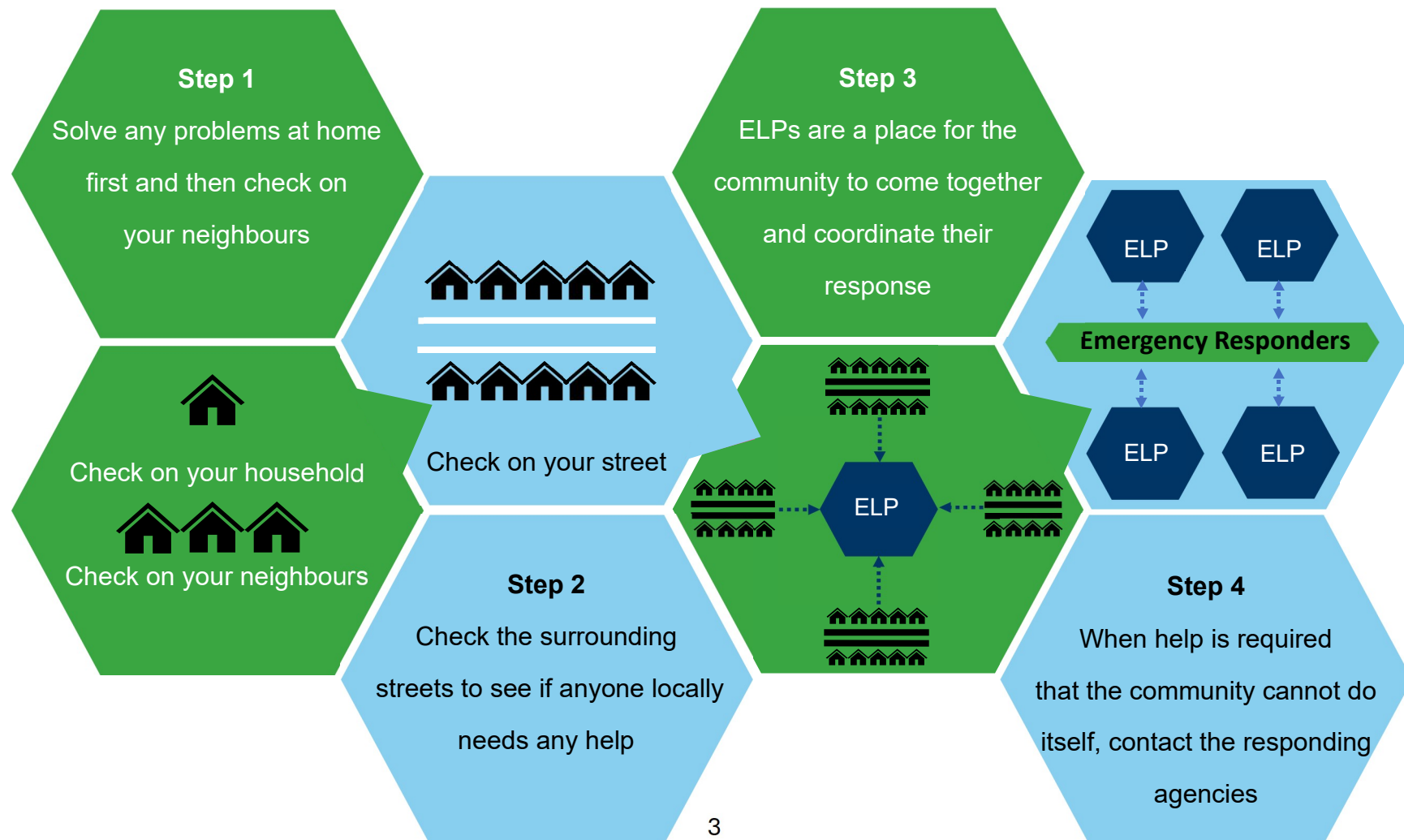
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Introduction to Emergency Liaison Points (ELPs)

Disruptions have invasive and far-reaching impacts whether they arise from floods, storms, cyber-attack, or other events. Disruptions will disturb your normal living conditions, expose fragilities in your community, and can cause widespread impacts and suffering. The local council and emergency services aren't the only ones who respond to a disruption. Communities have many of the skills and resources needed to solve problems and help each other. ELPs are a way for local people to work together to solve problems, while still co-ordinating with the local council and emergency services about big problems.





Objectives of the Emergency Liaison Point

The ELP is a place for your community to coordinate its efforts to help each other during an incident.

The main objectives are:

- Provide a template for your community to support during an emergency.
- Help address local challenges during emergencies using available community skills, knowledge and resources.
- Provide a safe, trusted and accessible gathering place for members of the community to support one another.
- Provide a geographic location for information sharing between community members and the responding agencies.

*i*nformation about the wider response

Responding agencies (including the Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Environment Agency, Utilities, NHS, and Local Authorities) are likely to be very busy during a large-scale incident and will therefore need to priorities their response and may not be able to respond to every highlighted issue. Despite this, it is vital that all **emergency situations are continued to be called into 999**

- Each ELP venue should maintain a Grab Box which includes some basic equipment as suggested in section 1
- Some ELPs will have additional equipment, this may include items such as power banks, generators and radio setup.
- Some other community groups may also activate in an incident; it's important that the ELPs work alongside these groups as much as possible.
- People volunteering in the ELP have no legal powers and cannot force anyone to do anything.

1

Set up an
Emergency Liaison
Point

Identifying an appropriate facility for your Emergency Liaison Point

When identifying a facility, consider:

Facilities that are already used and known by the local community (e.g. Community centres, Village Hall, Pavillion)

To make ELPs as flexible as possible, there is no pre-defined list of criteria. However, we would expect that all ELPs have at least:

- An enclosed structure (building)
- Disabled access
- Toilets
- Running water
- Tables and chairs
- A kitchen or drink making facilities
- Heating



Some ELPs might have extra amenities such as:

Shower area; Books/Board games, Catering facilities

Locate your ELPs grab box Suggested items required:

- High vis vests
- Role cards on lanyard
- Radio (wind up receivers)
- First aid kit
- Foil blankets
- Light sticks



- Wind up torches
- Megaphone/whistle
- Signage/posters
- Map of the community
- Stationery
- Copy of this guide



Additional items to consider:

Power banks, LED Lighting, Generator, Radio setup

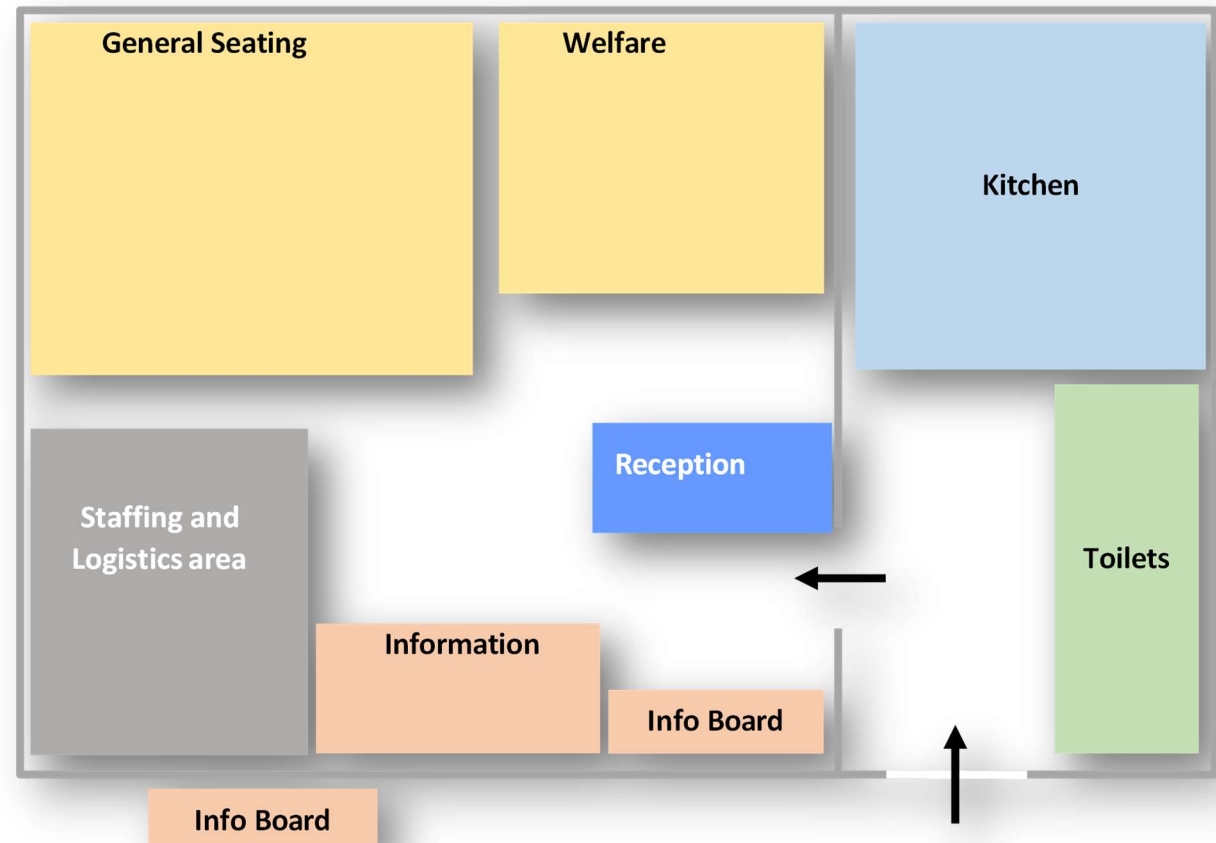
Consider:

- Access to the building. To be predetermined. Does it have a key box, contact number for keyholders? We ask all ELPs to have an easily identifiable method of activation.
- ♿ Accessible to all, free from trips and hazards, keep walkways clear and consider those with mobility and visual difficulties. Ensure the ELP is clean and tidy before opening, move any furniture or tables that are obstructive and ensure all walkways are clear.
- Some ELPs might be more than one room. It's important you identify the most appropriate space to use, ideally with disabled access, some segregation between areas and easy access to facilities.

Example of how you might choose to set up an ELP. This is only an example and it is up to decide how to layout your section:



It is a good idea to include a drawing of your layout, along with location map at the back of this guide.



2

Safety briefing for
all volunteers

Safety is the number 1 priority

It's a good idea to print and laminate this Safety Briefing to be read by all volunteers or read to them. It reminds them that:

! If you cannot do something safely, do not do it. If a situation is life threatening, phone 999

1. Before doing anything:

Assess the risk of an activity:

- Decide what you can do safely.
- Check you have the kit and ability to work safely.
- Find others to work with to avoid working alone.

2. As you work:

Stay alert to life-threatening situations:

- Do not put yourself in danger so only help if you can stay safe.
- Tell others to stay away from the hazards.
- Report new dangers and accidents, immediately, to a supervisor.
- Report near misses to a supervisor

3. Safeguard vulnerable persons:

Safeguarding is to ensure the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and their protection from harm.

- Ensure at least two people are with the vulnerable person, where possible, to protect their safety.
- Ensure you understand their individual needs and act appropriately.

4. Always:

Take care of yourself and others:

- Attend to your own needs first.
- Ask others how they are feeling.
- Consider taking a break, changing roles, or going home.



5. Remember:

Media are an important part of any incident and will be managed by the statutory responding agencies. However, there may be interest in the activities of the Emergency Liaison Point (ELP) To protect the privacy and wellbeing of those using the ELP, media representatives should not be permitted to enter the facility.

Please be aware that you should not share:



- Any personal information or details about your community (Individuals may choose to share their personal information with the media).
- Address or contact information of the community.
- Details of deaths or injuries.
- Details on people's homes.
- Consent will also need to be given from any community members or volunteers who have their photo or video taken



You may only share:



- Anything the media can see (as if they were a member of the public).
- General Information (it's busy, it's quiet, we've had lots of offers of assistance)
- Information you have received from the emergency responders.



3

Activities an
Emergency Liaison
Point can deliver

Check the Community Emergency Plan

Your community may have prepared a Community Emergency Plan. You can check that plan for initial information on local assets to address local problems. This may help you to identify places/spaces, local groups, youth groups, clubs and networks, services, and infrastructure in the community where you can target your efforts.



The purpose of the Emergency Liaison Point is to provide a safe, trusted, welcoming, and supportive place for residents to gather, support one another, access information, and receive assistance at times of a community-based incident.

Its functions may include:

- Gathering and reporting information on community impacts, unmet needs, and emerging issues.
- Sharing official information, advice, and public safety messages from responding agencies.
- Signposting residents to relevant services, support, and assistance.
- Recording requests for assistance and escalating urgent concerns to the appropriate agencies.
- Coordinating local volunteers.
- Reporting life-threatening emergencies to 999 immediately.
- Helping keep people safe by discouraging access to hazardous areas.
- Acting as a link between the community, local authorities, and emergency services.
- Offering reassurance and basic aid.

4

Work as a team

Bring everyone together

Before setting up with tables and noticeboards, gather all volunteers together to chat through the safety brief and discuss activities.

The ELP will be staffed primarily by members of the community and should be organised in a way that best meets local needs. We recommend that each ELP includes the following key roles:

- Supervisor/Coordinator
- Reception Officer
- Welfare and Support Officer
- Information and Communications Lead
- Facilities Officer

The ELP is a community asset and will only succeed through teamwork. While these suggested roles provide a useful framework, your community is free to adapt them as required.

Roles should be assigned based on who is available and their skills at the time of an incident, rather than being permanently allocated to specific individuals. This ensures the right people are carrying out the right tasks, even when some volunteers are unavailable. Everyone has their own skills and abilities and can make a valuable contribution to the group.

You may find it easiest to appoint an ELP Supervisor/Coordinator as the first action. This might help initially with organising the rest of the team. Having a ELP Supervisor/Coordinator will also ensure that the group concentrate on the whole task at hand from the very beginning. As you start to organise the overall team you might find it's appropriate to change the person in the role.

Major decisions should be made together by role holders.

Some volunteers may take more than one role.

Print and laminate the role cards overleaf.



Make sure everyone knows who the ELP Supervisor/Coordinator is and that all role holders wear lanyards so they are easily identifiable.



While the community will greatly value the contribution of all volunteers, please remember that volunteers have no legal powers in their work. So, they cannot take resources from anyone, or force anyone to do anything because all the usual laws still apply in a disruption.

ELP Supervisor/Coordinator - stands up the ELP and oversees the running of the site.



Key Actions:

- Opening and closing of the ELP.
- Oversee and coordinate all ELP activities, keeping an action and decision log.
- Brief and assign roles based on available volunteers.
- Ensure ELP remains within remit.
- Liaise with and keep authorities updated.
- Escalate and/or action any issues.
- Ensure welfare of volunteers. Plan breaks.
- Debrief and/or handover to Local Authority at stand down.

Remember:



Supervisors/coordinators don't do everything;



Keep it simple;



Ensure volunteers take breaks.

Supervisor/coordinator Role – Summary

- The role is responsible for the overall coordination and effective operation of the Emergency Liaison Point (ELP). This includes overseeing the opening and closing of the ELP, ensuring activities remain within scope, and maintaining a clear action and decision log.
- They assign roles to volunteers based on skills and availability, monitor attendance, and ensure the welfare of volunteers, including planning breaks and access to food and hydration.
- They also liaise with partner agencies and keep authorities informed, while identifying, escalating, or addressing issues as they arise.
- Although they coordinate activity, they support collective decision-making rather than making decisions alone, stepping in only when needed.
- At stand-down, they are responsible for debriefing and handing over to the Local Authority. The role is flexible and can be handed over to another individual if required.



Oversight Make sure that all roles are allocated to volunteers that best suit their preferences and skill sets. Ensure that no one feels isolated and is not doing a role that they do not want to.



Welfare Ensure volunteers are well fed, hydrated often work for long periods without prioritising their own wellbeing during an incident.



Resources All volunteers will need to have the correct equipment to undertake their role. This covers equipment from tables to pens and paper alongside additional support where required.



Register It's important to keep a register of who is working and when. This helps for record keeping and understanding when people need breaks.



Meetings Regular meetings will need to be held so that the volunteers are aware of the current situation and future requirements of the hub/incident.



Opening & Closing Ensure the ELP is opened, secured and operated within agreed opening hours, with appropriate signage displayed and relevant partner organisations informed.



Keep a record Keep a simple log of key decisions and actions to support future learning and provide a useful reference if needed.



ELP Closure: Coordinate the safe shutdown, pack away and closure of the ELP when no longer required, ensuring relevant partner organisations are informed.

Key Actions:

- Welcome ELP users to the venue
- Keep an accurate log of those using the ELP
- Provide reassurance
- Direct queries appropriately
- Pass key info to team

Remember:

- Stay calm
- Be honest if unsure

Role summary:

- Anyone coming to the ELP should be signed in, welcomed and provided with information on what the ELP is for and what it can/can't provide. The reception needs to be located near the front of the ELP and be easily identifiable.



Greeting: Make sure that everyone is greeted and directed to areas or volunteers who can help as they require.



Registration- Keep an accurate log of those using the ELP, through a sign in, sign out (template provided on following page).



Stay Calm Provide reassurance to community members who require it. Expect people to be upset, emotional or frustrated, so remaining calm is vitally important as you are their first contact with the ELP.



Be Honest- If you don't know the answer, be honest and direct them to someone who might be able to help.



Emergency Liaison Point Registration Form

Site Address:

Site supervisor name & contact:

Date & Time	Title	Surname	Street name & No	No in party	Immediate needs (Food / Water / Shelter / Medical / Welfare / Information	Vulnerability flags: Mobility / Elderly / Child / Disability / Language / Mental health
In: Out:						
In: Out:						
In: Out:						
In: Out:						
In: Out:						
In: Out:						
In: Out:						
In: Out:						
In: Out:						
In: Out:						

Note: Record everyone entering and flag urgent medical/safeguarding needs immediately

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Key Actions:

- Maintain information board
- Collect updates from community and responders
- Share accurate updates
- Record time and source

Remember:

- Only share confirmed information
- Avoid rumors

Role summary:

For the public to retain their trust in ELPs and statutory organisations, the information officer will keep ELP users updated with information provided by statutory organisations and will also feed information back to the statutory organisation to ensure they have the most up-to-date information.



Situation Board- Use white board or paper stuck to doors or wall to display current information on the board. Keep the board as up to date as possible.

ELP Location address:
date:

Last update time &

- What's happening: e.g. flooding in__ due to high rainfall on __, Electricity still off, likely to remain so for next 24 hours; drinking water is still usable but may have low pressure.
- Our response – what are we doing now e.g., flood wardens out checking drains, tea and coffee available etc.
- Upcoming tasks to be completed e.g., flood signs to be put up on roads entering town.
- Any other relevant information or anything you don't know e.g., we are currently awaiting information on the timeline for flood water pumps



Keep tabs on what information you need to know- What information do you require to get a better overview of the situation; Is there a specific area of the community you haven't heard from?



Collect information from ELP users- The situation where they came from, what they saw on the way, do they know of anyone that needs help



Manage the information- The best way of presenting information to responding agencies is via the same system they use (METHANE) It can help you organise your own information.



Manage all information and any extra volunteers- To help with information collation/collection. Consider sharing on social media sites if appropriate.

M	Major incident	Has a Major Incident been declared? YES/NO (If no, then complete ETHANE message)	Include the date and time of any declaration.
E	Exact Location	What is the exact location or geographical area of incident	Be precise as possible
T	Type of Incident	What kind of incident is it?	E.G: flooding, fire, utility failure or disease outbreak.
H	Hazard	What hazards or potential hazards can be identified?	Consider the likelihood and the potential severity of any impact.
A	Access	What are the best routes for access and egress?	Include information on inaccessible routes
N	Number of casualties	How many casualties are there and what condition are they in?	Use an agreed classification system such as P1; P2; P3 and dead
E	Emergency Services	Which and how many emergency responder assets/personnel are required or are already on the scene?	Consider whether other emergency responders may be required.



Key Actions:

- Provide reassurance
- Identify vulnerable individuals
- Ensure basic welfare (warmth, seating)

Remember:

- Not a counsellor
- Escalate serious concerns

Role Summary:

The welfare & Support volunteer role exists to provide people with a friendly face to talk to during what is most likely a distressing time for the ELP users, offering emotional & physical support- It is understood that everyone has different needs in a crisis or disruption.

It's important to:

- Help people feel in control by making their own decisions.
- Listen respectfully to them.
- Encourage them to think about where any extra support can come from (family and friends).
- Take note of what they need.
- Remain supportive and do not take anything they say personally.

Avoid:

- Ordering people around/ telling them what to do.
- Tell them it will all be fine when it might not.
- Being distracted and give your full attention to them.
- Separating them from their friends and family.
- React to their emotions personally.



Offer compassionate conversations to ELP users, ensuring they are kept confidential, unless there is a risk of harm e.g. thoughts of suicide or self-harm.



Offer refreshments to ELP users, either making them directly or directing them to a refreshment station (if set up- it's important these are easily accessible and available).



Be visible and approachable so people can easily find and feel comfortable approaching you for support. Escalate unmet needs to the ELP supervisor & information officer.



Key Actions:

- Keep the ELP accessible to all
- Keeping facility clean and tidy.
- Assist with any tidying required.
- Ensure the building is opened and locked as required.

Remember:

- Call 999 for emergencies & inform Supervisor

Role summary: The ELP should be a comfortable & hygienic place for its users to shelter, seek support, and/or find information. The facilities volunteers should ensure the ELP remains as so for the duration of its activation. Keeping it clean and tidy will also ensure that it is safe for the public and that people feel



Clean and tidy- Keeping the building clean and tidy, cleaning up any debris and rubbish, making sure that people don't slip or trip on anything.



Walkways and paths Keeping footpaths clean and clear around the building. This could be making sure they aren't obstructed or might involve clearing some ice and snow around the entrance.



Maintain stock- Making sure all toilets and washing points are fully stocked and provide fellow volunteers with the equipment they need to do their tasks.



Opening and closing- It's not necessarily the facility officer's responsibility to open and close the ELP, but the arrangements need to be known by them.

5

Considering Emergency Liaison Points in recovery

Recovery is often overlooked in an incident, as attention and resources focus on the response phase. However, it is important not to forget the recovery phase, as returning to normal can take time. Maintaining the sense of community and collaboration developed during the response helps consolidate the progress and achievements made, support those affected, and strengthen long-term recovery efforts.

Key steps in recovery are:

Staying connected

- *Build upon and cement existing and newly formed relationships.
- *Maintain contact with anyone evacuated or in temporary accommodation.
- *Set up email and/or WhatsApp groups or phone trees.

Wellbeing

- *Give yourselves time to adjust and breath after the incident.
- *Consider that everyone's needs are different.
- *Remember, it's okay to ask for help

Working Together

- *Keeping the great energy from the response going.
- *Share and promote success stories between the community.
- *Don't forget that people need help after the 'storm' has left.

Common voice

- *Look for common goals that will help the community.
- *Come together to produce an action plan to move forward.
- *Be inclusive - everyone's needs are different; make sure you don't dismiss anyone's.

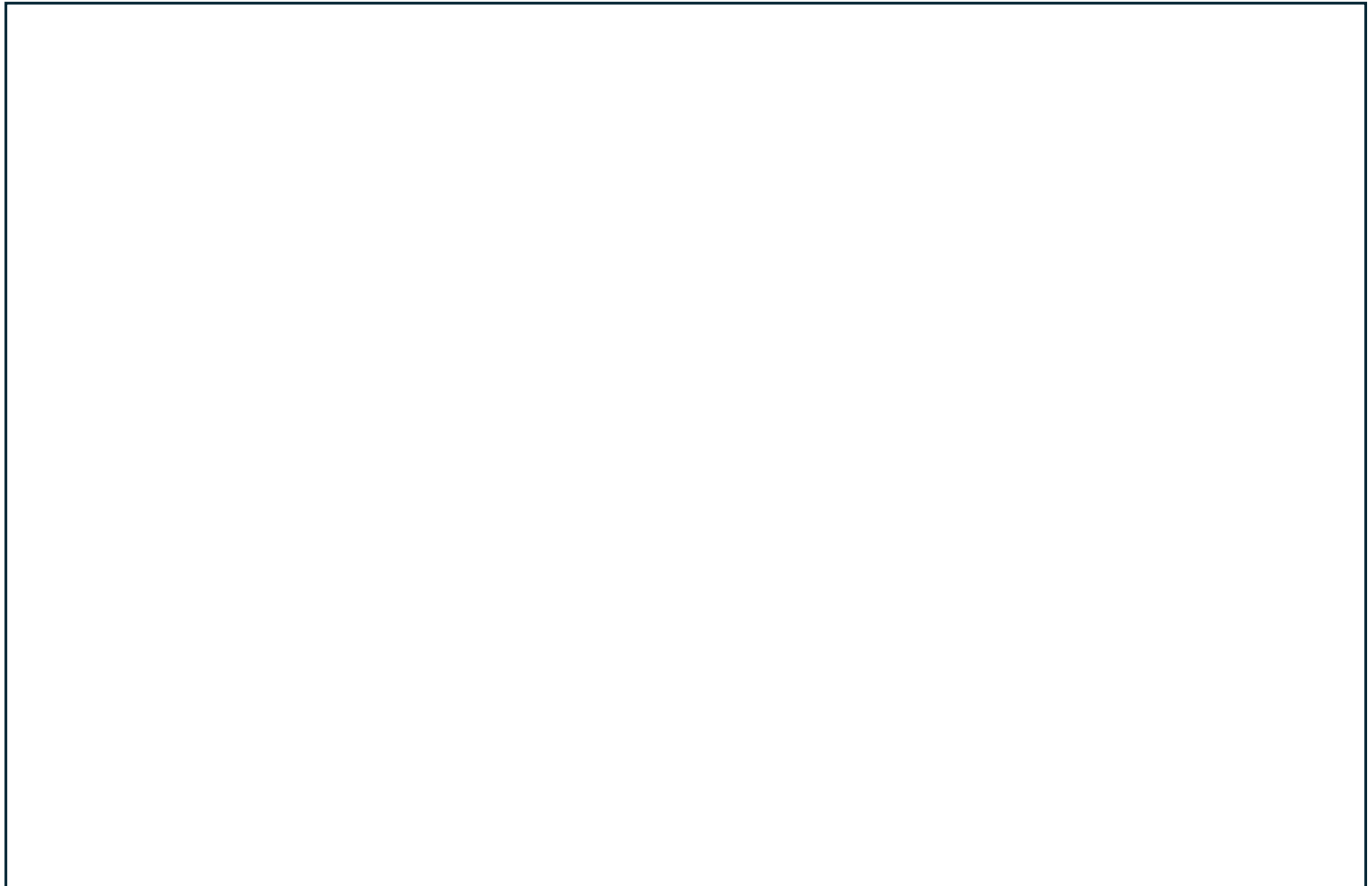
Recovery is not an exact process and will vary between incidents and communities. While practical recovery is important, the human aspects are equally significant. Although response structures such as the Emergency Liaison Point may stand down, the relationships and experiences developed during the response can continue to support recovery and help build a stronger, more resilient community.



Thank you for your commitment to emergency preparedness and community resilience. Your dedication to supporting others and strengthening local connections will help make a positive difference before, during, and after an emergency.

The blank pages overleaf can be used to record a suggested or agreed layout for your specific Emergency Liaison Point (ELP). It is also recommended that a map of the local area is included. This document should be stored at the ELP location with the grab box so that it is readily available during an emergency.

A sketch of our suggested ELP layout: (Include suggested segregation areas, enter point, Reception area, information board/area, where tables/Chairs would be best placed, toilet facilities, kitchen area etc)



Community groups are encouraged to obtain a detailed map of their local area to support emergency response activities. OpenStreetMap is a free, community-maintained mapping resource that can be viewed and printed for emergency planning purposes. Maps can be accessed at: <https://www.openstreetmap.org>

Where possible, maps should be annotated with key local information, such as Emergency Liaison Points, community assets, vulnerable locations, access routes, rest centres, and known hazard areas.

This document has been developed using guidance and best practice published by the following organisations:

