



UK Resilience
Academy

UK Resilience Lessons Digest

Learning in community

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Contents

4	Introduction
7	Executive summary
16	Community resilience
22	Control learning analysis
23	Introduction
27	Findings
28	Theme 1: Understanding communities
31	Theme 2: Response and recovery challenges
36	Theme 3: Emergency planning and preparedness
40	Theme 4: Governance and assurance
42	Theme 5: Community investment and integration
45	Conclusion
46	Emergency planning in partnership: Strengthening flood resilience in Loftus
51	Riots to resilience: Five ways to turn lessons into action
55	Dynamic support, real challenges: What young people with additional support needs can teach us about resilience
62	National Consortium For Societal Resilience [UK+]: Lessons from working to build resilience in society
70	Resources
78	Acknowledgements

Foreword

I am delighted to have been asked to pen the foreword to this UKRA Digest on community resilience.

When a crisis starts, while our strategies, plans, frameworks and assessments are beginning to come into play, what people notice first is the human response around them: local WhatsApp group checking that everyone is safe; a neighbour knocking on the door and sharing water bottles; a voluntary, community or faith group turning up around the corner with food supplies.

Strong strategies and systems provide the scaffolding for an effective response. But it is community action that brings that scaffolding to life, turning coordination into care, and plans into support that people can see, feel and rely on. These small but immediate acts of care and solidarity shape how a crisis is felt in communities. We saw this most powerfully in the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire, and again on a national scale during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through their work with the local tier, my teams witness firsthand the power of local knowledge, trusted networks, and an extraordinary capacity to adapt, and believe strongly in the value of a whole-society approach. When communities, local responders and national actors share expertise and support each other; the result is far more powerful than they could achieve alone.

This well-timed Digest highlights important lessons on why, when and how this collaboration works best, including recognising early the existing capabilities that already exist within communities and creating the conditions in which they can thrive.

Ultimately, resilience can never be something we deliver into communities. It must be something we build together



Zainab Agha
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Introduction

Welcome to the seventh edition of the UK Resilience Lessons Digest, Learning in community.

At the heart of civil society are our local communities: the networks of people, relationships, institutions, and shared experiences that shape how we live, support one another, and respond when challenges arise. Whether defined by geography, identity, shared interests, or common purpose, communities are where resilience is often most visible in practice.

Communities have long been described as the social fabric of society. They provide the connections that enable people to organise collectively, share knowledge, offer support, and act in times of uncertainty or disruption. In everyday life, these connections may appear informal or even invisible, but during moments of crisis they can quickly become vital.

Research consistently demonstrates that being part of a caring and connected community brings significant benefits. These include improved health and wellbeing, a stronger sense of belonging, greater trust between individuals and institutions, and access to practical support networks. Some studies even suggest that strong community ties can contribute to longer life expectancy. In this sense, communities are quite literally critical lifelines.



At the same time, we recognise that “community” is not always experienced as a frictionless ideal. Communities are dynamic, complex, and diverse. No two communities are the same, and most will, at different points in time, experience varying degrees of challenge, disruption, or change. Economic pressures, environmental risks, social inequalities, and emerging threats can all test the strength and cohesion of communities. Understanding how communities adapt, organise, and respond in the face of such pressures is therefore central to building resilience across society.

The National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Resilience and Emergencies define **community resilience** as *the capacity of individuals, groups and organisations within a community to anticipate, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disruptions, drawing on local knowledge, resources and relationships*. This definition reflects an important shift in resilience thinking: recognising that preparedness and response are most effective when they are shared across the whole of society.

As a broad and continually evolving field, this edition of the Digest is designed to complement the extensive work, knowledge, and resources that already exist across the resilience community. Rather than seeking to provide a single perspective, the Digest brings together insights from practice, research, and lived experience to support collective learning.

At the heart of this edition you will find our lessons analysis, highlighting key learning themes and transferable lessons relating to aspects of community resilience. These lessons are drawn from real-world incidents, exercises, and operational experiences, and are shared so that members of the resilience community can apply the learning to strengthen whole-of-society resilience in their own contexts.

The analysis is complemented by a small collection of guest-authored articles aligned to the edition's theme. These contributions help to coordinate knowledge and experience across the resilience community through the presentation of applied tools, case studies, and academic insights. Together with the central learning analysis, these articles contribute to the continual improvement of doctrine, standards, good practice, training, and exercising.

As always, the UKRA maintains the commitment to continually improve the Digest in response to feedback, to ensure it remains relevant to the resilience community. Please do share your thoughts, ideas, and feedback via enquiries@uk-ra.org to help inform future publications.

We look forward to hearing from you.



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The UKRA maintains the commitment to continually improve the Digest in response to feedback, to ensure it remains relevant to the resilience community. Please do share your thoughts, ideas, and feedback via the QR code to help inform future publications

Executive summary

Learning in community



Executive summary

About the digest

The UK Resilience Lessons Digest is part of the UK's strategic approach to resilience¹. It sits at the heart of a programme of work at the UK Resilience Academy to synthesise and share lessons identified from major exercises and emergencies. Each Digest adopts a topical focus, providing a relevant, thematic analysis of lessons identified from a range of reports. The analysis is complemented by a small collection of guest-authored articles on the edition's theme. The theme of this 7th Digest edition is 'Community Resilience'.

Resources

If you haven't seen the UK Government's Resilience Action Plan, it is available as HTML and PDF [download here](#).

Background

The [UK Government Resilience Action Plan \(RAP\)](#)² was published in July 2025, setting out government's strategic approach to increasing the UK's resilience against the risks we face.² The RAP explicitly acknowledges the important role that civil society plays in the UK's resilience. At the heart of civil society are local communities – groups of people who come together based on proximity, shared identity, common interest or social ties.³ Often, as the RAP acknowledges, communities can be highly effective and self-organising, mobilising meaningful support for others quickly in the event of emergencies. However, community is also where the rubber of daily life hits the road, and for many valid reasons, not all 'roads' lead to resilience.

¹ The UK Government Resilience Action Plan The UK's strategic approach to resilience July 2025.

² UK Government Resilience Action Plan – GOV.UK

³ Standards for Resilience and Emergencies – The Workforce Development Trust

Learning in community

Community resilience

The [National Occupational Standards for Resilience and Emergencies](#) describe resilient communities as those that 'can anticipate, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disruptions, while continuously adapting and thriving in the face of change'. Yet 'community resilience' itself is not a static, end-state product. Instead, it is an ongoing, adaptive process that enables both individual members and community groups to develop, mobilise, organise, and deploy shared capabilities for mutual benefit.

This means that the commitment to deliver enhanced resilience across society now (in part at least) depends on the ability to foster, sustain and strengthen the community resilience process across the country. Given that the relative 'success' of that process – and the quality of its outcomes – can vary significantly based on both internal aspects (e.g., group dynamics and trust) and external inputs (e.g. from supporting organisations⁴), it is timely to review lessons already identified from community resilience building efforts.

Summary

This Digest's central learning analysis synthesised a total of 186 lessons and recommendations with relevance to community resilience. These were brought together from 19 different reports, published over a 12-year period (2013 and 2025).

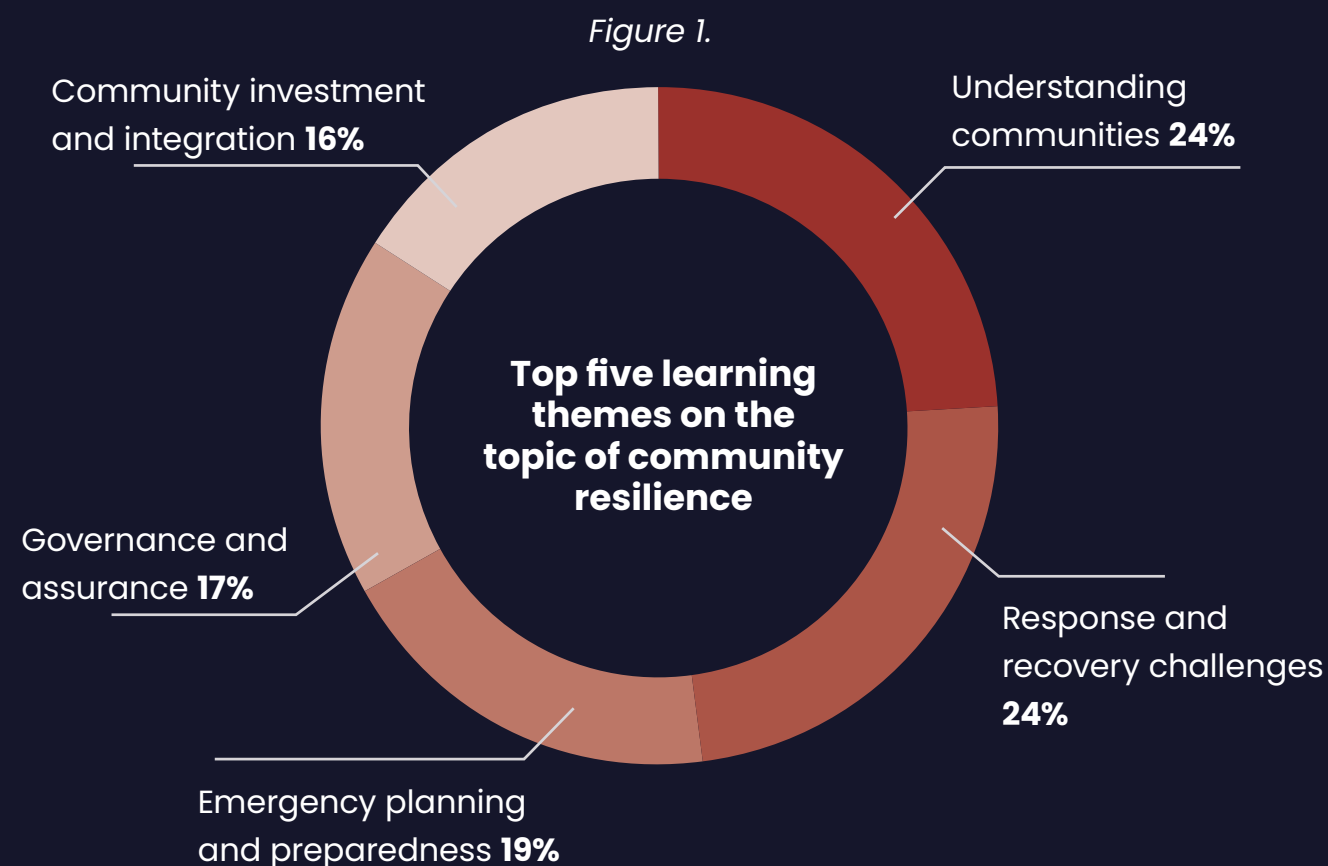
The collection of reports was diverse by default, in efforts to capture learning from different types of emergencies, using different methodologies, and engagement with different communities. Variation in report type also reflects efforts to help balance the weight given to learning from larger formal reviews, with the localised expertise and lived experience captured through 'grassroots'⁵ community projects. A short summary of the key learning themes is provided below. Further details on each theme, along with examples of transferable lessons, can be found in the Central Learning Analysis on page 22

⁴ Standards for Resilience and Emergencies – The Workforce Development Trust

⁵ Grassroots – 'ordinary people, especially as contrasted with leadership or social organisation'

Share: Learning themes and transferable lessons

Five learning themes were identified across reports. These are detailed below in order of prevalence and presented in Figure 1.



Theme 1: Understanding communities

Communities are not passive recipients of aid, but active partners in resilience.

The importance of understanding the communities we belong to and work with was the most prominent theme across reports. Approaches that failed to truly understand local strengths and existing resources, alongside the complexity of a communities' history, needs and priorities, risked weakening effectiveness and confidence in activity across the risk cycle.

Lessons also emphasised the roles that inequality and vulnerability can play in the dynamic exacerbation of risk. Populations facing disadvantage before an event were at greater risk of disproportionate impacts when an emergency struck. This was especially the case when public sector preparedness efforts had been insufficient or inconsistent. Assessing vulnerabilities and inequalities in the context of wider social, economic and cultural factors, was crucial for reducing risks and generating consistent, equitable resilience.

Resilience building efforts were found to be more effective when readiness, response, and recovery plans were based on local knowledge, relationships and priorities. The benefits and impacts of resilience building efforts were also supported, and in some cases augmented by, activities that developed the foundational antecedents of community resilience, such as trust, positive relationships, and social cohesion. Overall, many factors shape a community's resilience, and external organisations were cautioned against the view that it could be 'socially engineered'.

Theme 2: Response and recovery challenges

Lessons in this theme emphasised the negative impact that operational response challenges and limited recovery capacity had on individuals and communities. Operationally, dynamic and/or escalating response requirements continually challenged both responders and communities in their ability to manage the effects and impacts of emergencies. Access to appropriate equipment and sufficient resources were salient issues across reports. However, response capacity depended not only on numbers and resources, but also on systems, relationships, and communication. In some cases, response challenges resulted from a mix of fragmented systems, siloed working procedures and unclear organisational responsibilities. These aspects each had the ability to weaken even well-funded responses, making recovery more difficult and were seen to increase risks for affected communities.

In comparison, strong social networks and attention to community wellbeing before, during and after emergencies positively influenced longer-term recovery and adaptability. Communities with established connections and support systems were better prepared to handle prolonged disruptions overall.

Theme 3: Emergency planning and preparedness

Adaptable, evidence-based planning and early preparedness interventions were found to be crucial in minimising the effects of emergencies on communities. Lessons in this theme highlighted the importance of reviewing reasonable worst-case scenarios, ensuring high-quality of risk assessments, and maintaining flexible emergency plans. Reports repeatedly demonstrated that static plans and assumptions were inadequate in contexts characterised by interconnected systems, climate change, and technological reliance. Proactive predictive measures also reduced long-term community impacts by minimising damage, protecting livelihoods, and lowering recovery costs through early investment, preparedness, and targeted warnings.

Theme 4: Governance and assurance

Organisations reported improved cooperation and maintained public trust when governance systems acknowledged levels of risk and uncertainty. Fair and risk-conscious governance was seen to promote shared responsibility within and across communities, responder organisations and government departments. Conversely, vague accountability and unclear guidance weakened trust and diminished community involvement. The theme also highlighted a role for partners in helping others make sense of policy and risk information. Communities were better able to recognise dangers and take prompt protective action when information and guidance was conveyed clearly, consistently, accessibly, and tailored to local contexts.

Reports also advocated for independent assurance processes that could offer assessment, feedback and direction on continual improvements for existing capabilities, that local communities would depend on in an emergency.

Theme 5: Community investment and integration

Sustainable investment and funding for local communities and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) groups operating alongside them, was a notable theme across reports. Reports suggested that the disbursements of funds to support local activities before or after an emergency were more effective when a) granted to local delivery partners with existing credibility and b) aligned to the goals or priorities of community groups. Without this alignment, and especially when projects were based on externally dictated aims, buy-in was often poor and engagement found to diminish over time. In some cases, timely response action had additionally benefitted from putting strategic, financial mechanisms in place for release of pre-arranged funding to key partners, based on early warnings. Overall investment and integration often went hand in hand, strengthening connections between local groups and authorities, and providing opportunities for organisations and institutions to achieve strategic priorities through an aligned, holistic approach to resilience.



Coordinate: Shared experience, knowledge and insights

The first case study provides a short introduction to the topic of community resilience, setting out helpful definitions, concepts and current policy direction.

This is followed by four guest-authored articles, showcasing academic insights, local community case studies, grass-roots research and pioneering work with vulnerable groups.

An introduction to community resilience

This short article offers a helpful introduction to the topic of community resilience. It includes some key terms and useful concepts to help you navigate the content in this edition.

Emergency planning in partnership: Strengthening flood resilience in Loftus

Loftus is a town and parish in Cleveland, North Yorkshire, that is prone to flooding. In 2023 Loftus Town Council, started working with [Cleveland Local Resilience Forum](#) to strengthen their resilience through the development of a Local Emergency Plan. In this case study, Rachael Campbell, Principal Emergency Planning Officer at Cleveland LRF, explains how they have worked together to realise a significant increase in property-level flood protection, and provide a safe and resilient location for residents to use during incidents. She also shares some helpful lessons that the Forum have identified along the way.

Riots to resilience

The [Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership \(VCSEP\)](#) bring organisations together to deliver a more coordinated response to emergencies. In this article, Marcus Bowen shares the results of research commissioned by VCSEP following the 2024 mass stabbing in Southport UK, and the wave of riots, protests, and civil unrest that followed in the seven days after. **'Riots to Resilience: Five Ways to Turn Lessons into Action'**, identifies clear lessons and sets out evidence-based recommendations for recovery.

Dynamic support, real challenges: What young people with additional support needs can teach us about resilience.

The [National Centre for Resilience](#) works to strengthen resilience to natural hazards through collaboration with Scotland's universities, policymakers, responders and communities. Following a growing recognition that young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) require more inclusive systems and responses when it comes to fostering resilience, the Centre worked with the School of Social and Environmental Sustainability, University of Glasgow, to explore how resilience is understood and experienced by young people with ASN. In this article Dr Alexander Whitelaw shares findings from the research, along with practical, evidence-based implications for policy and practice.

The public value of societal resilience

The [National Consortium for Societal Resilience \[UK+\] \(NCSR+\)](#) was established to enhance the UK's whole-of-society approach to resilience, so that individuals, groups, organisations, and networks can all play a meaningful part in building the resilience of our society. In this article NCSR+ share some of the lessons that they have learnt in working with Local Resilience Partnerships, including development of a Social Return on Investment approach, to help organisations demonstrate the public value of societal resilience to disruption.

New to the Digest?

To help you navigate the Digest, we have provided some helpful in-document signposts. As you read through the content you will notice the following icons:

Sidelights

As in previous editions, the Digest continues to use Sidelights to provide helpful definitions, insights and related knowledge.

Make it active

The 'Make it active icon' highlights opportunities and ideas for putting Digest content into action in your setting.

Resources

At the end of the Digest the resources section provides a summary of transferable lessons from the analysed reports, along with links for further reading.

Community resilience

An introduction

This article provides a brief introduction to community resilience. It includes some helpful definitions and links to policy documents, setting community resilience in the wider context of national, whole-of-society resilience.

About communities

Communities are groups of individuals with something in common. They are characteristically diverse, self-organising and voluntary in nature, bringing people together for many different reasons. Some communities coalesce based on common interests, for others its shared beliefs, or neighbourhood location. Collectively, community groups make up the larger, organised societies that we live in (see Figure 2).

Society

Community

Household

Individual

Figure 2: The building blocks of society

Communities in the context of emergencies

Lessons from crises at home and abroad show that everybody in society can contribute to protecting a nation against disruptive events. This includes a significant role for local communities, especially given their recognised ability to self-organise in the event of an emergency. In such times, communities often become 'first responders', offering a vital response that is uniquely placed to understand and support affected individuals, households and vulnerable groups³. Established

¹ Roberts, D. (2026). *The Psychology of Resilience: Understanding and Enhancing Human Strength and Perseverance*

² The UK Government Resilience Action Plan – The UK's strategic approach to resilience

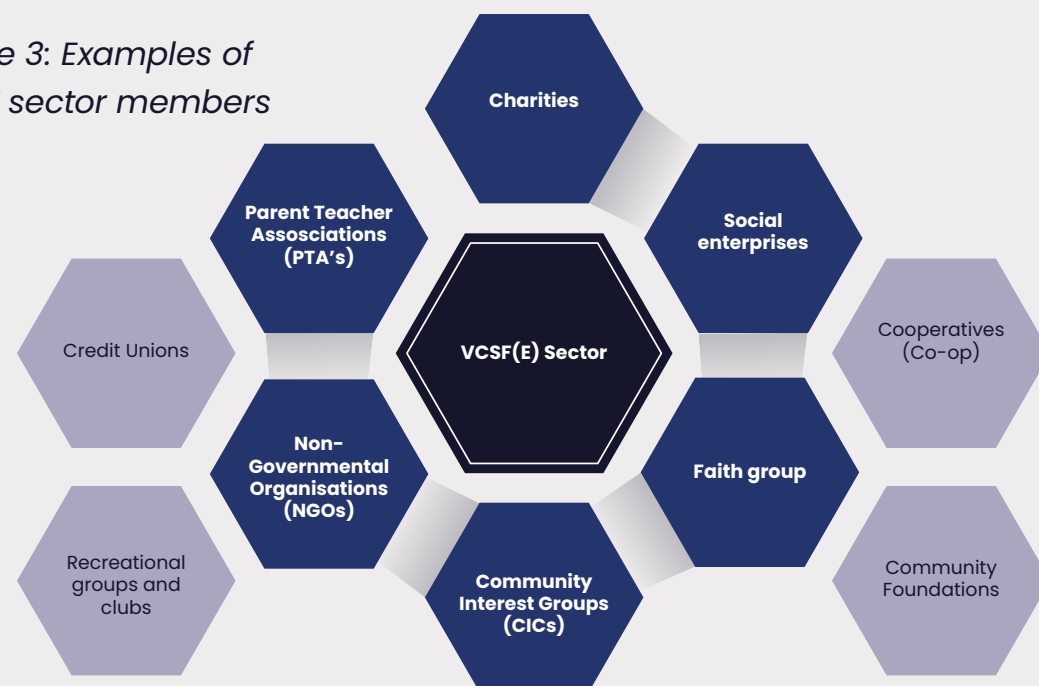
³ The UK Government Resilience Action Plan – The UK's strategic approach to resilience

Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector groups (VCFS), such as churches, registered charities and neighbourhood organisations are vital stakeholders in this regard. With them comes a wealth of relational expertise, depth of local knowledge and a nuanced understanding of community dynamics that arguably only those on the ground in a local area can truly obtain. Although often most visible in a response scenario, community resilience is not in any way limited to that phase. Much community resilience work happens quietly and consistently through local projects that build trust, support local needs and strengthen relationships on the ground, day in and day out. It is also increasingly common for communities to actively engage in emergency prevention and preparedness activity.

Communities in the context of emergencies

VCFS is a collective term used to describe the diverse sector that includes voluntary organisations, community groups and faith-based organisations. The term is often expanded to VCFSE, so that it also includes social enterprises – businesses who reinvest their profits into local communities, social challenges, or the environment. The sector includes many different groups⁴, with examples provided in Figure 2. VCFS sector members are vital resilience partners, as they tend to be deeply committed to local action, embedded in local network and invested in relationships with individual community members.

Figure 3: Examples of VCSF sector members



Communities in the context of national resilience

In the context of national resilience, 'community resilience' can be described as the ability of communities to anticipate, assess, mitigate, prevent, prepare, respond to and recover from emergencies. While this is a fair and helpful definition, particularly in connecting community resilience efforts with the core duties and activity of Category 1 and 2 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), it could be seen to reduce community resilience to a function of the integrated emergency management cycle. Research suggests that best endeavours to build and strengthen community resilience can become increasingly meaningful when it is understood as being both broader in concept and dynamic in practice.

Sidelight: Resilient communities

[The National Occupational Standards \(NOS\) for Resilience and Emergencies](#) define community as a place-based or identity-based group of people who come together through their social ties and common interests to take collective action. By leveraging their shared assets and engaging in decision-making processes, communities can achieve outcomes that individuals alone cannot.

Resilient communities can anticipate, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disruptions, while continuously adapting and thriving in the face of change.

A more holistic view of community resilience is reflected in the **National Occupational Standard (NOS) SFJCCAFI⁵: 'Work with communities to raise risk awareness, increase preparedness and resilience'**. Here we still see the definition of community resilience anchored into key requirements for those working in the resilience and emergencies profession. But it is not expressed as a product limited to the integrated emergency management cycle. Instead, the standard describes community resilience as an **'adaptive process that enables both communities and individual members to develop, mobilise, organise, and deploy shared capabilities for mutual benefit.'**

⁴ Local Government Association: [Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector](#)

⁵ [National Occupational Standards \(NOS\) for Resilience and Emergencies](#)

It also emphasises that community resilience relies on positive social interaction, diversity, knowledge, and appropriate inputs from supporting organisations.⁶ This means that the strength of a community directly influences its ability to 'be' resilient, while continuously adapting and thriving in the face of change.

Communities in the context of whole-of-society resilience

Given the range of risks we face, including threats to lives, health, society, critical infrastructure, economy and sovereignty⁷, strategic efforts to foster community resilience across the nation are embedded in commitments to foster resilience at the societal level. This is why societal resilience has become an increasingly important area of policy focus in recent years⁸.

Internationally, we see the call for an 'all-of-society' approach emphasised in key documents like the United Nations [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030](#) and [NATO's Seven Baseline Requirements](#) for National Resilience. In the UK, the emphasis on 'whole-of-society' resilience is reflected in the [Strategic Defence Review's](#) vision for UK Defence (2025), the [National Security Strategy](#) (2025) and the government's latest [Resilience Action Plan](#) (RAP) (2025).

Sidelight: Societal resilience

The [National Consortium for Societal Resilience \(NCSR+\)](#) provide a helpful definition of societal resilience based on academic literature review and consultation: Societal resilience is capability created by local systems that helps people and places to adapt and advance in a changing environment.



⁶ [National Occupational Standards \(NOS\) for Resilience and Emergencies](#)

⁷ [National Risk Register - 2025 edition](#)

⁸ Friman, A. and Swinscow-Hall, M. (2024). [Mobilisation of community venues for resilient response and recovery](#).

Communities in the context of the Resilience Action Plan

The RAP details three core objectives in the delivery of the plan, of which the second – to 'enable the whole of society to take action to increase their resilience' has particular, (but not exclusive) relevance to this Digest edition. Drawing on key lessons identified from the Covid-19 Inquiry and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry in particular, this section details government's specific commitments to action, including i) asking and supporting the public to take action that can strengthen resilience at individual and household levels (via GOV.UK/Prepare, launched in May 2024) and ii) to better integrate the offer from Voluntary, Community and Faith Services (VCFS) into wider resilience arrangements at national and local levels. The Learning Analysis that follows this article presents some of the key learning that national and local partners can draw on to maximise resilience efforts in these areas.

Further reading and guidance

For more information about how responder organisations can engage with local communities, including VCFS members please see:

- [National Occupational Standards for Resilience and Emergencies](#)
- [The Community Development Framework \(2019\)](#)
- [National Resilience Standards for LRFs: Standard # Community Resilience Development](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness](#)
- [Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance](#)

Learning analysis

Learning in community

Introduction

The purpose of the Digest's central learning analysis is to synthesise lessons and recommendations from a range of reports on the edition's selected theme.

The aims of doing so are to:

- Identify any **common learning themes** evidenced across reports, to support a shared and developed understanding of community resilience
- Highlight any specific, **transferable lessons** that could be applied across contexts to continually improve activity and approaches building community resilience

'Learning themes' refer to common areas or patterns in findings, lessons and recommendations detailed across analysed reports.

'**Transferable lessons**' are key points of learning identified during the analysis, that have multi-stakeholder applicability or are by nature 'risk agnostic' (i.e. could be leveraged to strengthen resilience in other risk scenarios beyond the report context).

The findings are then presented under headings that describe the most prevalent, common learning themes across reports. Alongside each learning theme, the Digest provides insights from existing knowledge on identified learning themes. It also signposts to resources that can support local implementation efforts in response to those themes and their related, transferable lessons.

Methodology

The Digest applied its usual qualitative methodology for synthesising selected documents¹. This involves engaging with the full report contents, before drawing out key findings, identified lessons and recommendations for analysis. During analysis that information is then reviewed for trends, patterns and finally common learning themes.

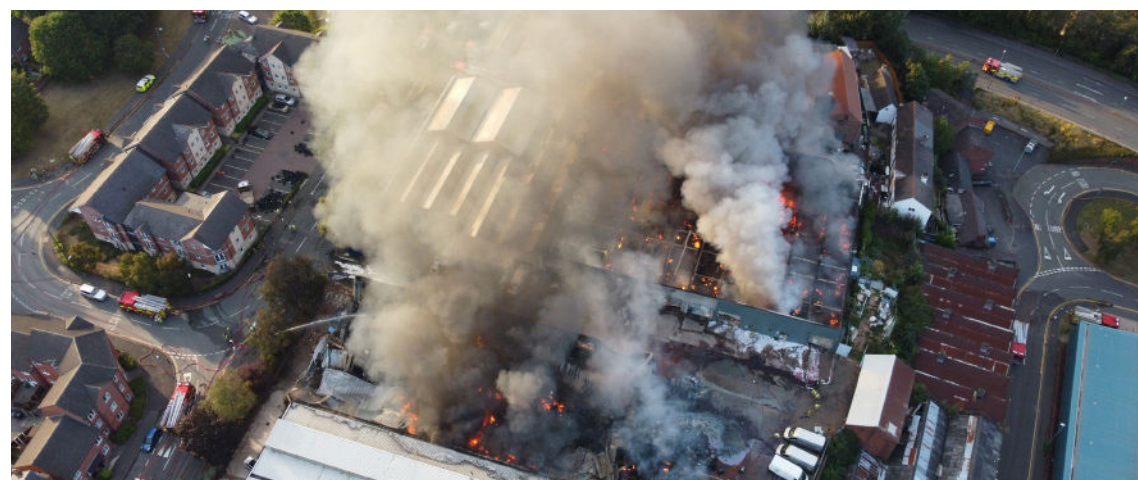
¹ EPC UK Resilience Lessons Digest 1: About the Digest

Analysis

Community resilience is a diverse and dynamic topic area. This is especially true given the augmented, holistic view of community resilience that now brings research on the collective ability of society to manage all-hazards adversity at large, and localised grassroots learning into a shared space. This informed a ‘diverse by default’ approach to document selection for the learning analysis and a conscious effort to help balance the weight of learning given to larger reviews with smaller, hyperlocal findings that captured more granular perspectives. Specifically, the diverse by default approach also helped to ensure that the analysis included reports that:

- Reflected lessons identified in the aftermath of different types of emergencies.
- Identified lessons using different types of research methodology
- Reflected lessons identified from research that extended before and beyond the emergency response

This led to the selection of 19 reports relating to the topic of community resilience. The reports were published over a 12-year period (2013 and 2025), bringing a total of 186 lessons and recommendations into a shared space for analysis. Most reports focussed on findings from a variety of UK contexts. Two reports on building community resilience in international work were also included. Table 1 provides a full list of the 19 documents reviewed in the community resilience learning analysis.



Year	Report title	Authoring organisation	Community lessons
2013	Effectiveness of interventions in the humanitarian field to support community resilience (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report) – GOV.UK	Commissioned by Department for International Development (DFID)	6
2016	Section 19 Flood Investigation Report: Carlisle	Environment Agency (in partnership with Cumbria County Council)	12
2018	Improving Institutional and Social Responses to Flooding (Science Report: SC060019 – Work Package 5)	Environment Agency (EA) and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	12
2019	Inquests Arising from the Deaths in the London Bridge and Borough Market Terror Attack – Regulation 28 Report on Action to Prevent Future Deaths	Chief Coroner of England and Wales	12
2020	Local Action, Global Reach Report 2020–21 (Asia Pacific)	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	12
2022	Experience of Community Resilience Projects in the Pacific Islands: Lessons for Future Operations	The World Bank Group	12
2022	Practical action to build community resilience: The Good Life initiative in New Earswick	Joseph Rowntree Foundation	8
2022	Evaluation of Communities Prepared: Final Evaluation Report May 2022	ERS Research and Consultancy, on behalf of Communities Prepared	8
2023	Manchester Arena Inquiry Volume 3: Radicalisation and Preventability	Manchester Arena Inquiry	16
2024	Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 Report, Volume 7 (HC 19–VII)	Grenfell Tower Inquiry Panel	15
2024	UK Covid-19 Inquiry: Module 1, The resilience and preparedness of the United Kingdom	UK COVID-19 Inquiry Panel	12

2025	Resilience in Transition: Change, Conflict and Community – Impact Report 2024/25	Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership (VCSEP)	8
2023	Three wildfires in England: Best practice and lessons learned	Natural England Commissioned Report NECR484	8
2024	Building resilient communities: The case for social cohesion	Protection Approaches, commissioned by the London Resilience Unit	5
2024	Building Community Resilience Through Engaging Neighbourhood Networks	Greater London Authority (GLA) and Neighbourly Labs	5
2025	Localising Early Warning Systems & Anticipatory Actions through Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)	Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)	12
2025	Public health approaches to ‘Leave No One Behind’ in heatwave resilience: insights from the UK	Nunes, A.R. (2025) University of Warwick	8
2025	Community, not catastrophe: What a ‘whole society’ approach to preparedness really means	Young Foundation [1]	10
2025	Social infrastructure and social capital – the active elements of community resilience (Lessons for the UK section only)	A policy review for the Independent Commission on Neighbourhoods[2]	5
Total lessons			186



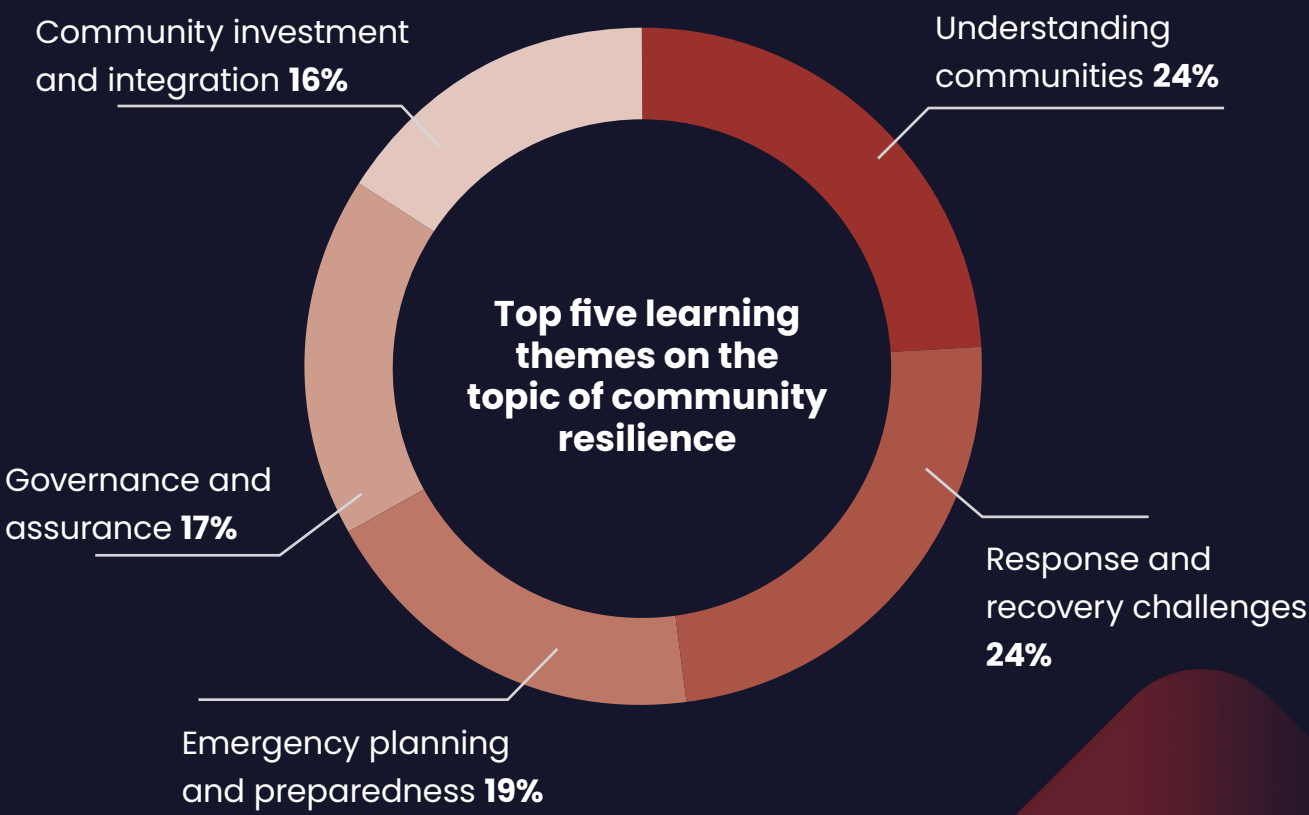
Findings

Five prominent learning themes were identified across the 19 reports. These are listed in below in order of prevalence and visualised in Figure 2.

- **Theme 1:** Understanding communities
- **Theme 2:** Emergency planning and preparedness
- **Theme 3:** Response and recovery challenges
- **Theme 4:** Governance and assurance
- **Theme 5:** Community investment and integration

A summary of findings under each theme heading follows, along with examples of related, transferable lessons that can be used to support community resilience efforts in a range of contexts.

Figure 4: Prominent learning themes from reports, reviews and research on community resilience



Theme 1: Understanding communities

The importance of understanding the communities we belong to and work with was the most prominent theme across reports. In general, activities that failed to understand the complexity of a communities' history, needs and priorities, alongside local strengths and existing resources, risked weakening effectiveness and confidence in activity across the risk cycle.

The consequences of underdeveloped local knowledge and relationships often became most salient in the recovery phase but were not limited to it. Lessons impressed the role that intentional, proactive relationship building in relative 'peacetime' played in helping team members and their organisations develop a meaningful level of local knowledge and understanding.

Relationships with local grass roots groups and charities offered teams and organisations the opportunity to demonstrate a longer-term commitment to understanding a locality and its residents. The connections also provided opportunities to help strengthen the foundational antecedents of community resilience (such as trust, social cohesion, and neighbourhood networks) or help address local divisions that might undermine or diminish it. Engagement with pre-existing social networks and trustworthy local actors helped external stakeholders to demonstrate a consistent and authentic approach that simultaneously understood communities as a single diverse collective, but also recognised and acknowledged individual, distinctive groups within it. For example, within a single locality, different faith, community, and voluntary organisations often possessed a keen understanding of local issues and are well-placed to connect with people whom formal 'area-wide' systems might overlook.

The importance of meaningful, community knowledge and understanding were additionally significant when it came to the identification of vulnerable individuals and groups. Lessons emphasised the dynamic roles that inequality and vulnerability could play in the exacerbation of risk, with disadvantaged populations typically finding themselves at greater risk of disproportionate impacts when an emergency struck. This was especially the case when public sector preparedness efforts had been insufficient, inconsistent, or left

incomplete. Inclusive, community-centred strategies were found to be vital in preventing current disparities from worsening. Reports indicated that planning and response measures could unintentionally disadvantage those who need assistance most, if vulnerable people and groups were not proactively identified beforehand. To provide proper support during emergencies and reduce reliance on reactive measures, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry emphasised the importance of identifying and planning for the needs of vulnerable residents in advance. Overall, assessing vulnerabilities and inequalities in the context of wider social, economic and cultural factors, was crucial for reducing risks and generating consistent, equitable community resilience.

Sidelights: Vulnerability

Anyone can be made vulnerable in an emergency. In the context of this analysis, and in line with the Cabinet Office's [Guidance update \(April 2025\): Identifying and supporting vulnerable persons in an emergency](#) the term 'vulnerable' is used to describe 'individuals who may be at-risk of being disproportionately impacted by emergencies.'

Further [details and guidance are available on gov.uk](#)

A selection of transferable lessons from this theme are detailed below:

Understanding communities		
Source	Transferable lesson	Ref
Grenfell Tower Inquiry Report: Phase 2 report (Volume 7)	The response of local voluntary organisations to the disaster demonstrated their capacity to act as valuable partners in responding to an emergency. Regulation 23 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) Regulations 2005 requires a Category 1 responder to have regard when making its plans to the activities of relevant voluntary organisations. We therefore recommend that the regulation be amended to require Category 1 responders to establish and maintain partnerships with the voluntary, community and faith organisations in the areas in which they are responsible for preparing for and responding to emergencies.	p. 245–246
UK Covid-19 Inquiry – Module 1: The resilience and preparedness of the United Kingdom	There was a failure [see Appendix 2: Exercises] to...identify those who were vulnerable; to consider, stress-test and put in place effective plans to mitigate the social and economic impacts [of the pandemic and potential responses]; to involve voluntary organisations that were well placed to advise on how to help vulnerable people. These failures left the most vulnerable people in society exposed to the effects of a pandemic. There (see Recommendation 6: A regular UK-wide pandemic response exercise)	p.123–125
Building resilient communities: The case for social cohesion	Evidence collected through our consultation shows that more 85% of groups who responded to our call for evidence believe that their work on social cohesion helped people become more prepared or able to support each other during [these] shocks and chronic stresses. (1) Social cohesion is a foundation of resilience... (2) Community-led activities build social cohesion and strengthen crisis preparedness: Community and faith groups implement a series of essential initiatives that foster social cohesion and equip communities to respond more effectively to crises.	p.2–3, 61–2
Practical action to build community resilience: The Good Life initiative in New Earswick	Identifying ‘hooks’ relevant to local people’s interests was important for encouraging residents’ shared actions and proved pivotal to our successes. This appears to be a key element for building new community social network links, thereby contributing to resilience. ...Identifying interest ‘hooks’ provides opportunities for motivating community engagement that do not start from a responsive–reactive agenda...imposed by an outside agency.	p.65

Theme 2: Response and recovery challenges

Some of the most salient learning points under this theme could be grouped under three key subheadings: The aims of doing so are to:

1. Partnerships

Lessons relating to the strengths and challenges of partnerships between community groups and statutory responders (and sometimes the lack there-of), spanned lessons from both response and recovery phases. So too did the strengths and challenges between the different responding agencies themselves. In the case of the former, the vital learning from reports authored at home and abroad was that **communities should be viewed as active partners in resilience – not passive recipients of aid**¹. The message was explicit in the public Grenfell Tower Inquiry² (GTI) report, which evidenced the strength of response efforts from local community members and groups who stepped into to support many

Sidelight: Strengthening partnerships consultation

Following publication of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report, government made a [formal response](#). In response to Recommendation 43 specifically, Cabinet Office launched the ‘[Strengthening Partnerships Consultation](#)’ last Autumn. The purpose of the consultation was to gather views on whether legislative changes could help to strengthen existing work between Category 1 Responders and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector groups (VCFS). The [findings were published in December 2025, and are available to read on gov.uk](#)

¹ VCS Partnership –Resilience in transition: Change, conflict and community – Impact Report 25 FINAL
² VCS Partnership –Resilience in transition: Change, conflict and community – Impact Report 25 FINAL

of those impacted by the high-rise building fire. In this regard, the inquiry found that residents and VCS groups were often more effective in their efforts and attuned to local needs than statutory parties. The resulting recommendation (Recommendation 43) proposed to strengthen partnerships between Category 1 responders and VCS groups by improved and increasingly formal integration into disaster preparedness and response. The importance of doing so also extended across wider analysed learning, with response and recovery being generally slower and in situations where these partnerships were absent, ad-hoc, or informal.

In terms of challenges experienced between responder agencies, the key take-away was that **operational response capacities depended not only on numbers and resources, but crucially on the systems, relationships, and communication between them.** To this point, the analysis emphasised the importance of communicating clearly, quickly, and inclusively, ensuring that the best possible level of situational awareness can drive a timely, targeted, and effective response.

2. Coordination

Coordination of response efforts, recovery operations and the extraction of supporting resources formed a second sub-group of learning in this theme. The reports demonstrated that **communities were better able to recognise dangers and take appropriate action when information was conveyed consistently and tailored to local contexts.** Where there was inconsistent, delayed or unclear messaging, confidences were undermined all round, leading to increased confusion or misinformation during critical moments. For example, information sharing across communities was inhibited by the unavailability or inability to produce and/or disseminate communications in locally spoken languages.

Efficient and well-coordinated information exchange between agencies was also essential for maintaining effective operational capacity. In this case, reviewed reports indicated that **delayed sharing of vital information, unclear roles and responsibilities, and fragmented communication between agencies could weaken even well-funded responses.** Organisations were better able to collaborate under pressure and sustain continuity during recovery when clear responsibilities were present and established communications channels/systems were in place to support coordination. When these were lacking or poorly understood, informal workarounds, gaps in responsibility, and duplication occurred, reducing capacity overall.

3. Protraction

The final group of lessons and recommendations in this thematic area emphasised the dynamic and challenging nature of recovery: for the individuals affected; the community groups involved; and the agencies responsible for extracting support or resources when the time comes. **Across different types of emergencies, the protracted complexities of non-linear recovery journeys were salient.** In many cases, the surge of effort and capacity created in response efforts could understandably not be maintained, especially in what for many could be considered an 'open-ended' recovery. Especially when, in some cases, recovery remained on-going when the next disaster (especially in the case of flooding) struck.

For individuals, post-event research reports particularly highlighted the protracted, long-term impacts on that emergency events had on mental health and wellbeing. For VCS organisations the immediate effects later gave way to longer-term impacts, putting pressure on funding to meet local need and demand. For agencies, rotas often became stretched and understaffed, frustrating the expectations of local people and groups in need of help. Overall, an important message here advocated for: (1) clear communication and expectation setting, (2) the need compassionate, collaborative, people-focussed exit strategies and; (3) long-term/on-going planning for the provision of mental health and wellbeing work/resources to support common social and psychological impacts that tend to endure beyond (and sometimes only manifest) the early weeks of recovery ‘work’.

A selection of transferable lessons from this theme are detailed below:

Response and recovery challenges		
Source	Transferable lesson	Ref
Practical action to build community resilience: The Good Life initiative in New Earswick	“There needs to be a planned (and preferably phased) reduction or exit of any outside assistance, funding or support to manage community expectations, which also seeks to promote a legacy with the community to embed change... planned transitions are needed to ensure that community resilience is actually embedded, and that people are left with the necessary network connections, knowledge and leadership skills to achieve their own goals rather than requiring continuing outside support.”	p.6, 66.
Experience of Community Resilience Projects in the Pacific Islands: Lessons for Future Operations	The research confirmed that the social impacts of flooding are widespread and interconnected and may be long-lasting [for months or even years]. Often, the long-lasting effects of a flood may be caused or exacerbated by the stress of dealing with the aftermath of a flood: cleaning up, dealing with insurers and builders and returning to the home. People are vulnerable in different ways at different times of the flood incident cycle... There is a strong case for providing more emotional support for flood victims, including the establishment of self-help groups.’	p.8–9, 20
Experience of Community Resilience Projects in the Pacific Islands: Lessons for Future Operations	When exit strategies did not align with local governance structures, funding arrangements, and planning cycles, projects risked losing their long-term influence: ‘Exit strategies should be closely linked to local governance systems to help ensure sustainability.’	p.46
Section 19 Flood Investigation Report: Carlisle	A number of community meetings have taken place, and these will continue in order to ensure that all those affected are given the opportunity to be involved in reducing the flood risk in their area.	p.5

Make it active: The disaster recovery graph

Have you come across the Disaster Recovery Graph before? The concept of the graph originated from work by the United Nations, demonstrating that often recovery frameworks do not actually encompass the ‘whole’ of ‘recovery’. The graph has gone on to be significantly influenced and developed through the work and experience of Professor Lucy Easthope.

In her books ‘[The Recovery Myth](#)’ and ‘[Come What May](#)’, Lucy uses the graph pictured below to help visualise and communicate helpful lessons on the different phases of recovery. The graph has been reproduced with permission below, as it speaks to the extended complexities and protracted nature of recovery, reflected in findings from this Digest’s learning analysis. The latter of the two books referenced is a pertinent reminder that: “The lesson here is that there is a path – and that the path cannot be rushed.”

- Have you considered how the Disaster Recovery Graph relates to your personal experience or context?
- How does your professional role influence, engage or intersect on the path charted in the graph? How can formal recovery planning support common challenges in these processes?

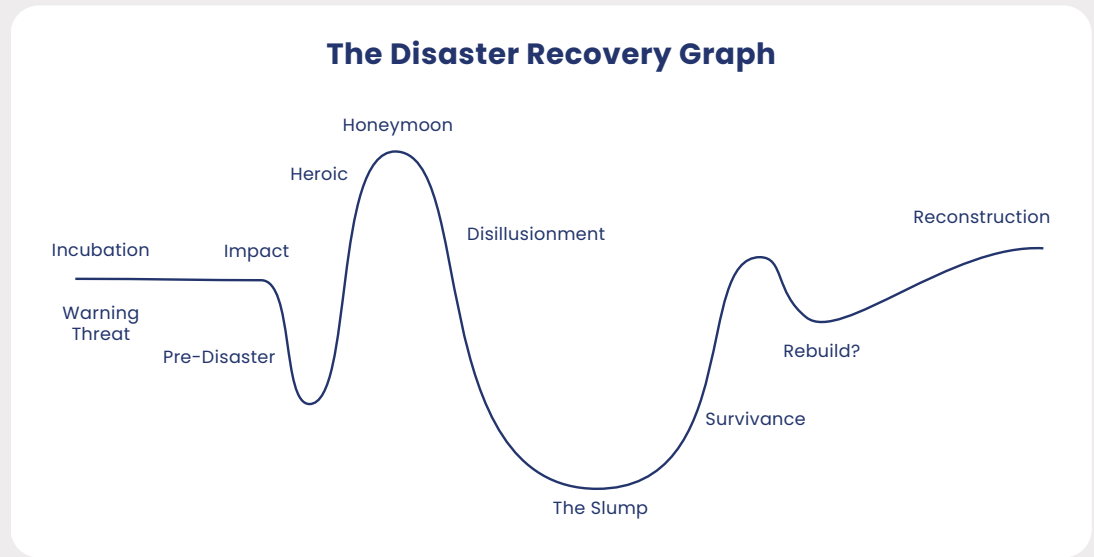


Figure 5: ©The Disaster Recovery Graph, Lucy Easthope. For further information on the different phases represented, please see: ‘The Recovery Myth’ and ‘Come What May’.

Theme 3: Emergency planning and preparedness

Lessons in this theme emphasised a continued and increasing need for robust yet agile, evidence-based emergency planning. They also stressed the vital importance of making plans and preparations meaningful to local households, networks and groups, for example through intentional engagement with local VCFS groups and neighbourhood networks. Hyperlocal plans for high-risk scenarios, such as localised flooding, that had been produced in the context of positive relationships between residents and responder organisations were particularly effective. When successful, co-production simultaneously fostered relationships between planners and residents, strengthened local buy-in and enabled local knowledge to inform plans.

Sub themes in this area highlighted i) the impacts of evolving risks on emergency planning, and ii) the opportunities for education, engagement, and empowerment of communities in the planning process.

Evolving emergencies

Reports highlighted the evolving nature of emergencies, resulting in responses that had exceeded reasonable worst case scenarios, led to unanticipated outcomes, or required underprepared resources. In such cases fixed plans and overarching, generalised impact assumptions had proven inadequate. For example, in some cases local emergency communication planning was in place but unable to meet multilingual neighbourhood needs, limiting its effectiveness and reach. In other situations, negative impacts had extended much further (geographically) than anticipated, due to evolving hazards (e.g. climate change), shared infrastructure and growing technological reliance. For example, the Carlisle Flood Investigation Report found that critical

infrastructure was left vulnerable due to a failure to fully account for a combination of shifting flood risks and system interdependencies, which increased severe storm disruption across communities. Focussing on preventative measures and anticipated system failures were found to be more effective when they assessed risks at a catchment, or system-wide level rather than solely concentrating on individual assets.

Recommendations in this area called for organisations to review the quality and accuracy of existing risk assessments, with renewed perspectives and increasingly open mindsets. The adoption of flexible planning frameworks was also encouraged, allowing organisations to pivot as situations change, rather than working to fixed scenarios.

Education, engagement, and empowerment

Most of the reports detailed at least one way in which the authoring organisation had engaged with residents in relation to emergency planning and preparedness. For some this was in the context of community research or consultation, for others it was through the delivery of emergency preparedness education and in some cases via post-event recovery groups. Whatever brought the local authority, planners or responders and community members together, reported benefits were evident in terms of building relationships, strengthening local connections and mutual knowledge sharing. In some cases, reciprocal relationships enabled the co-production of bespoke local emergency plans or even resourced and empowered local volunteer groups to set up their own community emergency hubs.

In general, efforts to engage local communities in this “top-down”

manner (i.e. led by an external organisation) were most successful when they were anchored into existing community interests or groups. However, barriers and challenges in achieving positive, community interactions were also experienced. In those cases lessons indicated that a lack of awareness of, trust in and connection to emergency planning teams, a lack of capacity and resource for relationship building (on either or both sides), and competing priorities and motivations (especially once a disaster has passed) could all influence community interactions and engagement. One way found to help overcome these challenges in the early stages of engagement was to identify and build relationships with key charities or local groups who had existing, trusted relationships in the community. In other cases identifying and/or introducing a Community Champions scheme was also found to help in establishing and developing those early connections.

A selection of transferable lessons from this theme are detailed below:

Emergency planning and preparedness		
Source	Transferable lesson	Ref
Section 19 Flood Investigation Report: Carlisle	During the flood event the power supply to the area failed...Following the failure of the pumping station the basin filled and overtopped leading to additional flooding... [Recommended action] to review the flood risk and resilience of critical transport and power supply infrastructure.	p.17, 32.
Building Community Resilience Through Engaging Neighbourhood Networks	1) There was a lack of awareness of and connection with emergency planning support amongst Neighbourhood Networks... (3) This lack of opportunity to engage with Neighbourhood Networks can mean that their value is not fully appreciated. [It is recommended that]: Emergency Planning Teams to invest in face-to-face engagement in well-trusted community places and figures • Emergency Planning Teams to better connect with internal Local Authority Teams that have good relationships with the community • Local Authorities to have dedicated team resource in the Emergency Planning team for community resilience	p.40-80
Practical action to build community resilience: The Good Life initiative in New Earswick	Although the training was consistently rated as excellent and educational, some participants reported difficulties in applying what they had learned to real-world tasks such as completing emergency plans, conducting exercises, or maintaining volunteer momentum. The extent to which learning was embedded was reduced by the lack of organised follow-up opportunities and personalised support, particularly for newly formed or less confident community groups	p.84-86

Make it active:

Have you considered where your organisation or local group are at in the local relationship building process? The diagram below provides an example of a opportunities for interaction. It was originally designed to support the development of health and social care services, but can be helpful in lots of contexts to develop current engagement, or decide on an appropriate level of engagement for a given project.

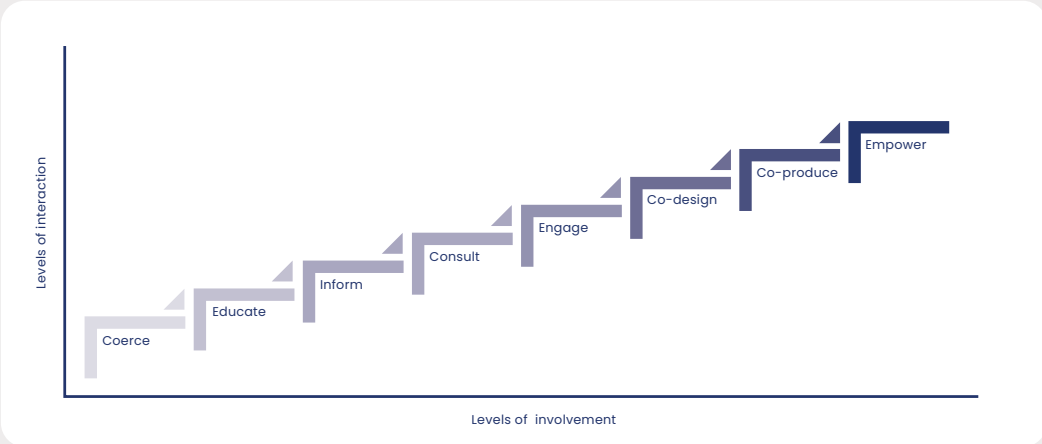


Figure 6: Levels of community interaction and involvement. Adapted from: *The Ladder of Co-production?, and informed by 'Experience of Community Resilience Projects in the Pacific Islands: Lessons for future operations'*

For diagram: definition of terms

- Coerce:**
People use services or attend an event about services as passive recipients. Their views are not considered important and are not taken into account.

Educate:
People who use services are helped to understand the service design and delivery so that they gain relevant knowledge about it.

Inform:
People are responsible for services that inform other about the services and explain how they work. This may include telling people what decisions have been made and why.
- Consult:**
People who use services may be asked to fill in surveys or attend meetings. They may not have the power to influence or effect change, but can provide feedback on things such as plans, analyses, alternatives, decisions.

Engage:
People who use services are given more opportunities to express their views and may be able to influence some decisions, depending on what those responsible for the service allow.
- Co-design:**
People who use services are involved in designing services, based on their experiences and ideas. They have genuine influence but may not be involved in seeing the designed service through.

Co-produce:
People who use services and those responsible for services work together from design to delivery, sharing strategic decision-making about policies and service delivery.

Empower:
People who use services 'own' the service, leading on final decisions and delivery.

Theme 4: Governance and assurance

This theme underscored the important role that sound governance plays in helping responder organisations work efficiently and effectively with each other and their local communities.

Reports demonstrated that organisations with clear lines of authority, responsibility and consistent local representation benefitted from higher levels of confidence amongst local communities. Trust, cooperation and collaboration were further improved when levels of risk and uncertainty were clearly acknowledged in policy and well translated through communications with local community members. The importance of respecting and understanding necessary aspects of governance structures underpinning engaged VCFSE groups was also highlighted. Doing so offered responders an opportunity to enhance their understanding of how local groups operate in practice, signalling their commitment to equitable partnership working in planning and response. It was further recommended that responder organisations include local VCSFE groups and related networks in regular emergency exercises, to regularly test whether the roles and processes facilitated by their governance arrangements functioned with clarity and fluency in practice.

There was also a role for both responder organisations and local partners with more established governance structures in helping others make sense of policy and risk information. Communities were better able to recognise dangers and take prompt protective action when information and guidance was conveyed clearly, consistently, accessibly, and tailored to local contexts.

Conversely, responder organisations with complex, fragmented, or unclear governance arrangements and vague accountability tended to undermine system confidence and weaken responsibilities during a response. It also had the potential to obstruct or complicate decision-making processes and result in unclear guidance to those affected by emergencies, which tended to weaken trust and diminish community involvement over time. To help counter this, reports advocated for independent assurance and oversight processes that provide the necessary accountability, transparency, and challenge to flag discrepancies between official guidelines and actual operations, while driving continual capability improvements.

Overall, this theme emphasised how resilience relies on strong governance, clear direction and assurance, as the foundations that underpin consistent practice, learning, and trust at every level of emergency management.

A selection of transferable lessons from this theme are detailed below:

Governance and assurance		
Source	Transferable lesson	Ref
UK Covid 19 Inquiry - Module 1: The resilience and preparedness of the United Kingdom	[the Inquiry learned that] refresh' was a euphemism for an update [to strategic plans] that was only minor and limited in scope... The governments of the UK, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland should each introduce the use of red teams. to scrutinise and challenge the principles, evidence, policies and advice relating to preparedness.	p.149-152 (Rec.9)
Practical action to build community resilience: The Good Life initiative in New Earswick	The initiative showed that community-led activities alone were not enough to overcome larger systemic barriers such as infrastructure delivery, policy cohesion, and disparities between areas... Besides reducing the effectiveness and fairness of community resilience efforts, a lack of supportive governance could also deepen inequality... There will still be an ongoing role for supportive governance (by local and national bodies) to ensure the wider context of infrastructure and policies to support local resilience across communities." "Building the necessary social capital, knowledge, leadership skills and support networks to allow communities to effectively engage with policies needs to happen before introducing initiatives."	p.66
Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report	The Inquiry found a lack of consistent, formal requirements/ assurance to practice as a fire engineer, and a lack of understanding about fire engineering across the built environment: We therefore recommend that the profession of fire engineer be recognised and protected by law and that an independent body be established to regulate the profession... Pending the establishment of such a body we recommend that the government convene a group of practitioner and academic fire engineers...[to] produce an authoritative statement of the knowledge and Skills to be expected of a competent fire engineer."	Rec.15

Theme 5: Community investment and integration

This theme brought together notable lessons on the need for a holistic, integrated and sustainable approach to community resilience. It highlighted findings on key antecedents of community resilience, the need for anticipatory investment and financial preparedness, and the cohesive benefits of value driven programmes.

Three key subthemes in this area included:



Financial investment and funding: Reports suggested that the disbursements of funds to support local activities before or after an emergency were more effective when a) granted to local delivery partners with existing credibility and b) aligned to the goals or priorities of community groups. Findings also advocated for financial forethought and pre-agreed disbursement mechanisms that could be activated quickly in the event of an emergency, as local groups as they could often reach residents that statutory services could not. Caution was raised over inadequate financial support and partial provision, which could exacerbate recovery costs in subsequent crises.



Social capital and cohesion: Social cohesion was described as the “glue that holds society together”, and a key precursor of resilience. Activities that supported and strengthened social cohesion (whether through direct project work or indirect engagement with existing programmes or networks) were considered to be important strategic investments (financially and relationally) in community preparedness.



Local integration: When community resilience projects were based on externally dictated aims, buy-in was often poor and engagement found to diminish over time. Responder organisations with wider, long-term community resilience strategies, clear frameworks, engagement plans, and allocated engagement leads were better placed than those without to establish and sustain relationships across the risk cycle. The analysis indicates that sustained capability, rather than short-term escalation, is vital to protect communities during complex or prolonged situations.

Overall investment and integration often went hand in hand, strengthening connections between local groups and authorities, and providing opportunities for organisations and institutions to achieve strategic priorities through an aligned, holistic approach to resilience.

A selection of transferable lessons from this theme are detailed below:

Community investment and integration		
Source	Transferable lesson	Ref
Social infrastructure and social capital – the active elements of community resilience (Lessons for the UK section only)	The cost of incomplete response compounds over time. France spent billions after 2005 but still faced renewed riots in 2023. Each cycle of violence requires more expensive intervention, more policing, more criminal justice costs, more economic damage than sustained investment in prevention would have cost. The €1 billion damage from the 2023 riots represents five times the cost of 2005.	p.21
Experience of Community Resilience Projects in the Pacific Islands: Lessons for Future Operations	Participatory plans addressing climate and disaster risks help communities prioritise investments and strengthen resilience processes—but care is needed to manage community expectations ...This [participatory] planning process helped communities build resilience capacity and awareness, beyond the scope of the sub-projects that were ultimately funded. [Recommendation]...To the maximum extent possible, resilient development plans should be used as opportunities to help communities strengthen their own resilience processes. This may include helping communities think through, as well as learn from, past experiences, building awareness of [climate] and disaster risks.	p.21, 23
Building Community Resilience Through Engaging Neighbourhood Networks	...systems change work needs deep, long term investment and care in the most affected communities"... As communities face escalating economic, social, and environmental pressures, increases in funding and resource will be vital in maintaining community- Increase funding for social cohesion and community resilience initiatives [is recommended]: .. funders] should expand support to grassroots organisations [on an ongoing basis] dedicated to fostering social cohesion and community resilience.	p.28-29

Resources: Social Cohesion

If you are looking to expand your knowledge on social cohesion, or integrate practices that support social cohesion in the context of community resilience building, the following resources offer information on policy, theory, practice and measurement. They are just a few of many resources available on this topic.

- UK Government Policy paper – [Protecting What Matters: Towards a more confident, cohesive, and resilient United Kingdom](#). Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2026.
- Research briefing: [Strengthening community cohesion](#). House of Commons Library, 2026.
- Social cohesion in practice (UK) – [Building Resilient Communities: The Case for Social Cohesion](#). Protection Approaches, commissioned by London Resilience, 2024.
- Operationalising and measuring social cohesion (EU) – [Social cohesion concept and measurement](#). United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), 2023.

Conclusion

Taken together, these themes emphasise how effective understanding, support, and collaboration throughout the risk cycle help to build resilient communities.

The analysis demonstrates that adaptable, evidence-based plans, supported by strong governance, and assurance help to support consistent local practice and accountability. Strategic preparedness and anticipatory action were particularly effective when locally tailored to meet specific needs and support existing goals.

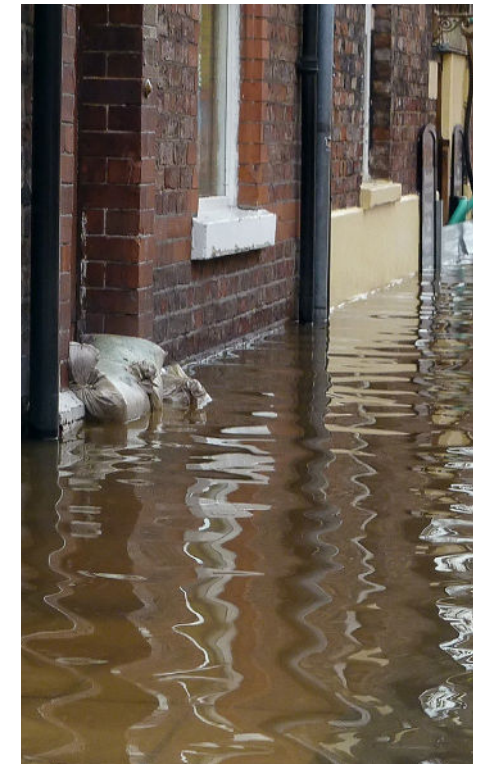
Long-term resilience can be fostered by integrating efforts with local values and existing programmes, recognising that trust, relationships and people are as important to resilience as strategies, frameworks, and resources.

Emergency planning in partnership: Strengthening flood resilience in Loftus

Introduction

[Cleveland Local Resilience Forum](#) (Cleveland LRF) is a multi-agency partnership bringing together over 30 partners from a range of organisations, including the Emergency Services, Local Authorities, Health partners, Utilities and the Voluntary sector. It covers the Cleveland Police force area in the Northeast of England¹. The area faces a wide range of risks, including more than 20 top tier COMAH sites, a nuclear power station, a major port, an extensive coastline, and a diverse mix of urban and rural communities. In this case study Rachael Campbell, Principal Emergency Planning Officer at Cleveland LRF, explains how they have worked with Loftus Town Council, to strengthen resilience to flooding through the development of a Local Emergency Plan. She also shares some helpful lessons that the Forum have identified along the way.

Loftus is a flood-prone town and parish in Cleveland, North Yorkshire. In 2023, Loftus Town Council were keen to ensure the area was better prepared for future flood incidents, and started working with [Cleveland Local Resilience Forum](#) to strengthen their resilience. This work focused on the development of a Local Emergency Plan. Then, in July 2024, Loftus went on to experience two significant flooding events within the space of just two days. Homes were flooded and we learnt that many occupants were reluctant to evacuate, instead moving upstairs within their properties.



¹ [Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit](#)

Establishing a safe space

Following these events, the Town Council placed a strong focus on establishing a safe space for residents during emergencies. The Town Council successfully secured funding through the Cleveland LRF Community Grants Scheme, which enabled them to purchase practical equipment such as aqua sacks and a portable generator. This equipment has allowed the Town Council not only to support property-level flood protection, but also to provide a safe and resilient location for residents to use during incidents. These resources have since proved invaluable and have been utilised by the community on several occasions. Loftus Town Council continues to strengthen and enhance its resilience capabilities and has been identified as a Community Resilience Hub. This initiative, led by Cleveland LRF, provides additional support and coordination for communities activating during emergency situations.



Lessons identified

Through the work in Loftus, Cleveland LRF identified the following lessons to inform future resilience activities with our communities:



1. Early engagement with communities builds readiness before an incident occurs

Loftus, as a community, were actively seeking ways to improve their resilience and this resulted in them having plans in place when the flooding occurred in July 2024.



2. Real incidents can be powerful catalysts for strengthening resilience

Before a community has experienced an incident, engagement on resilience can be quite difficult. However, an incident focuses attention, and communities are then more receptive.



3. Small, targeted funding can deliver high-impact practical outcomes

The Cleveland LRF Community Grants initiative offers small grants up to £4000 to support communities to become more resilient. Even a relatively small amount of funding can make a huge difference.



4. Community-led safe spaces increase trust and reduce reluctance to evacuate

By being able to provide a safe space within communities, residents are more likely to leave their homes to go to a familiar building within a close distance. Having this in place provides reassurance to residents for any future incidents.



5. Ongoing support and integration into wider resilience networks sustains progress

Building relationships between communities and key partners is vital for continued progress. Working together across the resilience network with our communities provides the foundation for strong enabled communities.

Make it active:

Did you know that the [Duke of Cornwall Community Safety Award](#) was launched in 2012, in response to significant flooding in Cornwall. The award aims to teach and train young people between the ages of 5 and 18 in how to assist before, during and after a crisis. While originally developed in response to flooding, this established award continues to provide a great, practical introduction to what do in an emergency, whether that be severe weather, power cut or pandemic². It is split into three age-tailored award levels:

- The Home Award (5-10-year-olds)
- The Neighbourhood Award (10-14-year-olds)
- The Community Award (14-18-year-olds)

Many local councils, schools, and organisations working with young people have adapted the award content for delivery in their context. It can also be used by individuals and families in the home. An example of [how CLRF have done this in their area is available here.](#)

**About the author:**

Rachael Campbell is Principal Emergency Planning Officer at Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit, working across 4 local authorities and the Cleveland Local Resilience Forum. She is experienced in risk management, response coordination, preparedness planning and recovery. Rachael is committed to strengthening both organisational and community resilience through effective planning and continuous improvement

² The Duke of Cornwall Community Safety Award – Cornwall Council

Riots to resilience:

Five ways to turn lessons into action



Introduction

The Voluntary Community Sector Emergencies Partnership connects voluntary, community, and public sector partners before, during, and after emergencies. In this article author their Head of Delivery, Marcus Bowen, discusses the research that they commissioned in response to the racist and Islamophobic riots of August 2024. Working with Neighbourly Lab, the research findings led to five evidence-based recommendations that communities can act on to strengthen resilience to future unrest.

Between 30 July and 5 August 2024, the UK experienced a wave of riots, protests, and civil unrest following a mass stabbing in Southport that tragically killed three children. False online claims that the attacker was a Muslim asylum seeker quickly spread, fuelling violence, arson, clashes with police, and attacks on businesses and places of worship.

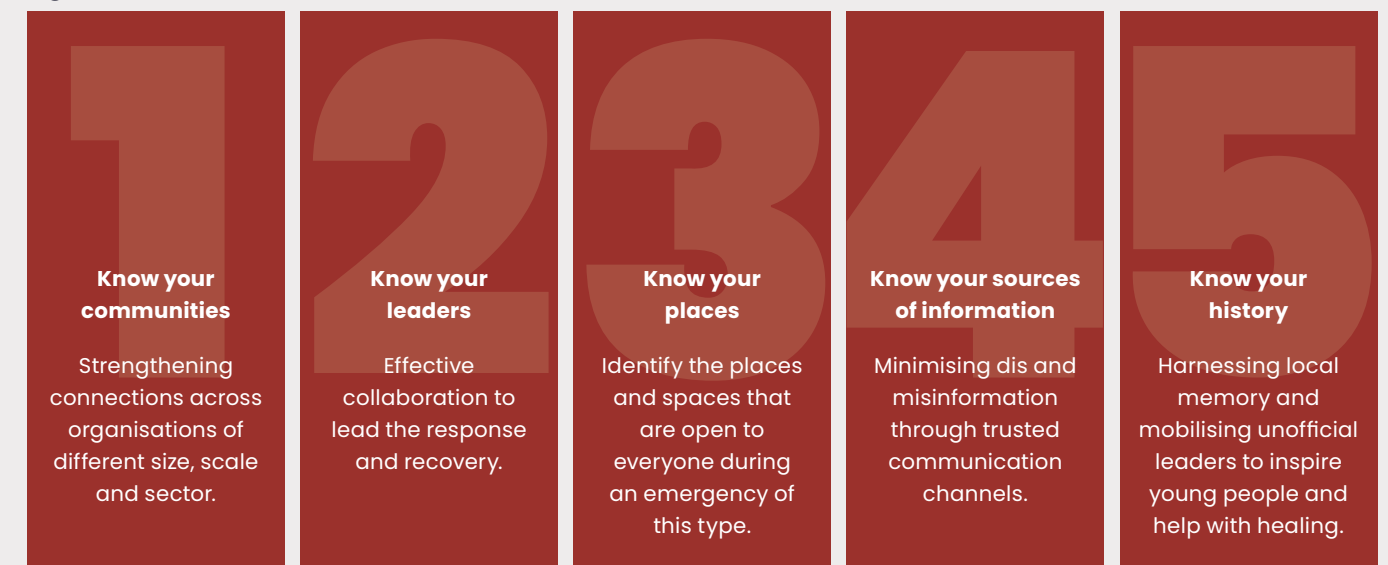
In response, the VCS Emergencies Partnership commissioned a report to understand the impact on communities and identify lessons to support recovery. While many such reports focus on recommendations to government and legislative change, we wanted to offer practical recommendations that communities could act on immediately to strengthen their resilience to future unrest.

In February 2025, in collaboration with Neighbourly Lab, a research and innovation organisation committed to building more inclusive communities – we published Riots to Resilience: Five Ways to Turn Lessons into Action. It captured the experiences of 80 local, national, and statutory organisations affected by the racist and Islamophobic riots.

Marnie Freeman, Co-Founder and Director of Neighbourly Lab, said: “Learning from the range of experiences across England has meant we can share strategies to help build resilience in the future.”

The five key recommendations made to support community resilience building, based on the findings from the research, can be seen in Figure 7.

Figure 7.



The report's impact has since extended well beyond its publication. One of the clearest lessons was the role of mis and disinformation in fuelling the unrest. In May 2025, we published a [Mis and Disinformation Information Sheet](#), co-authored with experts from Full Fact, the Center for Countering Digital Hate, and NCVO. Designed to help charities and community groups respond effectively when false information spreads during emergencies, it has already been downloaded over 400 times.

The riots also underscored the importance of safeguarding community spaces and service users. Our event on Martyn's Law legislation drew record attendance, as partners across our network sought to understand the implications of the new legislation and explore proactive steps to make their spaces safer, regardless of legal obligation.

Looking forward

More than a year on, there is a growing consensus that the potential for further unrest remains high. Our Network call last July, which focused on civil unrest and its impact on migrants and refugees, once again drew strong engagement. The discussion centred on the report's five key recommendations – particularly the importance of knowing your communities, knowing your sources of information, and knowing your history. These themes continue to resonate deeply, showing that the report is not only timely but essential.

Resources: Riots to resilience

The full report, including key findings and recommendations, is [available here](#)



About the author:

The **Voluntary Community Sector Emergencies Partnership (VCSEP)** connects voluntary, community, and public sector partners before, during, and after emergencies – so people and communities are at the heart, from the start. With over 300 partner organisations, VCS Emergencies Partnership are a leading force for resilience-building across England, fostering trust, sharing knowledge, and developing skills to better support those affected by emergencies. For more information visit VCSEP.org.uk



About Neighbourly Lab:

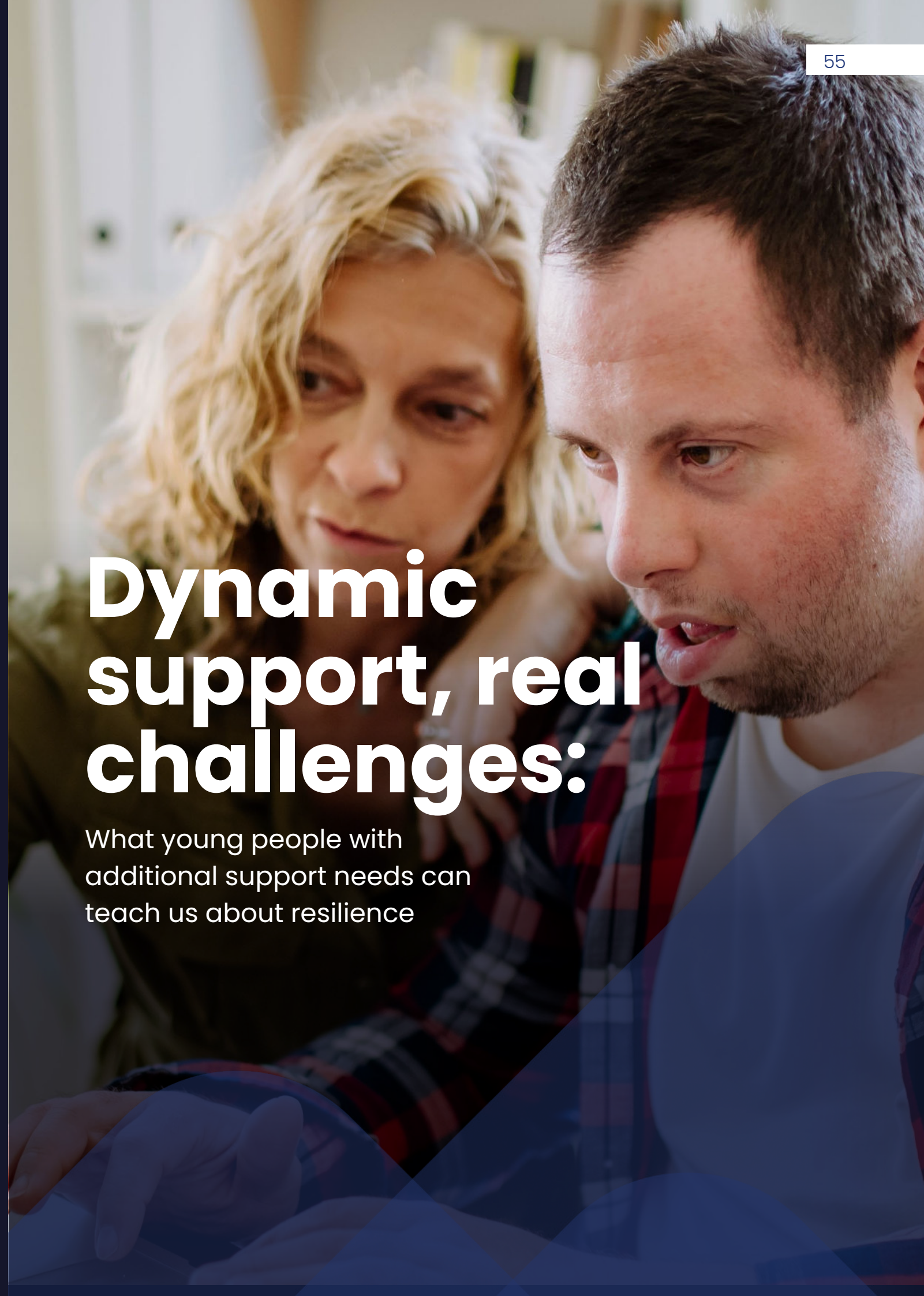
Our mission is to understand how people and communities can be supported to better connect. We work to gain insights into what works, where and how to achieve solutions that can be scaled and replicated. These solutions address the needs of those communities who are less well-heard and demonstrate sensitivity towards their experiences and priorities. For more information visit neighbourlylab.com

About the author:

Marcus Bowen is Head of Delivery at VCS Emergencies Partnership. He leads the strategic and operational delivery of the Partnership. His role focuses on driving high-quality partnership communications, products, and events that connect communities and organisations across the resilience sector.

Dynamic support, real challenges:

What young people with additional support needs can teach us about resilience



Introduction

The [National Centre for Resilience](#) is a cross-sector partnership with a mission to connect universities, government and practice. Committed to improving country-wide resilience to natural hazards, the Centre works to help build Scotland's resilience to significant natural hazard events utilises existing knowledge and commissions new projects to address real life issues faced by resilience practitioners and communities. In this article, Dr Alexander Whitelaw, Research Director, shares findings from recent research looking at how resilience could be promoted amongst young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN).

There is a growing recognition that many groups, particularly young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN), require more inclusive systems and responses when it comes to fostering resilience. There's still limited insight in this area¹, with most research focusing on individual resilience and overlooking the environments that shape lived experience, especially for young people with ASN, who are often excluded from mainstream education and employment. However, new perspectives point to the value of 'ecological'² and 'settings'-based approaches³ where resilience is best promoted in a collective 'community' context.

Sidelight: About ASN

Additional support needs (ASN) is the term used in Scotland for children and young people with additional learning needs.

The equivalent term in England is Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). In Northern Ireland this is sometimes shortened to Special Educational Needs (SEN), and in Wales the equivalent is Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

¹ Scheffers, F., Moonen, X. and van Vugt, E., 2020. External sources promoting resilience in adults with intellectual disabilities: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities*, 26 (1), pp. 227–243.

² Ungar, M. and Theron, L., 2020. Resilience and mental health: How multisystemic processes contribute to positive outcomes. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 7 (5), pp.441–448.

³ Vlot-van Anrooij, K., Naaldenberg, J., Hilgenkamp, T.I.M., Vaandrager, L., Van Der Velden, K. and Leusink, G.L., 2020. Towards healthy settings for people with intellectual disabilities. *Health Promotion International*, 35 (4), pp.661–670.

Inspired by this and the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, this **National Centre for Resilience** funded project was undertaken by the **School of Social and Environmental Sustainability, University of Glasgow**, and explored how organisational 'settings' (such as workplaces) could be used to promote resilience amongst this group.

This work focused on **The Usual Place** (TUP)⁴, an award winning, social enterprise in Dumfries. Operating as a community café, TUP offers training and employment for young people with ASN. Crucially, it does so through a business model, giving trainees direct experience of a real working environment. Making it an ideal setting in which to explore:

1. How is resilience understood and experienced by young people with ASN?
2. What organisational features help promote resilience in such a setting?

In-depth interviews were conducted with both TUP trainees and stakeholders, including mentors and staff members. The findings challenge traditional assumptions about resilience and offer a more nuanced perspective.



⁴ For more detail of this organisation see <https://www.theusualplace.org/>

How is resilience understood and experienced by young people with ASN?

Trainees described resilience in personal and metaphorical terms likening a form of personal flexibility to “a bendy tree in a big storm and “like an elastic band”. This reflects an understanding of resilience as an ability to adapt and respond to adversity.

More profoundly, resilience was seen as an inevitable challenge (“part of life” in a “big bad world”) and associated with growing up and becoming an adult (“about helping people with learning disabilities be adults...take risks...go out clubbing, go and have a drink, go and do what everybody else does”).

Resilience was seen as both internal “inner strength” and relational, something shaped by the people and environments around them as in “it depends on the nurture... the adults round about you”.



What organisational features help promote resilience in such a setting?

Looking at how the setting of TUP contributes to building resilience, trainees and staff pushed back against overprotectiveness, using terms such as “mollycoddling,” “smothering,” and “wrapping in cotton wool” to describe unhelpful approaches.

Instead, TUP’s effectiveness lies in structured challenge and supportive exposure. Trainees are expected to contribute meaningfully to a busy public facing café environment, including reacting to challenges, as one participant noted: “it’s...about trauma....and just challenges that you actually face every day...how you dealt with them”. Staff and mentors at TUP provide what they call ‘stand-back mentoring’, by both exposing trainees to new dynamic situations and uncertainty (“helping to push them to know where their boundaries are.... getting them out of their comfort zone”) and being supportive when needed via “tailored exposure”; and “managing uncertainties”. This delicate balance appears to be a key factor in fostering sustainable resilience.

Implications for policy and practice

Three core principles emerged from the research that should inform future policy and programme design:

- Resilience is the product of ‘dynamic strain’ a tension between encouraging independence and providing tailored support when needed. The aim is not to eliminate challenge but manage in way that supports growth.
- Resilience can be supported in environments that blend consistency (routines and regularity) with unpredictability (flux, unexpected events or built in change), challenge is very deliberately built in and agreed.
- Resilience is fostered directly via work experience co-produced with the young people and regularly co-reviewed.

Figure 8: A dynamic continuum: Protective and challenging features for fostering resilience amongst young people with ASN in organisational settings

	‘Protective’ features		‘Challenging’ features
Level of assistance	Active, interventionist support (when needed)		Fostering independence, taking responsibility and ‘failing safely’ (and the notion of ‘stand back mentoring’);
Orientation of support	Tailored individualised approach		Recognising the collective needs of the whole organisation as a working café
Degree of consistency	Providing consistency and security through regularity and routines		Recognising the importance of uncertainty and unpredictability as a pre-requisite of resilience
Nature of spaces	Creating safe and secure spaces		Allowing and enabling spaces to be unpredictable where trainees go outside their comfort zone

For further details on this project please see further details on the Centre’s website⁵.

⁵ Fostering Resilience in Young People with ASN – Knowledge Exchange event

About the author:

Dr Alexander Whitelaw has a 25-year track record in teaching, research and publication in and around public health policy and is a senior lecturer in Health and Social Policy at the University of Glasgow.

Resources: Are you prepared?

The National Centre for Resilience has launched ‘Are you prepared?’, an interactive educational card game for children aged 6–12 years, in Scotland. Aimed at raising awareness about natural hazards, it teaches children how to prepare for, stay safe during, and recover from severe weather events. Distributed to every state primary school in spring of 2025, the game is ideal for classrooms, families, and community groups. Co-designed with children, educators, and resilience experts, it includes a teacher’s resource pack with glossary, discussion prompts, and homework activities. Are You Prepared? makes resilience learning approachable, fun, and accessible for young learners across Scotland. [Find out more here.](#)



Whitelaw, S., Bell, A., Mackay, A. and Hall, H. (2024) Fostering resilience in young people with intellectual disabilities using a ‘settings’ approach, *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities*, 28 (2); pp. 549–566.

The National Consortium For Societal Resilience [UK+]:

Lessons from working to build resilience in society

Introduction

The [National Consortium for Societal Resilience \[UK+\]](#) (NCSR+)¹ was established in 2021 to enhance the UK's whole-of-society approach to resilience, so that individuals, groups, organisations, and networks can all play a meaningful part in building the resilience of our society. In this article NCSR+ members Becky Heginbotham-Blount, Andrew McClelland, Christopher Scott and Duncan Shaw provide a helpful overview of learning modules that have been co-produced with local resilience partners, to support societal resilience and the development of local capabilities. This is followed by a 'deep dive' into the findings of the Consortium's latest research publication on the public benefits of societal resilience.

Initial learning from NCSR+

Co-production: Supporting local resilience capability

The NCSR+ defines societal resilience as: 'Capability created by local systems that helps people and places to adapt and advance in a changing environment'.



Back in 2021, we began co-producing shared lessons with local resilience partnerships to support some of the local capabilities that underpin societal resilience. This resulted in the co-production of a [“Strategy and Manual”](#) to help partners think about societal resilience as a strategic endeavour.

¹ NCSR+ includes all 51 local resilience partnerships across the UK (i.e. all LRFs, EPGs, RRP). The Crown Dependencies of Guernsey, Jersey, and the Isle of Man, and partners from the voluntary, community, business, and higher education sectors contribute as the '+' in NCSR+.

Sidelights: Did you know...?

Following production of the 'Strategy and Manual', the International Standards Organisation then asked NCSR+ to develop this work into [ISO22354 "Guidelines to develop local capability to enhance societal resilience to disruption"](#), and that international standard will be available soon.

After the Strategy and Manual, NCSR+ went on to co-produce a [suite of modules](#) to enable self-help and helping others in a disruption. These modules include:



Community emergency hubs: Module 1 offers local resilience partnerships an approach to enable faster, better, safer, and more locally appropriate community responses to a disruption.



Spontaneous volunteers: Module 2 simplifies our previous approaches to organising spontaneous offers of help from individuals. It streamlines the coordination of everyday activities to free responders up.



Essential sectors that support vulnerable persons: Module 3 offers 17 questions to assure the resilience of organisations that are essential to support vulnerable persons in a disruption (e.g. social housing, domiciliary care).



Help from civil society: Module 4 presents a new approach for local resilience partnerships to help people in need access offers of support from civil society organisations. We call the approach Ready2Help.

² This project was supported by DEFRA/Environment Agency, via the Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience project, part of the £200m Flood and Coastal Innovation Programme (FCIP)

Latest learning from NCSR+

Lesson deep dive: The public value of societal resilience

The latest published learning from NCSR+ came from an 18-month research project assessing the public value of societal resilience to disruption (www.ambs.ac.uk/publicvalue). This work was commissioned by Cumbria CVS (Council for Voluntary Service)² and sponsored by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) / Environment Agency (EA). Our Social Return on Investment approach discovered that every £1 invested in societal resilience to disruption generates £35.12 of public value.

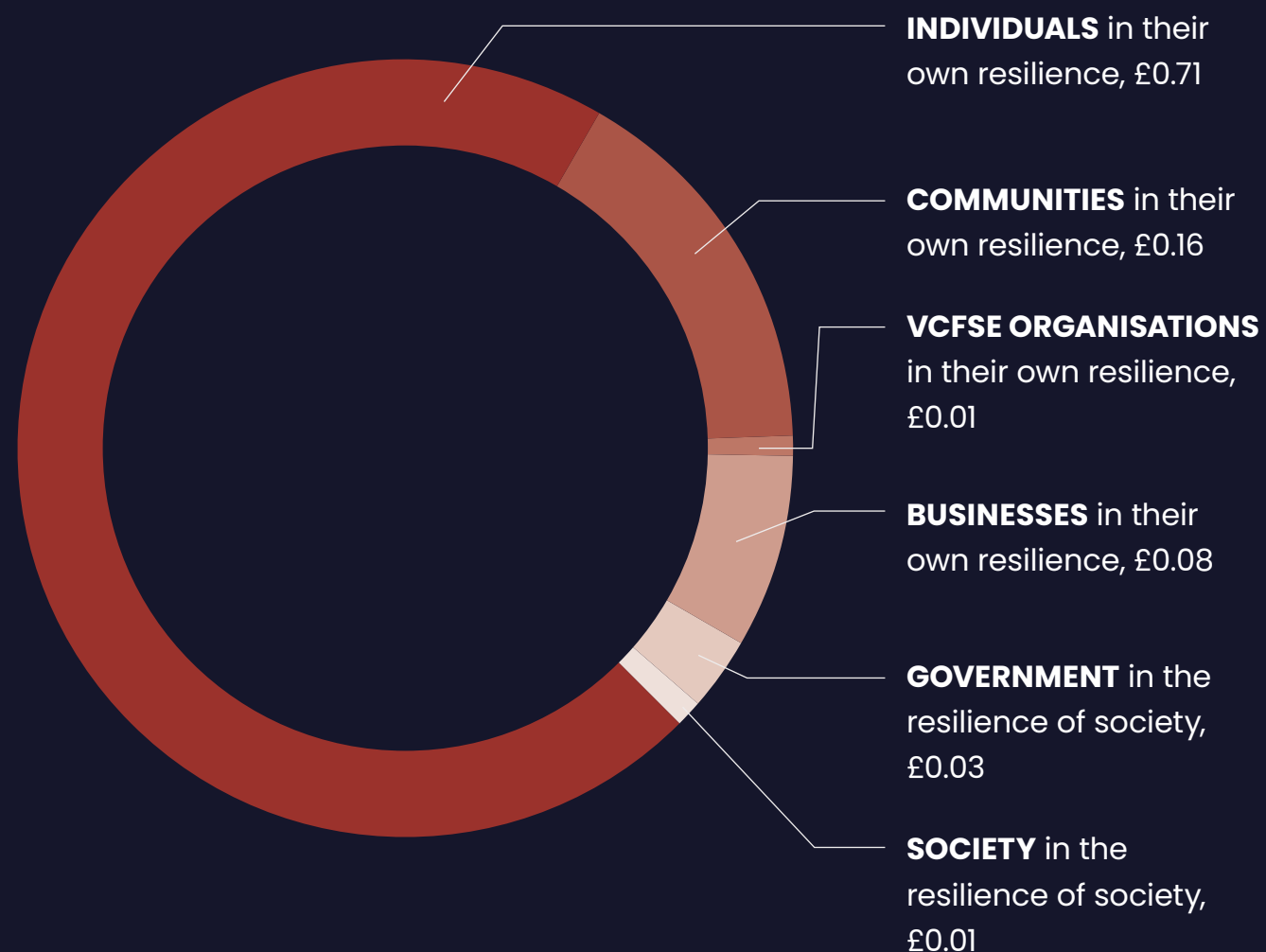
Public value is created by investing in ways to help society (i.e. individuals, communities, VCFSE organisations, businesses, government) to avoid, prepare for, respond to, and recover from a disruption. This level of public value is amassed where 5 years elapses between any type of disruption.

The assessment was grounded in the experiences of communities that have been disrupted and the officials who plan to help them. We collected evidence from 90 people to identify and assess 74 measures:

- **24 investments** that help society be more resilient to a disruption.
- **50 savings** (or avoided losses) from society being more resilient.

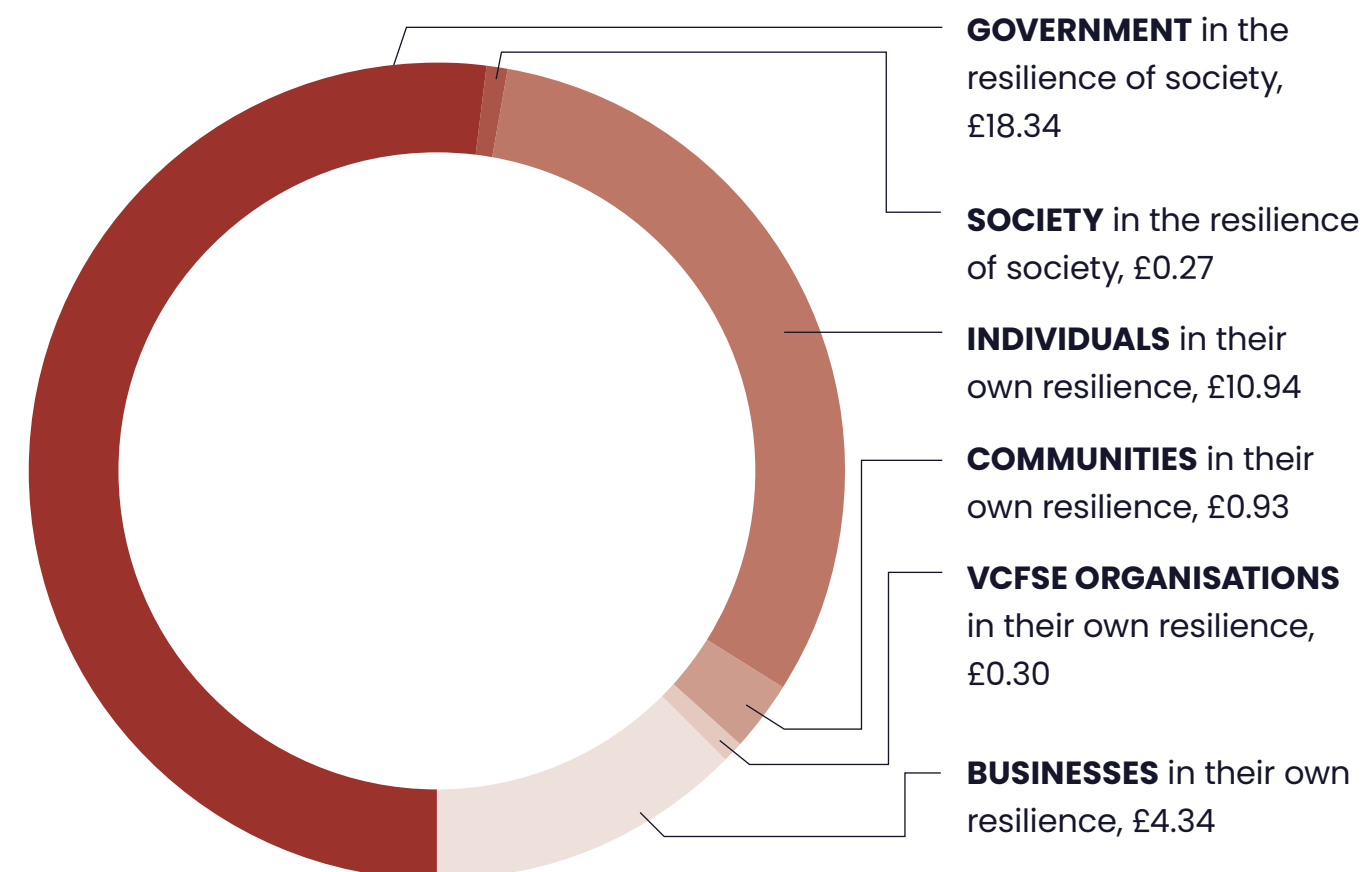
Every £1 invested in societal resilience to disruption generates £35.12 of public value.

The proportion of the £1 is invested by:



So, investment by local and national government is minor, contributing £0.026 and £0.006 of the £1, respectively. This investment is in additional staff time to support society's resilience-building activities – not to deliver an LRF's business-as-usual activities. Without investing in government's capacity, society's resilience activities would be curtailed and £35.12 would not be saved.

The proportion of the £35.12 is saved by:



Despite its minor investment, government reaps the greatest proportion of savings from society being more resilient (£18.34 of the £35.12) because societal resilience helps to lessen the impacts of a disruption (economic loss, damage, injury, psycho-social strain), reducing the need for expensive government intervention.

If disruptions happen more frequently than every 5 years, the saving is greater (e.g. if disruptions happen every year the saving is £161.77). If disruptions only occur every 20 years, the savings are still substantial at £9.48.

Figure 9: Savings for different 'times between disruptions':

Disrupted every 1 Year	Disrupted every 2 Years	Disrupted every 5 Years	Disrupted every 10 Years	Disrupted every 20 Years
£161.77 Saved	£84.59 Saved	£35.12 Saved	£18.101 Saved	£9.48 Saved

Make it active: Using £35.12 in strategic conversations

The public value of resilience offers more than just £35.12 of savings. Being resilient to disruption matters. Investment to create resilience matters. Sometimes even without their knowledge, all this matters to the most vulnerable parts of society. So, investment by government is essential to support community cohesion, coordination, training, and equipment for resilience. £35.12 should help leaders to appreciate the monetary benefit of investing in societal resilience to disruption, that investment will pay back 35 times over. Investing £5,000 in a community group creates £176,000 of public value.

Investing £5,000 in a community group creates £176,000 of public value.

To put £35.12 into perspective, £1 spent brings benefits of £2.92 from UK construction, £3.98-4.12 from the NHS, £4.20 from physical activity, and £5.30 from investing in employee mental health.

Use £35.12 as evidence of the urgent need to invest in the resilience of our societies. Help society to help itself. Support that journey. Whole-of-society has so much to offer in building resilience to disruption. Investing in that endeavour is the right thing to do, financially, socially, and ethically.



What's next? Emerging lessons from NCSR+

NCSR+ will continue to develop Ready2Help and embed that in local resilience partnerships, so learning will soon be available. We will also continue to develop lessons on where to best invest in societal resilience as, without help, the most vulnerable could be left behind when disruption hits.

About the authors

This article was authored by: Becky Heginbotham-Blount, Suffolk Resilience Forum; Andrew McClelland, The University of Manchester; Christopher Scott, West Sussex County Council and Duncan Shaw, The University of Manchester.

For more information you can get in touch about NCSR+: ncsr@manchester.ac.uk. Further examples of NCSR+ working with resilience partners are [available here](#).

Resources from NCSR+

Support for local resilience partnerships

NCSR+ also offers training and support on the implementation of the co-produced modules for supporting local resilience capability. Many local resilience partnerships adopt these modules, and there are 60 stories of how they have informed UK practice in the last year [available here](#).

National conference on societal resilience

Every year, NCSR+ organise a national conference to bring together partners from policy and practice across the UK to share insights and collaborate. To find out more please visit the [News and Events section on our website](#).

Resources

Further reading and resources

Belong Network

The [Belong Network](#) are the UK's leading membership organisation on social cohesion. They exist to connect, support and mobilise all those working to build stronger, more resilient, connected communities. For more information on the Networks offer and resources, [visit their website.](#)

Climate change and mental health

The [climate change and mental health](#) thematic assessment report from the [UK Health Security Agency](#) synthesises the evidence base relating to climate change and mental health.

Common ground: Building cohesive communities

[This guidance on social cohesion](#) authored by Belong and endorsed by the LGA, aims to help local authorities fulfil this role. It provides local authorities with the tools to address the challenges they face and share good practice, with the goal of building cohesive communities.

Community Resilience Development Framework

The [Community Resilience Development Framework](#) (CRDF) provides an update to the Community Resilience Framework for Practitioners (2016). It provides guidance to help emergency planners ensure communities are central to emergency planning, response and recovery. It also reflects the wider landscape of activities and capabilities being captured under the term Community Resilience (individual resilience, social action, voluntary capabilities).

Communities Prepared

[Communities Prepared](#) is a national community resilience programme led by Groundwork South, that equips Community Emergency Volunteers (CEV) and Flood Warden groups with the knowledge and confidence to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a range of emergencies, from flooding and severe weather incidents to pandemics. There are many helpful links and free resources to support [community resilience on their website](#).

Community resilience: resources and tools

[Preparing for Emergencies: Guide for communities \(2016\)](#) offers local partners selection of [community resilience resources and tools](#), including a [Community Emergency Plan Toolkit \(2016\)](#).

Community Security Trust (CST)

[CST is a charity that protects British Jews from terrorism and antisemitism](#). They work across the Jewish community, from the most religious to the most secular, young to old, across the political spectrum and throughout the whole of the UK to ensure that Jewish people across the UK can lead the lives of their choice. Widely recognised by police and government as a unique model of best practice, CST's research regularly informs public policy and helps to safeguard wider British society. [For more information and resources, see their website](#).

Come What May, Life Changing Lessons for Coping with Crisis (2025)

In this book disaster expert and Sunday Times bestselling author Lucy Easthope distils the most useful learnings from her work in disaster recovery. Lessons offer unique insights for those working with local communities and provide help for anyone facing a difficult time and looking for a way through. (Published by [Hodder & Stoughton, ISBN: 9781399736213S](#)).

Covid-19 Inquiry: Modules 2, 2A, 2B, 2C – Core decision-making and political governance

The Inquiry [published its second report and recommendations](#) following its investigation into the 'Core decision-making and political governance' on Thursday 20 November 2025. It looked into core political and administrative governance and decision-making. It includes initial response, central government decision making, political and civil service performance as well as the effectiveness of relationships with governments in the devolved administrations and local and voluntary sectors.

Critical Incidents in Educational Communities: Guidance on creating the best environment for recovery

[This guidance](#) from the [UK Trauma Council](#) forms part of a set of resources that has been produced by the UK Trauma Council to help staff in early years settings, schools, alternative provision settings and colleges to respond to critical incidents.

Developing community resilience as a foundation for effective disaster recovery (Coles and Buckle, 2004)

[In this article](#) from The Australian Journal of Emergency Management (Vol. 19 NO.4, November 2004), authors Coles and Buckle compare the resilience of communities and the engagement of local people in disaster recovery in Australia and the United Kingdom. Findings indicated that community resilience could be subject to neglect in planning and response phases, but that it could be effectively planned for and developed before a disaster strikes.



Enhancing Household Resilience in the UK: Empowering Preparedness in Everyday & Household Resilience (EM-PREPARE) (2025)

This report presents findings from a large-scale survey on UK household resilience. Key findings are grouped together into 14 distinct themes, which were distilled into 6 main conclusions and recommendations for action to increase household resilience in the UK. The research was conducted by Bournemouth University, in partnership with Safehouse PRO and the Regional Innovation Fund (RIF). The report is [free to download from the Safehouse Pro website \(ISBN: 978-1-85899-348-5\)](#).

Flooded People

[Flooded People](#) are a non-profit initiative that was launched in early 2025 by flooded people, flood response specialists, and advocates for housing rights and climate change. They support the National Infrastructure Commission's recommendation to achieve a national standard of protection. For more information and resources to help protect homes and communities, see their website.

Good Faith Partnership: Stepping Up and Stepping Out – Towards a future social covenant between faith communities and Government in Covid-19 recovery and beyond

This report from the [Good Faith Partnership](#) highlights the social impact of faith communities in their assistance to vulnerable communities during the pandemic. It also explores the current state of collaboration between faith communities and government, making recommendations on how government can aid and accelerate the positive impact of faith communities on society going forward. For further details [the report can be downloaded here](#).



Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2: Annual Report February 2026

Government published [the first Annual Report into progress on the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 2 Recommendations](#). It sets out the progress made to date including stronger oversight; advances in construction product reform; clearer guidance; higher professional standards; improved enforcement; faster remediation; and better preparation for emergencies. It also details where there is more to do going forward. Progress against each recommendation can also be reviewed via the public-facing [Grenfell Tower Inquiry Dashboard](#).

London Community Resilience Toolkit

The [London Community Resilience Toolkit](#) offers practical information and guidance to help communities better prepare for and respond to future challenges and emergencies. Originally developed to help London's communities get started on their community resilience journey, the toolkit has been designed in a way that can help anyone thinking about building greater community resilience in their local area.

National Emergencies Trust

The [National Emergencies Trust \(NET\)](#) are an independent charity, dedicated to responding to UK disasters. The Trust was launched by its Royal Patron His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales in November 2019. Within as little as four hours of a national emergency happening, the NET will launch a nationwide fundraising appeal to ensure those affected receive financial support as soon as they need it.

National Flood Forum

The [National Flood Forum](#) exists to support individuals and communities at risk of flooding. They have been working across the country since 2002 to help communities and individuals feel supported, informed and empowered to reduce their flood risk.

‘Not as simple as right or wrong’ – a themed report on social care and support for disabled people in the UK

[This themed report on social care and support for disabled people in the UK](#) was conducted by the Centre for Disability Studies at the University of Leeds and Disability Rights UK. It explores evidence on disabled peoples lived experience of social care and support in the UK, along with the experiences of accessing these services.

PREPARE website

The [Prepare](#) website has been created by UK Government to communicate recommended actions that individuals, households, communities and businesses can take to increase their own preparedness and resilience. The site provides details on how to [prepare for emergencies](#), [be more informed about hazards](#), and [get involved in activities to support your community](#) before, during and after an emergency. There is also [specific advice for disabled persons and carers](#). For advice specific to people living in Scotland or Northern Ireland, you can also visit the [Ready Scotland](#) and [NI Direct](#) websites.

Protection Approaches

[Protection Approaches](#) work to prevent and protect people from identity-based violence. There are a number of [reports and discussion papers](#) available on their website, to inform thought and on identity-based violence in local communities. To access these and explore the Protection Approach’s wider offer, [visit their website](#).



Strengthening Partnerships Consultation

As recommended by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, government recently [conducted a consultation](#) on strengthening the requirement for Category 1 responders to establish and maintain partnerships with Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations (VCFS). The consultation ran from 8th July 2025 to 16th September 2025, receiving 165 responses (100 from VCFS organisations and 65 from Category 1 and 2 emergency responders). Findings highlighted a strong, shared commitment to collaboration and partnership working, but exposed significant differences in existing experiences and perceived resource capacity challenges to implement a strengthened statutory duty. Full details of the findings have been published in the [Consultation Outcome Report \(2025\)](#).

The Khan Review: executive summary, key findings and recommendations

In April 2021, the government appointed Dame Sara Khan to carry out an independent review into social cohesion and resilience in England. As the Independent Reviewer, she was tasked with examining the negative impact that extremism and other divisive activity was having in local communities and on victims. This was in recognition that more was needed to be done to improve our response at a local level and to strengthen community resilience against such division. The final report, [‘The Khan Review’](#), published in 2024, making 13 recommendations for addressing identified threats to social cohesion and democratic resilience at individual, institutional and societal levels.

VCS Emergencies Partnership – Partner Hub

Visit the [VCSEP Partner Hub](#) provides open access a range of tools, reports and helpful resources to support community resilience. They also have a VCS Emergencies Partnership [Mental Health Network](#), who have shared a collection of helpful resources in this area. The Network brings partners and organisations from the wider voluntary and community sector together, to better meet the needs of those who struggle, or are likely to struggle, with mental health issues during and following emergencies.

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